

# NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1987

THE CAPE TOWN  
TRADE UNION  
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## MUNICIPAL WORKERS SAY TOWN CLERK MUST GO

On 31 July the Town Clerk of Diepmeadow Council (Soweto) told 12 meter readers that a private company was taking over the meter reading section of the council. So meter readers were no longer employed by the council. At once 1,200 TGWU council workers went on strike and demanded the reinstatement of the 12 workers.

The 12 workers were reinstated but the workers continued the strike demanding the dismissal of Noel Gaum, the Town Clerk. The council agreed to meet about Gaum so workers returned to work. But after the meeting Gaum was not dismissed. So workers struck for 2 more days.

Workers, clerks, township managers and social workers were united in calling for Gaum's dismissal. Gaum worked before as town clerk in Lekoa and Tumahole Councils and was not liked. Diepmeadow workers outlined 37 grievances against Gaum. Some of these grievances are that Gaum is racist, that he is rude to workers, that he never consults workers on anything, and that when the council was upgraded to a city council Gaum got a 20% salary increase but workers did not.

In response to worker demands the Diepmeadow Council dismissed Gaum and gave workers the 20% increase they demanded.



## TGWU STRIKES GALORE

TGWU workers are saying "NO, no, no, no!" No to dismissals, no to low wages, no to insults and assaults at work. Workers are saying "NO" through strikes and stoppages.

### TRANSPORT

- Renfreight Aircargo (Isando) - Strike 2 days 30/31 July. 2 workers were dismissed for drinking on duty. After the strike workers were reinstated.
- Renfreight Aircargo (East London) - Strike 2 days 29/30 July. 3 workers were dismissed for stealing. After the strike 2 workers were reinstated on full pay with no loss of status. Negotiations for reinstatement of the third worker continue.

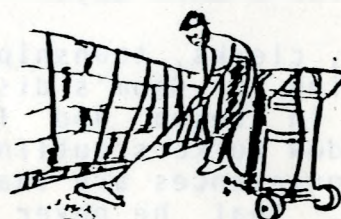


- **Mothusi Transport (Welkom)** - Strike 1/2 August 54 workers. Workers demanded a living wage. Management agreed to meet with workers to discuss recognition of the union, wages and other grievances.

- **Normans Transport (Cape Town)**: strike 1 day, 10 August around overtime. After the strike management agreed with shop stewards on sharing out overtime and paid workers for the 1 day strike.

- **SACD workers** banned overtime because management was paying a white woman more money than a black worker in the same kind of work. Management agreed to pay the same rate to both workers. And after a 2 hour stoppage workers forced management to apologise and promise that racism and differences in pay will not happen again.

- **Lehmbeckers** - drivers at this company have to look after trucks in the yard but they do not get overtime pay for this. So workers went on strike for 2 days. Management agreed to pay overtime to truck guards. talk about the problem of overtime.



#### **CLEANING AND SECURITY**

- **Shamrock Security**: Strike 23/24 July, 60 workers all members of TGWU. Workers demanded the reinstatement of 5 dismissed members (victimised for their active union work) and a living wage. Workers demanded R350 minimum as the company were paying below the wage determination of R262. The 5 workers were reinstated and management agreed to raise minimum wages to R282 and give a further raise of R350 from October 1987.

- **Pritchard Security (JHB)** - 1 day strike on 10 August of 800 workers over dismissal of 5 workers. The workers were dismissed 2 months before. 2 workers were reinstated and the other 3 are waiting for their appeal hearing.

- **Witwatersrand Technikon** - 2 day strike 15/16 July strike of 300 workers (250 TGWU members). The strike concerned the dismissal of an active TGWU member. Workers called off the strike as management agreed to talk but they will not reinstate the worker.

- **University Port Elizabeth** - 3 day strike 12/13 August over the date for payment of a general wage increase. The dispute has now gone to mediation.

#### **MUNICIPAL**

- **Ladysmith Municipality** - 2 day strike 3/4 August of 800- 1000 workers. Workers were demanding a living wage as the minimum is R187.55 a month. The Town Clerk met with TGWU and the town council are now looking at the demands.

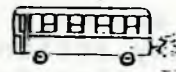
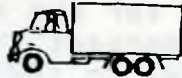
- **Springs Municipality** - 1 day strike on 3/4 August of 800-1000 workers over recognition of union and a living wage. Management have refused to recognise TGWU since 1983. Management then asked for proof of membership then they will recognise the union.

### **CONSTRUCTION**

- **Everite (Kliprivier)** - Strike of 976 workers lasting 13 days. A black supervisor assaulted a worker so workers were demanding the dismissal of the supervisor. TGWU has just handed over to CAWU so both unions handled the strike.

Management refused to meet workers so workers in other depots came out on a sympathy strike: East London 346 workers, Cape Town 936 workers, and in Port Elizabeth 25 workers. The dispute is now going to mediation.

### **T&G NEWS FLASHES**



- **Cargo Carriers** - TGWU signed a wage agreement after a very long dispute lasting 2 months. The agreement gives a R22 a week increase for drivers and R17 increase for general workers. The increase in wages and overtime will be backpaid to June 1.

- **Richards Bay Coal Terminal** - negotiations deadlocked on August 2. Management is offering an average 14% increase. Workers are demanding a 30% increase and will take no less because they know Amcoal (the main shareholder) made a huge profit of R456 million in 1986. The union has now declared a dispute.

- After a very long struggle, TGWU is sitting for the first time on the **Goods Transport Industrial Council** in the Transvaal. TGWU is demanding a R50 - R65 increase a week to bring the minimum wage in the transport industry from R71 pw to R121 pw. We are also demanding a 40 hour week, change in overtime rates, maternity benefits, May Day, June 16, March 21 and better allowances.

The employers are offering 8 and a half percent and they are not willing to negotiate any conditions of employment. The dispute is now going to arbitration.

- **The South African Black Taxi Owners Association (SABTA)** bought out PUTCO for R156 million. James Champman of SABTA says: "SABTA is now in the bus and taxi business. If taxis and buses work work together we can make more profit. For example, we can take out buses in the quiet times and use taxis so that buses don't run half empty."

"We believe black transport should be in the hands of blacks. There will be bus fare increases but we will not have problems because we are close to community organisation."

**A LIVING WAGE FOR ALL WORKERS!**



## NUM STRIKE

300,000 NUM workers are on strike for a living wage. It is the longest mine strike in South African history. Mineworkers continue to demand a living wage in the face of teargas, shooting, detention, and other police activity. The minimum wage in the gold mines is R238 and in coal R225. Workers want a 30% increase. The mine bosses refuse to negotiate wages.

What is TGWU doing to support the strike?

Workers at Richards Bay Coal Terminal (RBCT) asked management for a ballot to find out if workers want to go on sympathy strike with NUM workers.

RBCT is the one and only outlet for the export of coal in South Africa so sympathy action is important to NUM. Management refused to give ballot facilities to TGWU. But workers are fighting this as they want to support the NUM strike. Shop stewards are putting pressure on RBCT so that RBCT will also put pressure on the Chamber Of Mines.

## AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!



### DID YOU KNOW?

Transport companies need permits from the government to operate. These permits are mainly to protect the government owned SATS (South African Transport Services). Transport companies say they spent R60 million on permits last year.

Now transport companies are calling for the government to do away with permits (de-regulation). This means any transport company can operate in any place they like, and carry whatever goods they like.

What does de-regulation mean for workers?

Many more small transport companies will start up. And there will be a lot more competition between companies. Companies will try to keep their prices very low to get business. So companies will try to cut costs. And for companies the first way to cut costs is to keep workers' wages low, retrench, and get workers to work faster and so on.

### DID YOU KNOW?

That 88% of all money spent by transport managements in 1986 was to buy new trucks. So before the bosses pay higher wages they will spend money on trucks that use less petrol, are faster, have automatic lifts and so on.

### DID YOU KNOW?

A government report says that goods transport companies in South Africa together made a profit of R118 million in 1986. In 1985 the goods transport industry made a profit of R74 million.