



NUM NEWS

August 1987



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Official Newsletter of the National Union of Mineworkers

9 - 30 AUGUST 1987

21 DAYS THAT ROCKED THE CHAMBER



FORWARD WITH THE STRUGGLE FOR A LIVING WAGE



The strike by 360 000 mineworkers ended in the same disciplined way as it started when agreement was reached with the Chamber of Mines on wages and conditions of employment.

ATTEMPTS TO BREAK THE STRIKE

Despite all attempts by the Chamber and its allies - the State and big business - to break the strike, they failed in the end.

These attempts included:

- Sending out false pamphlets, telling workers that the strike was off.
- Forcing workers underground at gunpoint at Vaal Reefs, Harmony and Western Deep Levels.
- Assaults of individuals and groups of workers by mine security and police.
- Raids on union offices.
- Bomb scares.
- Arrests and detention of stewards, including the

entire regional leadership of Klerksdorp.

In total 11 mineworkers died, 500 were injured and over 400 were arrested. This unmasked the ruthless nature of management.

UNITY AND DISCIPLINE

Despite these attacks the union's strike stewards stuck strictly to the union's strike rules. The discipline and unity throughout the strike laid a firm foundation for a Living Wage campaign in 1988.

LESSONS OF THE STRIKE

As Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of the union, put it:

"This struggle was only the dress rehearsal for the struggle in 1988, it has laid a golden foundation for the future."

The strike proved beyond any

doubt that the union enjoyed the support of the workers. It also showed that NUM can continue to strike as long as it wants to. It also showed that the union has an effective and disciplined leadership, at all levels.

The Chamber thought that the union did not have workers' support. They also thought that if the strike did take place, it would only last 48 hours. This proved a costly mistake for them and became a three-week nightmare.

In fact, the Chamber lost well over R250 million during the strike. That is almost twice the amount of the union's wage demand. The Chamber was willing to go all out to destroy the union, but it underestimated the discipline of the mineworkers. In the end, they started dismissing thousands of workers, shaft by shaft, in an attempt to demoralise workers and hopefully break the strike.

But this still did not break the determination of workers, although it was clear that management of the mines was determined to dismiss all the workers.

It was necessary to defend the union because we were not only up against management, but also the State. Our main task became defending workers' jobs, and fighting the dismissals.

LIVING WAGE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The union remains confident that the strike was an important victory for the mineworkers, COSATU and the workers of South Africa. The strike remains part of a wider struggle and continuing strategy for dealing with the Chamber.

Our struggle for a living wage continues and in 1988 more significant gains will be made.

STRIKE DIARY



More than 340 000 mineworkers were involved in the biggest legal strike in the labour history of S.A. Our demand for a living wage is a legitimate demand. We produce the wealth in our country. We are the ones who suffer most.

The Chamber remained stubborn. Instead of listening to our demands, the mining bosses responded with violence to break our strike.

The bosses used their private army, the mine security, backed up by the SAP to shoot at our members. They used rubber bullets, teargas and sjamboks on unarmed workers. Many workers were injured and hundreds were arrested by the police. Still our strike remained strong.

When 40,000 of our members had been dismissed the union decided, through discussion in its structures, to end the strike.

The strike was an important victory for mineworkers. We proved that we have built an organisation that can withstand the vicious attack of the mine bosses. We are determined to continue the struggle for a living wage.

9 August 1987

•70 000 nightshift workers strike at 44 gold and coal mines.

•Fake pamphlets were distributed in Klerksdorp informing workers that the strike was called off.

•Eight members were detained at Vaal Reefs.

•At Harmony strikers were allegedly forced underground at gunpoint. Workers then staged an underground sit-in.

•Mine security allegedly attacked workers at Kinross.

10 August 1987

•Total number of workers on strike grows to 340 000.

•Newspapers reports that white workers receive R80 per shift for scabbing.

•800 workers at

Rietspruit join the strike.

•Fifteen workers arrested at Westonaria for allegedly blocking the street.

•The Assistant Hostel Manager allegedly tried to organise a faction fight at Matla Coal. He was reprimanded.

12 August 1987

•Seventy eight members of the regional strike committee in Klerksdorp were arrested by the SAP

•115 workers were arrested at various mines.

•Four workers injured at President Steyn.

•Workers at Unisel, Ergo, Springfield, New Clydesdale joined the strike.

13 August 1987



•Five workers injured at Bracken by rubber bullets.

•Birdshot was allegedly fired at workers at Lorraine.

11 August 1987

•About 7 000 workers at Stilfontein join the strike.

•Bomb scare at the Klerksdorp office.

•Ergo workers evicted from the company premises. Twenty-three workers injured and arrested

•The strike spreads to Consolidated Murchison, Rand Refinery, Phoenix

Colliery, East Daggafontein, Simmergo, Luipardsvlei.

•Workers at Saaiplaas were allegedly attacked by teamleaders organised by management.

•Six workers detained at Leslie.

14 August 1987

•Mine security backed by SAP allegedly attacked 700 singing workers at Western Deep Levels. Seventy-eight workers were injured, one seriously.

•At Optimum twenty-seven workers were injured when birdshot was allegedly fired.

•Mine security stormed the union office at Kriel and held one worker.

15 August 1987



•Twenty-four injured at Vaal Reefs and Matla Coal. Three workers hospitalised.

•Sixty-three workers arrested at Western Deep South.

16 August 1987

•The Labour Monitoring Group estimates that the

mines have lost up to R93 million.

•At Nufcor 104 started their strike.

•Sixty-three workers from Western Deep Levels released on bail of R200 each.

•National strike committee meets in Johannesburg and decide that the strike will continue.

17 August 1987

•Anglo met with the union to discuss violence during the strike.

18 August 1987

•Talks with Anglo breaks down when workers at President Steyn were allegedly attacked by the SAP. Fifteen were injured.

20 August 1987

•Workers at Vaal Reefs

No.6 shaft refused to accept management's ultimatum. About 2000 were locked out. Similar threats were received at Western Holdings No.1. The workers decided that all the workers will go home if management carry out its threat.

STRIKE SUPPORT COMMITTEE

On the eve of the big strike by mineworkers 22 organisations met to form the NUM STRIKE SUPPORT COMMITTEE.

The following progressive organisations participate :

UDF, SAYCO, FEDTRAW, NAMDA, SCA, NECC, SOSCO, SANSCO, NUSAS, TIC, JODAC, HWA, VAAL CIVIC, DESCOM, IKAGENG CIVIC, LENASIA YOUTH, NEUSA, and others.

More meetings were held and a co-ordinating committee was elected. The task of the support committee was to assist with transport, medical services for injured miners, accommodation, provision of food, publicity and monitoring of the strike. Comrades from SAYCO and SANSCO provided very valuable security services at the union's head office.

The UDF sent a telex to P.W. Botha demanding that they refrain from intervening in the strike. The UDF also telexed the Chamber calling on the Chamber to meet the legitimate demands of the miners.

The Unemployed Workers Co-ordinating Committee (UWCC) issued a pamphlet calling on the unemployed workers not to scab on the striking miners.

Organisations donated foodstuffs, blankets and money. These donations included: Soweto Civic Association - R1000 NECC - R2000 NUSAS and SANSCO - R3023,79

Support for the strike grew day by day.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS WISHES TO THANK ALL THE ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY.

WOMEN ON THE MARCH

a woman's place is in the struggle



This picture was taken on 9 August 1956. These women from FEDSAW are determined to deliver their petitions against the pass laws to Strydom, the then Prime Minister.

On 9 August 1956, thirty-one years ago, twenty thousand women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to deliver a petition to the government. They were protesting against the introduction of pass laws for women. Powerful leaders such as Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Mary Moodley, Bertha Mashaba and others who led this protest emerged from FEDSAW.

Many of these leaders gained valuable organising experience in the trade unions such as the Food and Canning Workers' Union.

This was not the first time women resisted the pass system. In 1913 in Winburg in OFS and many other rural areas women successfully campaigned against the introduction of the pass system for women.

Black women suffer exploitation

and oppression in a much more ruthless manner than any other group of people in our country. Black women are oppressed as part of the oppressed majority, they are exploited as workers and they are also sexually exploited by men.

Women have borne the brunt of the evil system of migrant labour. The discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa has dramatically changed our quiet and peaceful tribal communities. The old men and their sons were dragged off to the mines for cheap labour. The women were left behind to take care of the children and the homes and as a result family-life was destroyed.

Many women only see their husbands who work on the mines for fourteen days every year. Mineworkers, under the leadership of the NUM, are

demanding thirty days paid annual leave so that they can spend more time with their families.

Our union is involved in a campaign to destroy the hostel system. We are demanding family centered accommodation.

In our union special effort has been made to encourage greater involvement of women members in our structures. In Namaqualand two conferences were held by the regional education subcommittee which focussed on the role of women in our union and in the struggle.

COSATU has recognised that little progress was made to implement its resolution on women. Our task now is to give special attention to this crucial area of struggle within the NUM and COSATU.



The march. Part of the 20 000 women who came from all over the country to march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

COSATU RESOLVED TO FIGHT WOMEN'S ISSUES

This federation noting:

- 1) That women workers experience both exploitation as workers and oppression as women and that black women are further discriminated against on the basis of race.
- 2) That women are employed in a limited range of occupations, doing boring and repetitive work with low and often unequal pay.
- 3) That due to overtime and night work women workers are subjected to many dangers while commuting.
- 4) That women workers often suffer sexual harassment in recruitment and employment.
- 5) That most women workers in South Africa lose their jobs when they become pregnant.
- 6) That pregnant women often have to work under conditions harmful to themselves and their unborn child.

Resolves to fight:

- 1) Against all unequal and discriminatory treatment of women at

- work, in society and in the federation.
- 2) For the equal right of women and men to paid work as an important part of the broader aim to achieve full and freely chosen employment.
- 3) For equal pay for all work of equal value - the value of work must be determined by organised women and men workers themselves.
- 4) For the restructuring of employment so as to allow women and men the opportunity of qualifying for jobs of equal value.
- 5) For childcare and family facilities to meet workers' needs and make it easier for workers to combine work and family responsibilities.
- 6) For full maternity rights, including paid maternity and paternity leave and job security.
- 7) For the protection of women and men from all types of work proved to be harmful to them, including work which interferes with their ability to have children.
- 8) Against sexual harassment in whatever form it occurs.
- 9) For adequate and safe transport for

workers doing overtime and night work.

Now commits itself:

- 1) To actively campaign in support of these resolutions.
- 2) To negotiate agreements with companies wherever possible as part of this campaign.
- 3) To actively promote within its education programme, a greater understanding of the specific discriminations suffered by women workers and ways in which these can be overcome.
- 4) To establish a worker-controlled subcommittee within its education programme to monitor progress made in implementing this resolution and to make representations to the education committee.
- 5) To budget for the workings of such a sub-committee.
- 6) To actively promote the necessary confidence and experience amongst women workers so that they can participate fully at all levels of the federation.

BAKHALA NGEFREEDOM CHARTER

COSATU adopts the Freedom Charter

The singing rang through the Flower Hall, after COSATU adopted the Freedom Charter. "Bakhala ngeFreedom Chart..." The COSATU Congress said: "The Freedom Charter is the only guiding document in our struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation."

COSATU ADOPTS FREEDOM CHARTER

The Freedom Charter enjoys mass support and has become a rallying point among all the people in our country.

As the political and economic crisis deepens and the struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation intensifies, the demands of the Freedom Charter have taken on a new meaning to workers.

Today we can truly say that the Freedom Charter has become the beacon in our struggle. The relevance of the demands of the Freedom Charter is reflected in the democratic manner in which it was drawn up.

In 1953 when Z.K. Matthews called on the people to give their vision of the future

South Africa, thousands of volunteers, dressed up in their khaki uniforms, went door to door, factory to factory, farm to farm to collect the demands from the people. These demands were compiled into a document which was presented to the CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE. Three thousand delegates debated these demands and finally the Freedom Charter was adopted at Kilpoven on 26 June 1955 by representatives of the majority of all South Africans.

On 16 July 1987, thirty two years later, COSATU adopted the Freedom Charter as a guiding document which reflects the aspirations and views of the majority of oppressed and exploited.

Two years after the NUM adopted the Freedom Charter in its Fifth National Congress in February 1987. Since the NUM's resolution to adopt the Freedom Charter, CAWU, FAWU, CCAWUSA and NUMSA adopted the Freedom Charter. All major COSATU affiliates have had vigorous debates about the Freedom Charter.

The COSATU congress also resolved that we, as workers must develop a coherent understanding of the demands of the Freedom Charter. This is now our important task.

We need to ask ourselves



10 000 members of our union attended the rally held after the national Congress in February this year.



These women came to Kilpoven to bring their demands to be included in the Freedom Charter.

what do we as workers mean when we say: "The people shall govern"? We are not referring to an election once every five years when after parliamentarians have a mandate to do as they please until the next election. Workers know how they run their trade unions. When they elect their stewards these shall stewards cannot do as they please. They must constantly go back to the workers who elected them for mandates. Likewise when we elect our representatives to any body of government they must be accountable to the people who elected them. The people must be able to recall their representatives and give them fresh mandates. They must be able

to remove these representatives from their offices if they don't represent the interests of the people who elected them. We know the Freedom Charter says that "all bodies of authority... shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government" or, in plain language of the election, "democratic organs of people's power".

These are the issues that we must debate to develop a coherent understanding of the Freedom Charter.

DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

Our resolution encourages the

fallen discussion of socialism and democracy in our structures and amongst all progressive organisations. It says that workers in our country are not only striving for better conditions in the mines, factories, shops and farms but also for a democratic society controlled by the workers and in which there is an equal distribution amongst workers of the country's wealth.

What is the nature of this society we are fighting for? How will we achieve this society?

The Freedom Charter lays a basis for the building of a non-exploitative society. Some intellectuals have been so

prone to point out that this is not so. This position however shows a lack of understanding of our struggle.

We are involved in a very bitter struggle against national oppression and economic exploitation. For miners in South Africa this is a crude reality. We live in the most miserable hovels, plucked from our homes and not even part of communities nearby the mines. We are forced to work in the worst conditions underground and for meagre wages. Black miners are victims of the worst race practices.

Thus for us, as miners, the struggle against profit hungry bosses must take place alongside the struggle against apartheid. For us there is no conflict between the two. Capitalism and apartheid are two inseparable evils.

FORWARD TO A UNITED FRONT

COSATU alone cannot bring about a change in government. To build the society where workers will control the state we need to form alliances with progressive organisations. Because a few individuals can call themselves a progressive organisation it is necessary to

define clearly what progressive organisations are.

We believe that a progressive organisation is a mass based organisation with a constituency and a proven record in our struggle.

We do not need to fear the powerful organisations, because we will show them in struggle that the vision of a worker's future is a future for all who want a society that will be free from fear, hunger and poverty.

Our resolution also calls on us to build structures in which the united front will rest. This is an important task that we as workers must embark on. We must not attempt to draw them up on a drawing board, but through our day to day experiences. We must bring together our comrades in the Youth, Civic, Women, Unemployed and Political organisations in an alliance.

Finally we must remember that history is not made in resolution writing but in the action that we take. Our task is great. History calls on us as organised workers to provide leadership at this crucial moment in our townships, mines and factories.



The demands of the Freedom Charter were read from this platform.

THE MINING STRUGGLE CONTINUES 1946 - 1987



Oupa Mike Motlabe

These days Marks Mabeo has a lot of time on his hands. He has not been at work for three weeks. Like 340 000 other mineworkers, he is part of the biggest mine strike in the history of this country.

Two weeks ago, Marks was given R80 and told to leave his hostel at Randfontein Estates. So the young man left for his home in the West Rand township of Mohlakeng. There he found his step-father, an old man called Oupa Mike Motlabe. The two sat down to talk. Marks found that his father had many lessons for the young men on the mines today.

The old warrior told the young fighter about the times when he too worked at the Randfontein Estates mine. He told Marks that the young miners of today were finishing an old battle that his friends began on the mines over forty years ago - in the strike of 1946. This is the old man's story:

FROM THE FREE STATE

"I was born in the Free State in 1921. When I was 16 years old I went to work on the mines. That is how I landed up at the Randfontein Estate gold mine.

"I first worked as a carpenter. I earned 12 pounds in five weeks. White carpenters earned that much in a week. I lived at the

Randfontein compound. The compounds were very crowded. In my room there were 42 people. The beds were lined up one on top of the other. We were not given any blankets - we had to buy them ourselves.

The miners who worked underground used to get thin porridge in the morning before their shift started. The porridge was served from a big bucket. Once a week, on a Friday, we were given a piece of raw meat to cook. Conditions underground were very dangerous. The stopes were very narrow and miners had to crawl around there for twelve hours a shift. Many miners were killed underground. Most were killed in rock falls. It was not a safe place to be in.

J.B MARKS - A STRONG MAN

There was no union on the mine in those days. I remember the time I met Mr JB Marks from the African Mineworkers Union.

I first met Mr Marks in 1945. He was a good man. He was also very strong. He was an ex-teacher. He came from Johannesburg to tell us about the union. I said I would help him organise the workers. It was a difficult job to do because the mine bosses did not want us to speak about it. If they saw us talking to Mr Marks they would

chase him away.

Organising the workers was also difficult. Many workers did not understand what the union stood for. I explained to them that the union would help us fight for better wages, better living conditions and improved safety. After this some workers decided to join.

Every Wednesday Mr Marks used to meet us at the Robinson compound concession store. Some of us had to keep watch in case the mine police came. I would give the names of the new union members plus their membership fee of 30 cents. If the mine police were looking for him, he would come to my house.

Sometimes Mr Marks sent his comrade, Mr Majoro, to see us. They were both very busy. In

was illegal because our union was not recognised.

During the strike Mr Marks gave me forms to fill in. I had to write down how many miners were striking, as well as their names. The police got hold of these forms, and we were questioned. I was warned to stop telling people about the union.

On our mine the strike lasted only two days. On other mines the strike lasted for five days. The police were too strong for us.

After the strike Mr Marks could not come as often as he used to. Then they arrested him. Next I heard he left the country and was in the Soviet Union. I believe he died there.

A HARD NUT TO CRACK

I left the mine in 1957, after 20



ROBINSON CONCESSION STORE changed over the years, but for Oupa Mike it still has many memories

Randfontein there were five compounds. Mr Marks and Mr Majoro had to visit them all.

The union wanted the mine to pay workers 20 cents a shift - an increase of five cents. The bosses refused. They would not listen to the union. The union organised a strike.

THE STRIKE IN 1946

Before the strike started we handed out pamphlets. These pamphlets explained to the workers the reasons for the strike and when it was going to start.

On 12 August 1946, the strike began. The government police came to the compounds at three o'clock in the morning. They chased us out of the compound. They forced us down the shafts. But we refused to work. The police used guns and teargas. Many miners were hurt.

The bosses called a meeting. They said we were doing something dangerous. They said the strike

years service. When I left I got no long service award. I tried many times to get my money but I was not successful. This strike today is just as difficult as our strike was. But the NUM is good. They are strong. They have brought the workers together. They say an injury to one is an injury to all. That is good. It is important that people come together and fight for their rights.

Today, at least NUM can talk to the bosses and to the miners. I want to know why the bosses do not listen to NUM. The union warned about the strike. Why didn't they listen? It could have been avoided.

In my day the bosses and their friends were stronger than us. We were always in trouble for following JB Marks. The children today are strong. They are making history like we did. That is a good thing. The bosses must pay a living wage. They are a hard nut to crack but I know that we will win in the end.



At this hall J.B. Marks met many workers in Randfontein who became members of the AFRICAN MINeworkers UNION

COSATU CONGRESS

On the 15 July the biggest Congress in our labour history took place. There were 1438 delegates from every corner of our country and every industry. For three days worker leaders debated crucial issues confronting workers.

The night before the Congress, the mood was set when delegates were entertained by a powerful display of workers' culture. Various workers' choirs performed backed up by the band, BAYETE.

The next morning, busloads of delegates arrived at the Flower Hall at Wits University. The 524 NUM delegates sang freedom songs, all dressed in their yellow and black track-suits.

The hall was draped with banners stating COSATU's policies. Each union brought its own banner. There were flags, posters and lots of union literature.

The Congress started with the singing of the National Anthem and this must have echoed across the country. It was powerful and electrifying.

The President of Cosatu comrade Elijah Barayi in his opening speech paid tribute to workers "who have been willing to set aside differences, old allegiances and even old rivalries; who have been willing to look beyond labels and names in order to build our formidable organisation of worker unity.

Many issues were debated which are of great importance to us. We must discuss and implement all the resolutions that were adopted, in all our regions and branches.

The election was the highlight of the Congress. Great jubilation broke loose when all the office bearers were re-elected unopposed. Comrade Barayi was re-elected as President, Comrade Dlamini 1st Vice President, Ledwaba 2nd Vice President, Comrade Xulu Treasurer, Comrade Naidoo General Secretary and Comrade Mafumadi Assistant General Secretary.

What Comrade Barayi said in his opening speech came true at the end of the day when

delegates came out more united than ever before and even more determined to translate the important resolutions into action. These were: Political Policy, International Policy, Namibia, Sanctions and Disinvestment, Education, National Industrial Unions, Domestic Workers, Unemployment, Rents and Repression.

Some resolutions could not be debated because of time constraints and were referred to the CEC for finalisation.

Because of the present state of emergency the rally planned after the congress could not be held. This did to stop workers from flowing in from as far afield as Cape Town, Namaqualand, Phalaborwa and other remote areas of the

country to attend the Cultural Day held on Saturday the 18th July 1987. This event displayed the emerging workers' culture that reflects the lives of workers at their workplaces and their homes. This was done in the form of poetry, music, plays gamboots-dancing and others.

**ONE
UNION
ONE
INDUSTRY**



NUM delegates participate in the singing at the COSATU Congress.



Gumboot dancers from Matla Colliery perform at the COSATU Cultural Day



These women from SADWU were beating the big drums and dancing in rhythm for the large crowd of 10 000 who attended the cultural day





Workers of the world unite against the Chamber

The National Union of Mineworkers' struggle for a living wage has captured the attention of the world. It is one of the biggest national strikes in the world this decade, and is the biggest in Africa. Solidarity messages have come from trade unions, national centres, anti-apartheid organisations and the entire progressive movement of the world committed to democracy and freedom of South Africa's oppressed people. Workers of the world are on our side. We are not alone in our struggle against the mine bosses.

Fraternal greetings have been sent to the National Union of Mineworkers by the following organisations:

1. Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (USA)
2. United Mineworkers Union of America
3. Trans Africa (USA)
4. Portuguese Workers Federation
5. Moroccan Workers Federation
6. OGT (Luxembourg)
7. Textile Workers (USA)
8. International Congress of Free Trade Unions
9. French Miners
10. IGBE (Germany)
11. Auto Workers (USA)
12. Trade Unions International Public and Allied Employees (Berlin)
13. Swedish LO
14. USA Miners
15. African Miners Federation (Algeria)
16. British Trade Union Congress
17. International Metalworkers' Federation

(Geneva)

18. Spanish Workers
19. African National Congress
20. South African Congress of Trade Unions
21. USA Congressman B Gray
22. American Federation of Labour - Congress of Industrial Organisations
23. Swedish TCO
24. FEIT (Switzerland)
25. International Miners Organisation
26. World Congress of Labour (Brussels)
27. Canadian Transport Workers
28. Australian Workers Federation
29. World Federation of Trade Unions (Prague)
30. Federation of National Miners (France)
31. East German Miners
32. East German Workers Federation
33. World Federation of Industry Workers (Brussels)
34. American Committee on

Africa

35. Brotherhood of Asian Trade Unionists
36. Netherlands Trade Union Federation
37. Spanish Confederation
38. CFDT (France)
39. Independent Union Youth of Luxembourg
40. Canadian Labour Congress
41. Central Committee of Soviet Workers
42. Movement Federation (Republic of Germany)
43. Australians Union of Metalworkers and Miners and Energy Supply Workers
44. Swedish Miners Union
45. American Public Employers Union
46. Confederation of Free German Trade Unions
47. Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions
48. New York Labour Committee
49. Unity Movement of South Africa
50. United Democratic Front
51. Wilgespruit Fellowship

Centre

52. Soweto Civic Association
53. Congress of South African Trade Unions
54. Call of Islam (Lenasia)
55. National Unemployed Workers Co-ordinating Committee
56. Health Workers Association
57. National Education Crisis Committee
58. Danish federation of Trade Unions
59. Mineworkers Union of Zambia
60. Confederation of Caribbean Public Services Association
61. United Steelworkers of America
62. Mineworkers of Cuba
63. Finnish Peace Committee
64. Soviet Miners
65. British Miners
66. Czechoslovakian Miners
67. Organisation of African Trade Union Unity
68. Austrian Metalworkers

And here is what some of them said...

The Austrian Union of Metalworkers Miners and Energy Supply Workers: Solidarity with the South African miners in their fight for higher wages and improvement of labour conditions. We wish your organisation a successful settlement.
British trade unionists send full support to the South African NUM and our best wishes for a successful outcome to the current

industrial dispute with mining employers for decent wages and working conditions.
World Federation of Trade Unions greets on behalf of its members your courageous struggle for better living and working conditions against inhuman solidarity and wish you and your countrymen all success your fight for freedom and end to apartheid.

OATUU on behalf of millions of African workers under its umbrella expresses its solidarity with the people and workers of South Africa, particularly the striking mineworkers in their relentless struggle for social justice, democracy and the elimination of apartheid.

OATUU appeals to all its affiliated national trade union centres as well as regional, national and

international trade union organisations to express their moral material support for, and solidarity to, the mineworkers in South Africa.

The United Democratic Front salutes the brave, militant action taken by the most exploited and abused workers of our land, under the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers.

NUM



News

STRIKE SPECIAL

August 9, 1987



NOW IS THE HOUR!



NOW IS THE HOUR!

THE time has arrived. We cannot turn back.

Every mineworker must move to the frontline and join the battle for a living wage NOW!

Strike action must take place on every mine.

The Chamber of Mines has clearly shown that it will not pay us a decent wage. It has shown that it is only concerned about profit, and making the bosses rich — while we get poorer.

The only way to bring pressure on the Chamber of Mines is to strike on all the gold and coal mines.

The bosses have said that if we go on strike, they will not increase our wages.

We also know that mine managements have started their own mobilisation so that they can crush our strike.

They have threatened to:

- * Dismiss us.
- * Close the mines if we strike.
- * Use mine security against us.
- * Starve us.

We also know that mine managements are well supported by the present state of emergency. This gives wide powers to the police and military, who

have been placed on full alert.

But comrades, let us not be scared by these threats.

The bosses are making these threats because they know we are united, disciplined and ready for action. They are worried about the action we are going to take on August 9.

They are worried because they will:

- * Face the biggest wage strike in this country's history.
- * Lose millions of rand in profit because gold and coal production will stop.
- * Learn that workers

fully support their union in its struggle for a living wage.

Comrades, let us not be scared by the Chamber of Mines.

Our strike is legal.

We have voted in our thousands to go on strike.

This is our only weapon now that the Chamber has rejected all the union's attempts to reach a settlement.

Our struggle for a living wage will be put back many years if we let the Chamber continue to pay us poverty wages.

We must fight for our demands!

WHY is it necessary to go on strike?

At the conciliation board, when deadlock was reached, the union wanted to go for arbitration or mediation in order to reach settlement.

But the chamber rejected both suggestions.

We then went for a strike ballot. Over 95% of the members of recognised mines voted in support of strike action.

Since the negotiations started, the NUM has been reasonable. We pointed out that the gold and coal mines have made huge profits

The Chamber of Mines, on the other hand, argues that things are bad in the mining industry.

But let's take a closer look at conditions in the mining industry.

In 1986, the gold mines recorded their highest profits in history. They achieved record results in 1985 for the amount of ore that was processed,

The bosses get richer. The workers get poorer.

revenues and profits.

Working profit rose by 37% in 1985 and by another 14% in 1986.

Dividends paid to shareholders rose by 38% in 1985 and by 10% in 1986.

The union's demand for a living wage is based on the fact that the mining houses can afford to pay. Our demand is not only supported by the mines' results over the last year, but the excellent results over the past decade.

For the past ten years, the gold mines have earned remarkable profits for their owners and the government.

If we look at the profits over that period, it is

obvious that we have not benefited from the high gold price and profits.

Between 1975 and 1986:

* Total profits have gone up by 44%

* Total dividends (money paid to shareholders) have gone up by 21%

* Capital expenditure has gone up by 106%

* Taxation to the government has gone up by 38%

For the past ten years the gold mines have become used to making massive profit, while the mineworkers are getting poorer.

Coal mines

It is the same on the coal mines. Since the rise of

the international price of oil in the early 70s, demand increased for South Africa's coal as an alternative source of cheap energy. Exports to countries increased.

Despite the competition with other coal producers, South African coal is still the cheapest in the world to mine. This is so because they pay very low wages to coal miners.

In return for supplying cheap coal, all the mines get cheap electricity. 27% of the electricity generated by Escom is absorbed by the mines.

The coal mines can afford to pay higher wages.

Strike rules

WE HAVE reached the stage where we must move towards united action.

All regions and branch strike committees must fully understand strike rules and ensure that strike stewards carry them out.

Our strike starts on Sunday night, 9 August 1987. For the strike to be effective, we must have all workers on strike. We must be disciplined in our strike action.

1. The strike will continue until we have

won our demands or until the union's National Executive Committee calls off the strike.

2. Only strike committee members will be responsible for matters affecting workers during the strike. Workers should listen to the strike committee.

3. During the strike, all workers should stay in their rooms and only come out when the shaft stewards or strike committee members tell them to.

4. Workers are reminded

not to drink alcohol or to fight among each other or intimidate each other. Any worker who fights or drinks must be taken to the strike committee.

5. Should the management refuse to give food and water to workers, the strike committee will meet

6. We must be prepared to go on strike for many weeks, like the railway and OK workers, because the Chamber is refusing to give into our demand for a living wage.



This is what we want!

THE Chamber of Mines knows what we want. Our demands are clear:

Wages — 30%

We are among the lowest-paid workers in the country, yet we do the hardest and most dangerous work.

Although we are only supposed to work 96 hours, we all know that we work much longer.

On gold mines, the minimum wage is R238 a month. On coal mines, it is R225 per month. On this pittance, the Chamber of Mines expects us to support our families.

The Chamber of Mines is only prepared to give us between 15 percent and 23,5 percent increases on gold and coal mines.

We say: Down with poverty and slave wages!

Leave Days - 30

Leave conditions differ in the mining industry. Some mining houses give 14 days, others 21 or 28 days.

The mining industry employs migrant workers who go home yearly after their contracts are finished. We demand the right to have more leave days to spend with our families.

June 16 as a paid holiday

The youth of our



country have been in the forefront of the struggle against gutter education. Many have died since June 16, which is an important day in the history of our country's struggle for liberation.

Danger pay

Every year over 400 of our comrades die in the mining industry. Thousands are injured, many permanently. Our workplace is very dangerous, and we

demand a danger allowance.

But, even though hundreds of our comrades die every year, the Chamber of Mines still considers safety to be an issue on which they make all the decisions.

Death benefit — to be increased to five years' earnings

At present, our families will only receive two years' earnings if we die — which is far too little.

The union's demands are reasonable. We have spent many meetings trying to win them, but the Chamber of Mines is big-headed, and says it has given enough improvements.

Let us make Sunday 9 August 1987 the day South Africa's mineworkers make their mark!

Let us make it a day of disciplined and united action!

Let us make it a day of unity!