

# Editorial Notes

## Political urgency

There is a new mood of political urgency in the organisations of the democratic movement. Having forced the apartheid regime to come to the negotiating table, the democratic movement is now suffering from a lack of political direction. This has been manifested in the limited success of campaigns to mobilise the masses onto the streets or to rallies. Unless the democratic movement can develop a strategic perspective to guide it in the coming period, De Klerk will maintain his control over the agenda of political change, seriously weakening prospects for a fully democratic, non-racial society.

Accordingly, the focus of this issue of *Labour Bulletin* is on the alliance between COSATU and the ANC, and the critical views held by many of the unionists. We hope this helps further the debate about the role and nature of the two organisations, and how they should relate.

## Economic debate

This issue also carries a range of articles on the economic challenges facing the union movement. The articles highlight the seriousness of the economic crisis in South Africa, and the poverty of business' response. The unions have some valuable ideas on restructuring the economy and forging a "new growth path" - but do they have the capacity to guide our society in a new direction?

To do so will require great organisational and intellectual resources - in short, it will require 'retooling' the unions. It will also require power. Which brings us directly back to the political question. If the democratic movement does not succeed in seizing the initiative and ensuring a thoroughly demo-

cratic constitution and society, the opportunity for the unions to test their economic ideas in practice will remain remote.

## SAMWU - dramatic growth

This edition also contains two articles on an under-reported COSATU affiliate, the SA Municipal Workers Union. With a style of solid democratic grassroots organising, the union has laid a firm base for its dramatic increase in membership. It has now become the key affiliate in the public sector, with an important role to play in restructuring local government in a future South Africa.

## Debates

In our debates section we carry SACTWU general secretary John Copelyn's response to Jeremy Cronin's critique of his original talk on the 'two hats debate'. The debate is opening up discussion on issues that are vitally important for the trade union movement: how best to safeguard union independence; the relation between unions and politics and between unions and economic policy formulation; the nature of the state; and what sort of 'post-apartheid' society we hope will emerge from the negotiations over our future. *Viva debate!*

We hope our readers enjoy this exciting edition!

## Enzo Friso, not Denzil Fraser

It has been brought to our attention that the name of the assistant general secretary of ICFTU is not Denzil Fraser, as was stated in our last issue, but Enzo Friso. We apologise to Mr Friso, the ICFTU and all our readers for this unfortunate error. ☆