

COSATU

PRESS CLIPPING SERVICE



Issued by COSATU h/o

May 1987



**FIGHT
POVERTY & EXPLOITATION**

Cawu's war on starvation wages

New Nation 26-1[3-4] 87

THE Construction and Allied Workers Union (Cawu) is to demand a minimum wage of R4 an hour for the industry's estimated 200 000 workers.

This was decided at a general meeting of Cawu's biggest region, Western Transvaal.

Regional organiser Tembiso Radebe said the demand would be put forward as part of the living wage campaign for a national minimum wage after discussion with other regions.

Workers are determined to push for national negotiations with some of the industry's biggest employers, among them Anglo's LTA.

Anglo American is currently involved in wage talks in almost every sector of the economy.

The living wage campaign will be launched this week.

The union says it will also make the struggle against unfair dismissals and the exploitation of unregistered workers the focus of its living wage campaign.

"But this does not mean we will neglect our health and safety struggle," says Radebe.

He points out that the high accident and fatality rates will continue to have top priority in the union's struggles.

Radebe points out that workers are being killed almost every week.

"Two more workers were killed in Vlakfontein when a wall collapsed on them last week - less than a month after the accident at a



construction site on the Phalaborwa mines, where eight workers were seriously injured."

Thousands of construction workers are expected to attend the funeral and commemoration service for the workers on Saturday.

Cawu has formed a women's committee which will steer the campaign for improved maternity benefits, another important demand.

Living wage push

begins

19-25[3] 87 New Nation

THE Congress of SA Trade Unions' (Cosatu) living wage campaign will be launched towards the end of this month.

Already various regions report that police are refusing permission for public launches to be held.

Initial plans by some regions to launch the campaign at the end of this week, to coincide with the commemoration of the Sharpeville and Langa massacres, had to be shelved when permission to hold a mass rally was turned down.

Cosatu has vowed to make this the "biggest challenge to bosses and their profit system".

The struggle is also seen as more than just an economic one. "It is a struggle against apartheid-capitalism which is built on ultra-cheap, ultra-controllable and super-exploitable labour.

'LOGIC AND GREED CONFLICT'

"For the past century, successive governments have been dutifully keeping the working class under the thumb of the ruling class," Cosatu says.

It says the economy, based as it is on high levels of exploitation and control, has created its own problems - among them a vast worker consumer market with housing, food and clothing needs.

But as workers have no money to spend, demand is very low.

This has in turn resulted in a very small manufacturing base. The direct result of low wages therefore is low profits, according to the federation.

"But the logic of bosses is opposed to their greed," says Cosatu. They will not pay higher wages for fear that it will eat into profits, the federation explains.

The problem therefore cannot be left to the bosses to resolve. "Workers and their

organisations must seize the initiative and build control over the economy," Cosatu adds.

The slogan of workers engaged in the struggle - "From each according to his abilities to each according to his needs" - will be taken up by millions as the campaign takes off.

At least two of its affiliates, National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and Mawu, which will lead the campaign, have already engaged bosses in a battle that could affect a million workers.

The struggle will be directed against the system which has resulted in the concentration of vast amounts of wealth in a few hands.

Illustrating this concentration of wealth, Cosatu points out that 1 360 families, not even representing 0,1 percent of the population, own and control 80 percent of the country's wealth.

The Anglo American Corporation alone is worth R60-billion, it points out.

The struggle is also expected to focus on broader political issues.

Although the living wage struggle's main focus will be higher wages, it will also include the fight for shorter hours, and for May Day, June 16 and Sharpeville Day to be observed as holidays.

The federation sees the campaign as an important opportunity to build new structures and strengthen existing ones. Many unemployed workers will also be drawn into Cosatu affiliates.

Cosatu, however, sees the demand for a living wage as a short-term solution. It says that as long as bosses are allowed to put their interests first, there will not be a lasting solution to workers' problems.

'DRIVE FOR A LIVING WAGE'

Cosatu launches campaign

27/3/82 Soweto

Soweto launch set to highlight Cosatu campaign

By SANDILE MEMELA

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) is to launch its "living wage" campaign this weekend.

The federation, as part of the campaign, is to present a set of wage demands to employers in various sectors this year.

Cosatu general secretary Mr Jay Naidoo told a Press conference yesterday that the federation's affiliates would be involved in a concerted campaign in their battle for a living wage.

Allied Workers' Union (lawu), is spearheading this campaign in this sector;

- An across-the-board 58 percent wage increase in the mining industry, as demanded by Cosatu-affiliated National Union of Mine-workers;

By LEN MASEKO

Among Cosatu's demands are:

- A minimum wage of R4,50 an hour in the metal industry. Cosatu's affiliate, the Metal and

- The scrapping of the migrant labour system and replacement of tribally-designed hostels with "decent housing" near workplaces;

- The scrapping of income tax "as blacks were never consulted when this was implemented". This tax, including GST, served to re-inforce the apartheid infrastructure, according to Cosatu.

Rejected

The federation has rejected President P W Botha's proposals on the May Day issue, say-

ing it would press ahead with its demand for May 1 and June 16 to be recognised as paid holidays.

In most sectors bosses had kept wages well below the inflation rate and "vehemently resisted worker demands for a greater slice of profits", the Cosatu official said.

"Workers are thus getting poorer every day, with less money in their pockets, less food in the cupboards, and increased hardship and degradation in the townships," Mr Naidoo added.

THOUSANDS of workers are expected at Soweto's Jabulani Amphitheatre on Sunday for the national launch of the Congress of SA Trade Union's "living wage" campaign.

The campaign's highlight will be the Soweto event, starting at 10am.

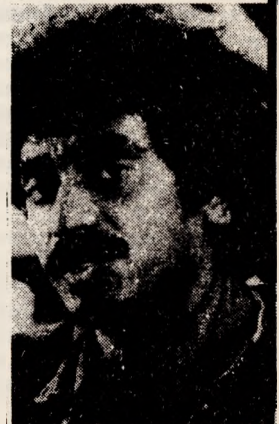
The campaign tops Cosatu's agenda this year, said secretary-general Jay Naidoo.

A number of regional congresses will also be held countrywide this weekend after permission to hold mass rallies was refused by the authorities a week ago.

Sunday's launch was postponed after the refusal and some affiliates needed more time to make preparations, said Naidoo.

The 500 000-strong union has taken legal action in a bid to challenge the State's refusal to allow it to hold mass rallies, said Naidoo.

According to Naidoo, a blanket ban has been placed on Cosatu rallies in Northern Natal. Other areas affected are the Eastern Cape and the Highveld.



Jay Naidoo

The national campaign will focus on demands for

- A living wage.
- A 40-hour week without loss of pay.
- No PAYE deductions.
- Recognition of March 21, June 16 and May 1 as paid public holidays.
- At least six months maternity leave for women.
- An end to the migrant labour and hostel system.
- Decent housing near places of employment.
- Decent education and training for unskilled workers.

Naidoo said the campaign would also focus on the plight of the unemployed.

"The unemployed must be drawn into our ranks because they have been abused by the system and have been recruited to participate in the vigilant phenomenon," said Naidoo.

He said this was Cosatu's most important campaign because thousands of workers faced retrenchment and workers' wages have fallen as a result of inflation.

"Over 182 000 jobs have been lost since 1982," said Naidoo.

Living wage campaign on

CP Correspondent

HISTORY will repeat itself this weekend in the Eastern Cape. On Sunday the East Cape branch of Cosatu is to start gearing towards the national living wage campaign scheduled to start next month.

In February 1957, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, now operating from outside SA, embarked on a minimum living wage campaign for workers.

About 300 delegates and thousands of workers are expected to attend the East Cape congress to launch the living wage campaign.

It will start at 10pm and the program includes:

- A Cosatu executive council decision on the format of the campaign.
- Demands to be made during the campaign.
- How women relate to the demands in the campaign.

All 15 Cosatu affiliates in the Eastern Cape will attend.

And for the first time in the workers' struggle, organisations outside Cosatu have been invited to attend the congress.

Community-based organisations

such as the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, PE Women's Organisation, PE Youth Congress and others have been invited.

Cosatu's Eastern Cape chairman, Thembonkosi Mkalipi, said Cosatu had invited all anti-apartheid forces to come together to plan the campaign for a living wage, so all workers would be able to pay rent, educate their children and buy food.

"Cosatu is the only structure still operating under the emergency and people should help it to work towards its freedom goal," said Mkalipi.

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) this week stepped up its "living wage" campaign by publishing a special edition of *Cosatu News* focusing on the issue.

The campaign is top of Cosatu's agenda this year. With industrial action over wages on the increase anyway, it is well to examine it.

The demands are for a living wage, a 40-hour week, May Day, June 16 and Sharpeville day as paid holidays, no PAYE deductions, at least six months maternity leave, decent housing near work and an end to the hostel system and decent education and training.

In some ways the demands focus on bread and butter issues to a surprising extent, given Cosatu's highly political reputation. But there is an important political dimension to the apparently economic demands. And the obviously political demands have a definite purpose, too.

The living wage demand is intended as a challenge to the capitalist system, or at least SA's.

It is saying: "Can capitalism provide for a decent standard of living for our members? If not, a socialist alternative must be devised."

And indeed, many articles go on to talk about the attributes of socialism and "worker control". What is not clear is exactly what is meant by these concepts. It is fair to say that Cosatu has not definitively formulated them.

At the very least, Cosatu is talking about working towards a social democracy. This includes diminishing the the area of management prerogative, so as to increase worker influence over their working lives.

But Cosatu could also be talking about a radical form of socialism, or any economic system in between. The point is that these issues are, and will continue to be for a long time hence, matters of intensive debate within the organisation. And the direction this debate

is influenced by the fortunes of unions and their members, and responses to campaigns such as this one.

Much space in *Cosatu News* is devoted to examining and criticising the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few large corporations, a la Robin MacGregor's "Who Owns Whom".

It looks at the effect of monopolies on the economy, and also reiterates the view that unions need to organise along similar lines so as to counter them.



Campaigning for a 'living wage'

ALAN FINE

It uses the threats of action against Anglo-linked companies during the OK Bazaars strike as an example. It implicitly rejects assertions about the independent management of subsidiary companies advanced when they are drawn into disputes.

Another article employs the Keynesian argument that higher wages will benefit the economy by enlarging local markets. Only shortsighted greed prevents business from seeing this, it avers.

It would seem that, with corporate profits on the increase again, Cosatu has timed its campaign well. Union-negotiated wage settlements so far this year have, in fact, been far above initial management expectations.

Unions in the retail, chemical and paper sectors, particularly, have consistently achieved increases of more than 20% for their lower paid members.

The two biggest sets of annual wage negotiations in SA — in the mining and metal industries — are still in their preliminary stages. But they will attract more attention this year than usual.

Cosatu has not specified what constitutes a living wage. On occasion, unions have entered negotiations merely demanding a "living wage," so immediately asking management to take a position.

In some sectors demands have been for a minimum monthly wage of more than R800, with some settlements above R600. In contrast, the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) 55% demand to the Chamber of Mines represents a minimum cash wage of about R300.

As regards the other demands, there have been few union advances on shorter working hours. But more companies are agreeing to maternity leave. And the vast majority have agreed to paid leave on May Day and June 16 without



Cosatu's 200-year-old war cry

27/2/83-4/87 W.M.

THE 710 000-strong Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) kicks off its Living Wage Campaign on Sunday with a demand even Ronald Reagan must support — "no taxation without representation".

The slogan, coined more than two centuries ago as the basis for the American War of Independence, is one of many demands Cosatu will put to bosses and President PW Botha's government as part of its campaign.

"We demand that no PAYE ('pay as you earn' tax) should be deducted from our wages," Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo said yesterday when announcing the start of the campaign.

"We have never been consulted about taxes and are not represented in the parliament which levies the taxes — why should we pay them?"

Naidoo said tax revenue was being used to subsidise crop failures for farmers and the apartheid infrastructure. As much as R7,5-billion was being used "for an illegal war against oppressed people" and R2,75-million had been spent on the tricameral parliament and other constitutional "reforms".

Naidoo said the last few years had seen "the most concerted and cold-blooded attack on workers' standards

of living".

"In most sectors, bosses have kept wages well below the rate of inflation and resisted worker demands for a greater slice of the profits. Average price increases are 12,4 per cent; average wage increases are 11,6 per cent — workers are thus getting poorer every day, with less money in their pockets, less food in their cupboards, and increased hardship and degradation in the townships."

At the same time, bosses were making massive profits despite the economic gloom.

Naidoo called on companies to open their books for inspection because "we want to see how every cent is spent".

Cosatu's campaign will focus on the following demands:

- A living wage and jobs for all.
- A 40-hour week without loss of pay, and a ban on overtime.
- March 21, May 1 and June 16 as paid holidays.
- Abolition of tax deductions.
- A minimum of six months' paid maternity leave for mothers.

● An end to the hostel and migrant labour systems, and provision of decent housing for all.

● The right to decent education, including acceptance of the concept of People's Education.

Cosatu will hold a rally at Soweto's Jabulani Amphitheatre from 10am on Sunday — the first step in "a process of mass mobilisation for a living wage", according to Naidoo. May Day and June 16 are other highpoints of mobilisation for the campaign.

Several other rallies have been banned, and the federation has been denied facilities. Naidoo said Cosatu is preparing to challenge these restrictions.

Minister bans Cosatu 'living wage' rally

By Mike Siluma

27/3/87

The Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, has banned a rally of the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) called for Soweto this weekend to launch the organisation's "living wage" campaign.

The campaign, announced at a Press conference yesterday, includes a demand that employers stop deducting income tax from workers' salaries.

Cosatu's general secretary Mr Jay Naidoo said the campaign was the most important for the 700 000-strong organisation this year.

In his statement, which he asked to be published in full, Mr Vlok said: "Under the powers vested in me by Section 46 (3) of the Internal Security Act, 1982 (Act 74 of 1982) I, Adriaan Vlok, Minister of Law and Order, hereby prohibit in the province of Transvaal during the period ending March 31, the gathering organised and advertised by or under the banner of Cosatu for March 29 at Jabulani Amphitheatre."

Cosatu meeting banned by Vlok

27/3/87

The Minister of Law and Order, Mr Adriaan Vlok, yesterday prohibited a meeting of the Congress of South African Trade Unions at the Jabulani Stadium in Soweto planned for Sunday.

In a statement, which Mr Vlok wanted printed in full, he said: "Under the powers vested in me by Section 46 (3) of the Internal Security Act, 1982 (Act 74 of 1982) I, Adriaan Vlok, Minister of Law and Order, hereby prohibit in the province of Transvaal during the period ending March 31, the gathering organised and advertised by or under the banner of Cosatu for March 29 at Jabulani Amphitheatre."

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"This prohibition shall become operative with immediate effect." Mr Vlok said.

Spokesmen for Cosatu were unavailable for comment at the time of the release of the prohibition. — Sapa.

Cosatu to fight rally bans

THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) has resolved to take legal action in areas where it has been refused permission to hold rallies to officially launch its living wage campaign this weekend.

Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo said at a Press conference yesterday town councillors in northern Natal had imposed a blanket ban on Cosatu meetings. And magistrates in the northern Transvaal, eastern Cape and Highveld had refused permission

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for the meetings.

Cosatu would hold a major rally at the Jabulani amphitheatre.

The living wage campaign was Cosatu's most important this year, said Naidoo. No specific figure had been put forward — it would be decided according to sectoral circumstances. He said the campaign was intended as a challenge to the "cheap labour system".

Blunder over a Mayday call?

PRESIDENT P W Botha's handling of the Workers' Day issue is a good example of why even his most generous reform moves have attracted little applause from black political and labour organisations.

In itself it may seem odd that workers are rejecting an additional public holiday, particularly one declared in their honour. The fatal flaw is that Botha made it a fait accompli in the absence of meaningful negotiation.

It is impossible to read Botha's mind. But it is conceivable that his intentions were twofold. Firstly, giving white workers a new holiday may attract some votes from the right-wing parties; secondly, since most black workers will be taking the day off anyway — most with their employers' agreement — why not minimise the risk of any serious trouble five days before the general election?

And perhaps they will actually like the idea of an extra long weekend every year. Unfortunately, he did not think of asking their opinion first. And not surprisingly, both the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and Cusa/Azactu — which represent the vast majority of unionised black

ALAN FINE

workers — have rejected the idea as an attempt to undermine all they have fought for.

The date of May 1 is of great importance to SA's black unions. It is recognised internationally (although not in the US) as Labour Day. It symbolises the labour movement's struggle for some kind of socialist society.

Most importantly, it is an issue to which local unions have devoted much energy — and with notable success — since the beginning of the decade. A few years ago, lunch-time May Day meetings attracted a handful of people. There was no question of staying away from work. Last year, 1.5-million workers stayed away, although only a minority of them with employer agreement. This year there's hardly an organised plant where management has refused to agree to May 1 as a holiday, in most cases with pay.

But there are also good reasons why Botha's proposal is, in itself, not a bad one. For one thing, SA has many migrant workers who may be able to spend an extra long weekend with their families.

As most employers now recognise, the most generous wage increases and fringe benefit schemes win little goodwill when they are imposed from above.

It's a pity the Manpower Department was unable to impress this on Botha. The most that can be hoped for now is that the process occurs when the President's Council investigates the whole structure of public holidays.

Workers' Day R1 000-m cost in production

Own Correspondent

CAPE TOWN — South Africa's new Workers' Day holiday could cost the country at least R1 000 million in lost production.

According to researchers at Stellenbosch University's Business School, each public holiday loses 0.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

The latest figure, given in the 1987 Business Blue Book, estimated GDP at R109 604 million.

Workers' Day was announced last month by President Botha as the first Friday of every May.

The move was immediately condemned by trade union federations and independent unions, which have been demanding May 1 as a paid holiday.

Confusion was spreading among employers as the announcement, which the President could make under the Public Holidays Act, conflicted with legislation such as the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which laid down paid public holidays for certain categories of employees and could be

amended only by Parliament.

Confusion was made worse because employers in some sectors were covered by different agreements.

Holidays in the civil engineering industry were covered by a wage determination of the Department of Manpower, which stipulated which days were paid public holidays. This could be amended only by application to the Department.

The industrial council agreement for the building industry had an "open clause" stating that the industry would observe all statutory public holidays.

Large employers involved in both sectors must decide whether to give all employees the day off or only those subject to the industrial council agreement.

The Cape Chamber of Printing, in a statement, warned its employers: "Be advised to consider the industrial relations implications of the declaration that the first Friday in May is a public holiday for only certain employees and the effect it will have on sound industrial relations".

Rally plan is refused

A PRETORIA magistrate has turned down an application for an open air May Day commemoration service which was to be held in Mamelodi on Friday (May 1).

This was announced yesterday by a spokesman of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) at a Press conference in Pretoria. He said no reasons were given for the decision.

He added that his organisation was granted permission to make use of church buildings.

"May Day celebrations will be held throughout the region starting 10am on Friday. Our shop stewards will conduct services in Mamelodi, Atteridgeville, Soshanguve, GaRankuwa, Mabopane, Brisa, Phalaborwa and Pietersburg," he said.

UNIONS SLAM NEW HOLIDAY

Sowetan 23/3/67

THE Government's announcement of declaring the first Friday in May a public holiday instead of officially making May 1 a paid public holiday has been strongly criticised by black labour unions and the community at large.

They said the Government does not want to be seen to be openly bowing to popular people's demands but uses devious ways of giving tit-bits, which they say would lead to serious labour unrest in future.

The State President, Mr P W Botha, made an announcement on Saturday in Boksburg that the first Friday in May of every year will be declared a public holi-

SOWETAN REPORTER

day known as Workers' Day.

Incidentally this year May's first Friday is on May 1, but next year's first Friday in May will be on May 6.

In spite of the criticism from black unions, most employers welcome the State President's move.

Mr Botha also said he has asked the President's Council to investigate other public holidays to ascertain whether they complied with "everybody's needs" with special reference to the composition of the population and its communities.

The country's two biggest union

groups, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Council of Unions of SA-Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions said they were still committed to getting May 1 and June 16 as public paid holidays.

Cusa said in addition it wanted March 21 and October 19 declared people's holidays.

"P W Botha is under pressure from the labour movement, employer organisations and the international community to declare May 1 a public holiday and at the same time he fears the right wing.

"He thus accepts a position of in-between and expects us to swallow this. He is very wrong because we know Labour Day as May 1," Mwsa said.

'Workers Day' paid holiday welcomed by Assocom

23/3/67 Citizen

Sapa and
ANDREW THOMSON

CHIEF executive of the Association of Chambers of Commerce (Assocom), Mr Raymond Parsons, said yesterday he welcomed the announcement by the State President, Mr P W Botha, about "Workers Day" which falls on May 1 this year — coincidentally the day honoured internationally by workers.

There has been controversial reaction among labour unions about Mr Botha's announcement that the first Friday in May would be "workers day". It is always observed on May 1.

"This is broadly in line with recent representa-

tions to the authorities by the private sector for a review of the public holiday position. Assocom sees the announcement as an important step in the evolutionary process of adapting the range and timing of public holidays in the Republic to changing circumstances.

"Many employers have already negotiated suitable arrangements for the forthcoming May 1. In the case of commercial and service sectors, the new Workers Day will now be a paid holiday, but in other sectors like manufacturing and construction, which normally only regards specific days as paid holidays, May 1

this year will still have to be negotiated on some agreed basis," Mr Parsons said.

The general secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), Mr Tommie Neethling, welcomed the announcement by the State President of a public holiday for workers in May, saying the union believed the decision to earmark the first Friday in May instead of the symbolic May 1 was taken in the best interests of workers.

Mr Neethling, who heads what is considered to be the leading union in the engineering industry, said the AEU had favoured a Monday or Fri-

day because of the obvious benefits, namely a long weekend.

The chairman of the 165 000-strong multiracial Federation of South African Transport Services Unions, Mr Jimmy Zurich, said his federation welcomed the announcement, but hoped the government would not annul another paid public holiday in lieu thereof.

Mr Zurich said his only reservation was the name "Workers Day", which he said had unpleasant socialist connotations.

White mineworkers union leader, Mr Arrie Paulus, said White workers would be unhappy with the decision as they would prefer a holiday in the latter part of the year. The government was showing it was afraid of Black workers, he said.

The president of the South African Association of Municipal Employees, Mr Attie Nieuwoudt, said the association, representing 50 000 Whites, welcomed an extra paid holiday for its members.

He said the fact that it was on a Friday was also welcomed since it meant a long weekend.

Trade unions want Workers' Day

Citizen Reporter
and Sapa

on May 1 — study

THERE appears to be a general consensus among South African trade unions that May 1 and not any other day, should be declared a paid public holiday for all workers, according to the labour research group, Labour Forum (LF).

The Johannesburg based unit said it had been conducting research concerning trade union opinion on public holidays, including May Day. "The research, in its preliminary stages indicates widespread support for May 1 being declared a public holiday.

"Of replies so far received, all but two unions (making up less than 5 percent of total workers represented) supported May 1 being declared Labour Day.

Welcomed

The Institute of Personnel Management, Southern Africa (IPM) welcomed the announcement that the first Friday in May will be a workers' day.

IPM president, Dr Johan Gouws said the gesture gave recognition to the positive contribution made by the work force to the South African economy and also brought the country in line with the international community.

But the head of one of the country's biggest labour organisations yesterday rejected the State President's "unilateral and dictatorial" statement.

The Secretary General of Cusa/Azactu, Mr Piroshaw Camay, said: "Since 1981, workers have clamoured and won hard fought battles for May 1 to be declared a labour day. We have over 200 agreements entered into at industry and plant level to this effect. The State President, ignoring these realities has acted in a way which will bring us into direct conflict with the state and the employers."

Mr Camay said his organisation reiterated its original statement that

May 1 would remain Labour Day and that workers would not work that day.

May Day is already an institution for the mass of workers in South Africa, a spokesman for the biggest labour federation in the country said.

Congress of South African Trade Unions spokesman, Mr Frank Meintjies said: "The concession made by Mr P W Botha is a poor attempt to subvert one of the key victories of working class struggle in South Africa, the recognition of May 1 as Workers' Day.

"At most, his unilateral and undemocratic action seems designed to sow confusion and retard the struggle of those workers still demanding May 1 as a paid holiday."

Mr Meintjies also criticised employers for "rushing forward to commend P W Botha" rather than considering the views of workers.

The Director-General of Manpower, Dr Piet van der Merwe, confirmed yesterday that workers in the mining, industrial and construction sectors would not automatically get Workers' Day on May 1 as a paid holiday.

Whereas civil servants and most shop and office workers would automatically get the day as a paid holiday, labourers in the mining, construction and industrial sectors would have to negotiate the holiday as part of their service conditions.

Dr Van der Merwe explained that Workers' Day had merely been declared a paid public holiday in terms of the Act on Public Holidays. This did not mean that all workers would be allowed to celebrate the day.

He said that labourers in the mining industry were restricted in the number of paid holidays they could take by the Mines and Works Act, which currently stipulates just four paid public holidays.

Employees in the construction and industrial sectors were restricted in the number of paid holidays they could take by

the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which currently stipulates six paid holidays. Dr Van der Merwe said that in the case of employees falling under this act, the stipulated paid holidays were still not automatic.

Whether or not work-

Unions to fight for May 1 holiday

By Mike Siluma

Major black unions today vowed to continue their fight for the recognition of May 1 as a paid workers' holiday, despite the Government's decision to declare Workers' Day on the first Friday of May.

The Government has been warned it may have "saddled" the country with one more holiday.

Accusing the State President of "side-stepping" recognising May 1 as a paid holiday, a spokesman for the country's largest union, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), said the decision was clearly an election ploy.

"There is a specific symbolism attached to May 1 by workers, which is celebrated by workers throughout the world. While there seems to be an acceptance of a workers' holiday, this does not yet change our position on the issue," said NUM spokesman Mr Marcel Golding.

A spokesman for the Cusa-Azactu federation, Mr Piroshaw Camay, warned that, should the Government go ahead with its workers' holiday, workers would take both the State-declared holiday and May 1, and employers would have to bear the cost.

He challenged Assocom to state what representations it had made to the State President on the issue of May 1. Mr Raymond Parsons, Assocom chief executive, said at the weekend that Mr Botha's decision was in line with representations made by the private sector.

Other unions to reject the State President's decision are the country's largest black workers federation, Cosatu, and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa.

ers were allowed to take the stipulated holidays depended on their service agreements with employers. If the days were taken, employers had to pay workers a day's wages; if they were not, workers had to be paid time-and-one-third. — Sapa-R.

Still 'no' to PW May holiday

THE two major federations in the country yesterday repeated their opposition to the declaration of the first Friday in May as a public holiday instead of declaring May 1 a public holiday.

The congress of South African Trade Unions spokesman, Mr Frank Meintjies, said: "The concession made by (President) P W Botha is a poor attempt to subvert one of the key victories of working class struggle in South Africa: the recognition of May 1 as 'workers day'.

"At most, his unilateral and undemocratic action seems designed to sow confusion and retard the struggle of those workers still demanding May 1 as a paid holiday."

The secretary general of Cusa/Azactu, Mr Piroshaw Camay, said in a statement to Sapa:

"Since 1981, workers have won hard fought battles for May 1 to be declared Labour Day. We have over 200 agreements entered into at industry and plant level to this effect. The State President, ignoring these realities, has acted in a way which will bring us into direct conflict with the State and employers."

Mr Camay said his organisation reiterated its original statement that May 1 would remain Labour Day and that workers would not work that day "this year or any other year in the future." — Sapa.

Workers' Day under attack

THERE was further adverse union reaction yesterday to President P W Botha's announcement that the first Friday in May is to be a public holiday designated Workers' Day.

Both Cusa/Azactu and the Congress of South African Trade Unions, SA's two largest union federations, stressed they considered May 1 to be Labour Day and would continue to observe it.

Cosatu said it was "disgusted that employers are rushing forward to commend P W Botha".

The Labour Forum, a loose grouping of middle-of-the-road established unions, said in the past two weeks it had conducted a survey on the issue among unions representing 250 000 workers. It found that unions representing nearly 95% of these workers would accept only May 1 as Labour Day.

The Institute of Personnel Manage-

ment yesterday welcomed Botha's announcement.

Employer spokesmen have also welcomed Botha's decision to ask the President's Council to examine the whole question of public holidays. Botha said Republic Day, religious holidays and those with a religious emphasis would not be affected by the investigation.

One employer said, though, that if the President considered the Day of the Vow in this category, pressure for a paid holiday on June 16 would become "irresistible". A spokesman for the President confirmed that the Day of the Vow was seen in this light.

Neither of SA's two largest employer organisations — the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation and the Chamber of Mines — would comment on the announcement.

Botha's Workers' Day slammed

PRESIDENT P W Botha's announcement of Workers' Day on the first Friday of May drew criticism from both left and right of the political spectrum yesterday, Sapa reports.

The announcement followed several years of pressure from organised labour for May 1 — "May Day" — to be recognised as a paid public holiday.

Business welcomed the announcement but spokesmen for the SA's two major trade union groupings — Cosatu and Cusa — indicated they would continue to fight for a May 1 public holiday.

Political leaders were also critical, saying it would not help stabilise matters.

The first Friday in May this year falls on May 1, giving rise to speculation that Botha has effectively shelved the problem until well after the election.

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CITY PRESS, March 27, 1987

These people were part of the thousands who celebrated May Day countrywide last year. This year, Cosatu will be holding a number of May Day rallies on May 1. The major demands at these rallies will be for a living wage and an end to poverty in the townships and homelands.



May holiday is no concession — Cosatu

By DAN DHLAMINI

THE ANNOUNCEMENT last week by President P W Botha that the first Friday in May will be a paid public holiday was an attempt to subvert one of the key victories of the working class.

This is the opinion of Cosatu, the country's biggest worker organisation.

Cosatu's information officer, Frank Meintjies, told City Press that the demand for May Day and June 16 as paid workers' public holidays would continue until the government recognised them as such.

He said Botha's statement indicated no concession at all as workers in their thousands, along with students and youths, had already vowed to observe May 1 as a Workers' Day.

Meintjies said Cosatu was disgusted that employers were commending Botha, knowing that workers have been consistently demanding May 1

as a paid public holiday.

He said workers were not impressed that their bosses preferred to look to Botha, rather than heed their demands.

"Cosatu demands that President Botha, instead of meddling with, and trying to undermine May Day, should declare June 16 and Sharpeville Day (March 21) as public holidays.

"This may not go down well as an election ploy but it will prevent the annual bitter conflicts between the majority and the security forces," said Meintjies.

"Through May Day, workers pay tribute to themselves as the producers of society's wealth. They will use it as a platform to make demands for a new society that recognises workers' leading role as a class," said Meintjies.

He said May Day meant that it was time for workers to display resis-

tance to the system which has, for a long time, caused so much poverty, suffering hardship and death.

He said Cosatu was planning rallies throughout the country this year, where strong demands would be made for an end to apartheid and the bringing in of a new society.

Meintjies added that Cosatu's May Day demands this year would be securing a living wage for workers and challenging the grinding poverty in the townships and rural areas.

He said Cosatu would call for housing, education, public holidays and working condition policies that gave priority to workers' interests and which reflected the aspirations of the majority in this country.

Meintjies said the launching of Cosatu's "Living Wage" campaign would be directed against monopolies who had a great deal of wealth at the expense of millions of workers and the unemployed.

Unions angry at May Day rally ban

By Mike Siluma

With widespread anger mounting in black trade union circles over the banning of today's May Day rallies, the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) described the bannings as a mockery of the Government's declaration of Workers' Day.

Cosatu said permission to hold rallies had been refused by magistrates throughout the country, except in the Western Cape where it had been granted on condition the meeting did not discuss the federation's "living wage" campaign.

Cosatu general secretary Mr Jay Naidoo, warning of workers' anger at the bannings, yesterday told a Johannesburg Press conference that permission to hold outdoor rallies had been refused in 21 centres in the Transvaal, Free State, Natal and the Cape.

Johannesburg rallies would have been held at Soweto's Jabulani amphitheatre and Ellis Park Rugby stadium.

"The mockery and the meaninglessness of (PW) Botha's Workers' Day announcement is abundantly clear. It is an official rejection of workers' aspirations and a total clampdown on our right to speak as organised workers about the society we are striving for."

Saying Cosatu would continue to demand May 1 as May Day, Mr Naidoo added: "The refusal is a clear demonstration of the systematic campaign to harass and suppress our legitimate trade union activity."

Reasons given for the banning included that:

- The living wage campaign was subversive.
- The peace would be disturbed.
- The rallies were intended to as a show of force.
- Youth were likely to attend.

"Workers reject these reasons and see the effective banning as repression of democratic activity," Mr Naidoo said.

● Earlier this week a spokesman for the Federated Chamber of Industries, Mrs Freda Dowie, said: "A living wage is a very legitimate thing for trade unions to talk about."

The international workers' day will be celebrated in South Africa against a background of intensified attacks on the labour movement – and resurgent mass militancy.

'MAY DAY IS OURS!'

MAY DAY will be celebrated in South Africa this year in the wake of a renewed attack on the labour movement – but it also falls at a time of resurgent organisation and mass militancy in the country.

This defiance and spirit of struggle is reflected in the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) rallying cry "May Day is ours!"

Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo said a vicious attack had been launched against the federation's members.

The battle between the SA Railways and Harbour Workers' Union (Sarwhu) and SA Transport Services (Sats), in which six workers were killed and 18 000 dismissed, was the latest in a catalogue of confrontations this year.

"Our living wage rallies have been banned under the pretext that they are part of a communist plot; our offices all over the country have been raided; our members have been harassed and their meetings broken up by force," Naidoo said.

"Last week saw the siege and occupation of Cosatu House. All this we see as a systematic attempt to destroy the labour movement."

However, Naidoo said workers were now better prepared than ever to survive and grow stronger.

"Last year, the emergency forced organisations to retreat and consolidate. That process has now been completed."

"Mass organisation has survived the emergency – in fact, the emergency has intensified resistance to apartheid and economic exploitation."

The mood of mass militancy was reflected in large-scale strike action such as those at OK Bazaars and on the railways.

Naidoo said this new militancy had fundamentally changed the nature of May Day celebrations.

"Some years ago, only a few hundred workers observed the day," he said. "Last year, more than a million workers supported the call for a May Day stayaway."

This year, he said, many more workers were expected to mark the workers' day.

Naidoo said Cosatu itself was much stronger than last year. "The federation has rooted itself firmly in its struggles. It has matured and is running more cohesive campaigns," he said, adding that there had also been a significant growth in the size of its affiliates.

The National Union of Mineworkers, Cosatu's largest affiliate, continues to grow at a dizzy speed. Its signed-up membership now stands at 369 000. Several union mergers have taken place, and two others – in the municipal and paper sectors – are set for June.

Commented Naidoo: "The trade union

movement has grown enormously. This year is one of consolidation and decisive action."

An additional factor giving May Day a different significance this year was the impending white election, Naidoo said. "This has put the issue of representation on the agenda of the mass movement."

"Despite white illusions to the contrary, the elections are irrelevant – parliament no longer holds effective power."

"Real power now rests with the National Security Council and its various agencies at regional and local level. Set against them is the mass democratic movement outside parliament."

"The elections don't even remotely touch

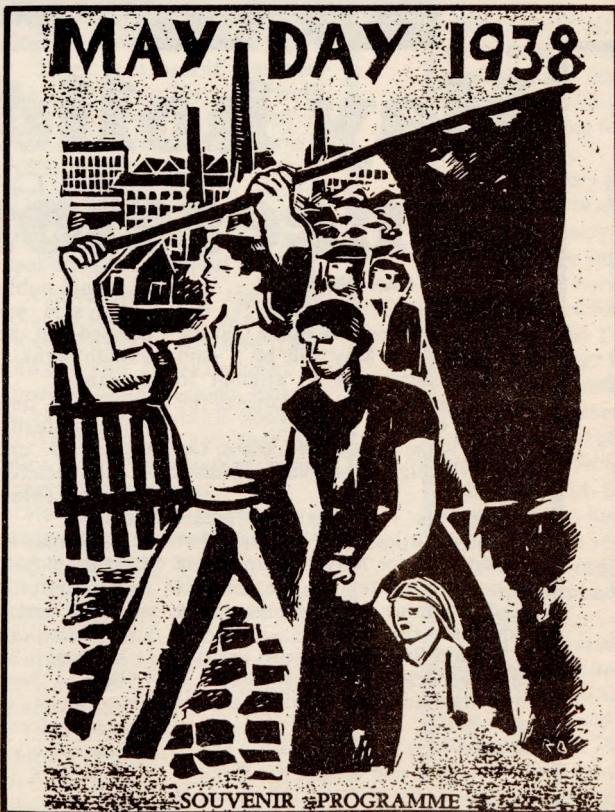
the issues of importance to the masses."

Naidoo warned that the political aspirations of the majority would increasingly be channelled through organisations representing the oppressed, such as Cosatu.

"Increasingly, we are going to see resistance to the state's response to the people's demands," he said. "Increasingly, workers are going to use their labour to get what they want."

"The emergency has not deterred people – instead, it has strengthened their resolve."

"We have learnt how to respond to repression, and workers are now in the forefront of the struggle."





THE Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) will focus on its major campaigns on May Day this year.

Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo said these campaigns, outlined by its executive committee (EC) earlier this year, would form the basis of its May Day programmes.

Topping the agenda will be Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign. "The struggle for a living wage will be Cosatu's main struggle this year," said its EC. "We must organise and unite behind a clear, co-ordinated, national living wage campaign."

The rationale is simple: "Our campaign will strike at the heart of the profit system. What we want is what we need to live decently. We want the wealth we created to come back to us, so we can all have decent lives."

Next on the list is Cosatu's campaign to organise unemployed workers, which it regards as an urgent priority.

"We have to organise millions of unemployed into our federation to strengthen our common struggle for jobs for all at a living wage," said the EC.

"We, the organised workers, can help the struggle of our unemployed comrades by implementing our resolution for a ban on overtime and a 40-hour

A time to focus on demands

week. "Let us mobilise support for this campaign and join unemployed workers in fighting for the sharing of all work on full pay and a massive public works programme."

Another important Cosatu campaign is the organising of farm-workers.

Cosatu believes this is a crucial area of its organising campaign. "As farmworker organisation develops, a solid bridge will be built between workers in the cities and workers in the countryside," it said.

"Millions of rural workers will join hands with organised workers in the cities to struggle for control over the land where they live and work."

Cosatu has also singled out the need to organise women workers

as a priority.

"Women workers have a special place because they carry the heaviest load of all," said the EC. "It is the duty of every Cosatu worker to make sure that the demands, participation and struggle of women workers are strengthened."

"If we do not succeed in creating free people, equal in every single way, then we will not be liberated."

Cosatu singled out several issues which members should take up as an immediate priority - including the struggle for maternity rights, child-care facilities and equal pay for work of equal value.

However, the federation's campaigns are not confined to the shop-floor. It also recognises the need to build strong

and democratic community and youth organisations.

"The problems facing us at work and in our communities are the same," the EC reminded workers.

"Nowhere do we have control over the decisions that affect our lives - over the rents we are forced to pay, high transport costs and terrible conditions in the townships."

Cosatu said these issues were directly related to the starvation wages workers were paid.

DEFENCE

"We must (also) give maximum support to the struggle for people's education and the building of democratic SRCs and control over the schools."

Another campaign launched by Cosatu is that of worker self-defence.

"The attacks (against Cosatu) are getting serious," warned the EC. "So many people have died. We must organise self-defence in every workplace and every township to consolidate and protect the gains we have made."

All Cosatu's campaigns are aimed at strengthening the working class.

"We are committed to the leadership of the working class," said Cosatu.

"We must unite and lead the vast mass of our people to a new, transformed society." In this society, "the needs of workers will be paramount."

No other time is more appropriate for workers to reflect on these goals than May Day.

It is not only a time for workers to celebrate their gains and victories. It is also a time to reflect on problems and mistakes.

Ebb and flow turns tidal wave

THE YEAR 1904 was a landmark in the history of the working class in South Africa - it was the first time local workers celebrated May Day.

On May 1 that year, thousands flocked to the Market Square in Johannesburg. Declaring their pride in being workers, they openly declared capitalism an enemy.

In 1917, the International Socialist League (ISL) re-launched the celebrations after a lapse of some years - and broke new ground by trying to unite the working class across colour lines.

The observance of May Day had been confined mostly to white workers. But in that year, a black speaker addressed the celebrations.

By 1922 there was a growing demand for May Day to be declared a paid public holiday, and in 1925 support for the celebrations was voiced

by South Africa's first mass organisation for black workers, the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (ICU).

In 1926, in a foreshadowing of PW Botha's May Day pronouncement this year, the government introduced a Bill in parliament proposing the first Monday in May as a public holiday instead of May 1.

Workers refused to accept this half-hearted peace-offering. They insisted on May 1 because they recognised it as an international symbol of working class solidarity.

The government refused to back down and dropped the Bill instead.

The history of May Day in South Africa has been marked by many setbacks. But the celebration now seems here to stay ...

In the early 1930s, economic depression weakened the labour movement.

Few May Day celebrations took place. Large-scale celebrations only revived in 1937.

In the 1940s - largely because of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (Cnetu) - May Day was observed more often in South Africa

than at any other time.

The rise of the National Party tore the labour movement apart on racial lines.

The conservative wing of the labour movement stopped celebrating May Day altogether - with the all-white The Building Workers' Union dismissing it as "a day for communist agitation".

The year 1950 was nevertheless marked

by the most significant May Day in SA history. The African National Congress, the Natal and Transvaal Indian Congresses and Cnetu called for a general stayaway.

The call, directed at the Suppression of Communism Act and in support of higher wages and better working conditions, resulted in South Africa's first mass worker stayaway.

In the late 1950s, the SA Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) struggled to keep the tradition of May Day celebrations alive.

But repression crippled Sactu and other worker organisations - with the result that the May

Day tradition temporarily died out in the 1960s.

Worker organisations gradually re-emerged in the 1970s, but May Day was not widely celebrated.

It was only in 1984 - the 80th anniversary of the first local May Day celebration - that workers once again took up the campaign to have the workers' day declared a public holiday.

The demand also began to appear at wage negotiations.

Last year, more than 1.5 million workers throughout the country marked May Day with a work stayaway - the biggest national general strike in local history.

This year, workers' won a partial victory, when the government declared the first Friday in May a public holiday.

But workers have refused to sacrifice the world-wide symbolism of May Day.

A crucial symbol of new life

PLANS for a bumper May Day celebration in Namibia are an important symbol of the revitalisation of the country's worker movement.

It is likely that this Friday will see the biggest celebration of May Day ever in Namibia - with an expected 10 000 workers taking part.

Three unions, the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), the Namibian Food and Allied Workers Union (NFAWU) and the Mineworkers' Union of Namibia (MUN) are planning to mobilise workers for an intensive programme of meetings, rallies and marches throughout the country.

The unions are either newly formed or revitalised after a period of dormancy.

The NUNW was initiated in the late 1950s when the Ovambo People's Organisation (now Swapo), was formed. It

played a major role in a general contract workers' strike in 1971 - an event seen by many as a landmark in the struggle of Namibian workers.

In the late 1970s the Department of Civic Affairs and Manpower refused the NUNW because it was affiliated to Swapo.

This and Proclamation AG 9, which made provision for indefinite detention without trial, forced the union into inactivity. During April last year, however, it was decided by Swapo's Windhoek branch to elect a steering committee to revive the NUNW.

Within four months, about 38 workers' committees had been established in and around Windhoek, with most of them being centred around the food industry.

These committees were combined and the NFAWU was launched in September.

Today it represents about 6 000 workers in the food, milling and hotel industries.

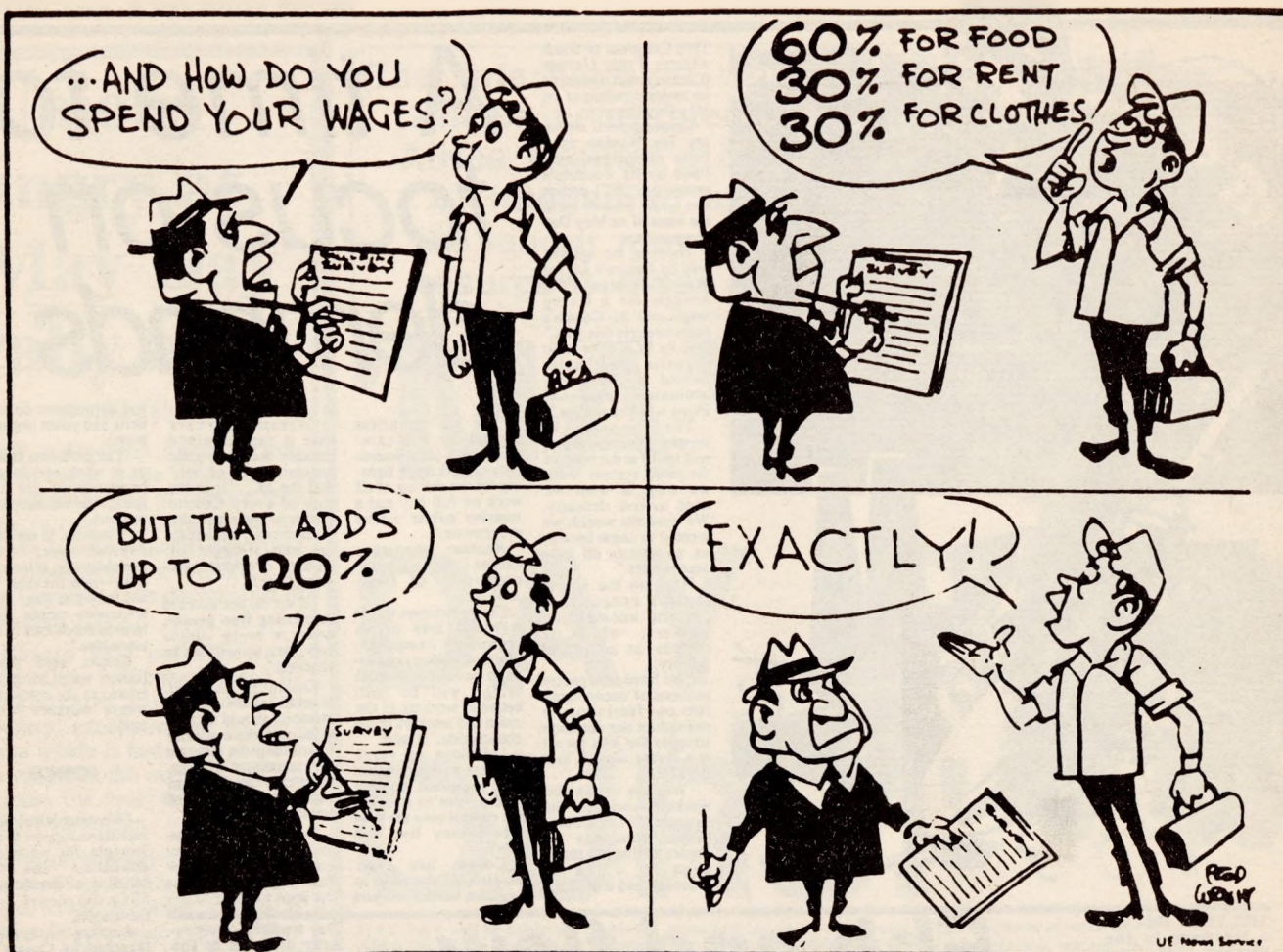
In November, unionisation in Namibia received a massive boost when a mineworkers' union was formed. More than 100 representatives from the three major mines in the country met in the dusty township of Katutura outside Windhoek for the official MUN founding.

At least 9 000 Namibian mine workers are employed on the Tsumeb Corporation Limited (TCL), Rossing Uranium and Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM).

Unionists from various mines will speak at May Day meetings at Swakopmund (for workers at nearby Rossing), Tsumeb (for TCL workers) and at Oranjemund in the south (DCM). Union leaders anticipate a record turnout on May 1.



The emblem of the recently revitalised National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW).



A mushrooming of May days

14/87

By SEFAKO NYAKA

TRADE unions are pushing ahead with their plans to have May Day as an official holiday — ignoring President PW Botha's declaration of a workers' day in the same month.

"May Day, May 1, is workers' day — not the first Friday in May," was the message from the country's two largest union groupings.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu), representing more than 700 000 workers, said Botha's "unilateral and undemocratic" announcement was "designed to sow confusion and retard the struggle of those workers still demanding May 1 as a paid holiday".

The Council of SA Unions and Azactu (Cusa/Azactu) said its members would continue to push for May 1 as workers' day, and "will not work on that day this year or any other year".

Several unions, including the powerful National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Ccaawusa), are presently involved in negotiations with employers over May 1.

A number of Cusa/Azactu and Cosatu affiliates have signed agreements with employers recognising it as a paid holiday.

Cusa/Azactu representative Piroshaw Camay said Botha's decision was

"ill-advised", and unacceptable.

"He has acted in a way which will bring us into direct conflict with the state and employers," he said.

Camay also listed Cusa/Azactu's other demands for "people's holidays": Heroes' Day on March 21, Soweto Day on June 16, Women's Day on August 9, Biko Day on September 12, Black Solidarity Day on October 19 and National Day of Prayer on December 16.

Cosatu representative Frank Meintjies said close on three-million people are expected to stop work on May Day this year "in an act of resistance against oppression and exploitation".

MAY DAY

Cosatu lodge protest

By S'BU MNGADI

THE Natal branch of Cosatu have lodged an urgent Supreme Court action against the refusal by Chief Magistrate JJ Pienaar for permission to hold a May Day rally at Durban's Curries Fountain, Cosatu secretary Thami Mohlomi said yesterday.

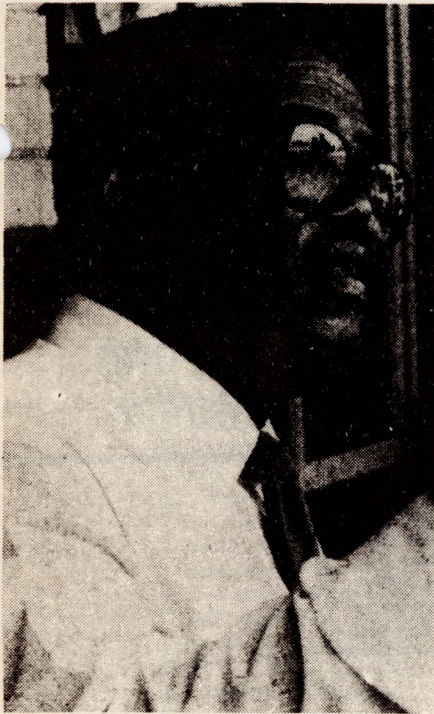
Before going into consultation, Mohlomi told *City Press* that his federation believed there were no reasonable grounds for rejecting the application on the grounds of what the police had to say.

Earlier this week, Pienaar sent a letter to Cosatu requesting the union's response to allegations by the police who are opposing the union's application for a permit to hold the rally.

According to the letter, the police were of the opinion that Cosatu's "Living Wage" campaign might be discussed or advertised at the rally and it would not be in the interests of public safety.

● See Page 10

MAY DAY!



Uwusa's Simon Conco.



Sydney Mafumadi will be addressing Natal Cosatu supporters.



NUM's Cyril Ramaphosa will be in Natal for Cosatu's celebrations.

Natal unions plan meetings

By S'BU MNGADI

UNIONS in Natal – like those throughout the country – are gearing up to celebrate May Day.

Cosatu has arranged to hold seven-hour rallies at Durban's Curries Fountain stadium and at the Esikhaweni stadium near Empangeni tomorrow. Both meetings start at 9 am.

At the time of going to Press, Cosatu had made applications to both the Durban and Umthunzini Chief Magistrates for permission to hold open air meetings.

National Union of Mine Workers general-secretary Cyril Ramaphosa and Cosatu's assistant general-secretary, Sydney Mafumadi, will address the Durban rally.

Southern Natal Cosatu general-secretary Thami Mohlomi said because of

the emergency ban on Cosatu activities in Northern Natal the Durban meeting would constitute the entire province's meeting – except for Zululand, Harrismith and Qwa-Qwa.

He said even though President PW Botha "misunderstood our demands" by declaring the first Friday in May a public holiday, Cosatu would continue to fight for May 1 to be declared Labour Day.

Already major Natal factories have accepted May 1 and June 16 as paid public holidays.

And in sharp contrast to the drama and publicity that marked the birth of the Inkatha-backed United Workers' Union of South Africa (Uwusa) on May Day last year, the fledgling union will be having a quiet birthday tomorrow.

It has advised its membership and supporters to stay at home and await constructive messages to be disseminated by its leadership.

According to Uwusa general-secretary Simon Conco this year's celebration would not be the same as last year's when more than 80 000 people converged on Durban's King's Park stadium to launch Uwusa.

Conco warned, however, that the variation should not be interpreted as a scaling down of the union's dedication to the significance of the day.

The main reason for Uwusa's toning down seems to be financial as, at this point in its development, Uwusa's financial resources could not meet the expenses required to achieve results as dramatic as last

year's.

"We decided that Uwusa members and supporters should observe the day by staying at home and reinforcing their commitment to the struggle by meditating on the constructive messages that would be disseminated through the various media," he said.

But Conco promised that next year's celebrations would be on a scale that would make up for this year.

The Cusa-Azactu Trade Union Federation is also planning to hold a May Day meeting at the Beatrice Street YMCA tomorrow, according to co-ordinator Kessie Moody.

However, despite all the celebrations that go with May Day internationally, celebrations in Natal have been marred by bloody union rivalry which has

claimed the lives of many people and destroyed much property.

Incidents such as vigilante attacks on Hlobane Colliery miners – which left 12 NUM members dead – and on the striking Sarmcol workers at Mpophomeni township near Howick – which left four Mawu dead – bear testimony to this rivalry.

One of the first outbreaks of violence in the rivalry between trade unions in Natal was when Cosatu supporter James Ntuli was fatally shot at Durban's Berea Station by Umlazi councillor and Inkatha member Zithulele Ngcobo, who was returning from the Uwusa launch.

Ngcobo was convicted of homicide and since then bloody battles between Cosatu and Uwusa have continued unabated.

MAY DAY FURY ON MINES

9-15[4]87 N. Nation

May Day: strike threat by NUM

3-0ay ALAN FINE 9/4/87

THE National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has threatened a "costly" strike if the dispute with the Chamber of Mines over May Day is not resolved.

The Chamber, however, says the strike is unnecessary because it is prepared to offer May 1 as an optional paid holiday, and the dispute is merely over a minor administrative matter.

At issue is the Chamber's requirement that all workers notify mine managements in advance whether they intend working on the day. Talks were abandoned earlier this week.

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said yesterday this arrangement left workers open to victimisation from mine management who may apply pressure to force them to work.

Ramaphosa warned that a strike on the issue "will cost the industry more than they bargain for".

The NUM declared an official dispute four weeks ago. Although deadlock had not been reached at that stage it wished to prepare the ground for possible lawful strike action.

The Chamber's industrial relations advisor Johann Liebenberg said last night he could not understand the NUM's objection or motives.

He said if there was any intention to victimise miners this could occur whether the administrative arrangement was applied or not.

He said employers were prepared to discuss the mechanics of notification.

THE National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has warned of "a very costly strike" by more than 350 000 members over May Day.

The warning follows the breakdown of negotiations between the union and the bosses, with the latter demanding that workers inform them of their intention to take May Day off.

The workers have rejected this demand, saying it is impractical and is "a major deviation from normal labour practice".

Workers have reacted angrily to a statement from the bosses, saying that any absence from work on May Day would be viewed as a stayaway, and that workers would forfeit their pay for the day.

STRIKE

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said: "There will be a legal strike and not a stayaway - and it will be a very costly strike."

"The Chamber of Mines seems to be under the illusion that it will be a one-day stayaway."

"In our view, no agreement has been reached over the issue, and unless a settlement is reached, the way will be open for a legal strike."

"The chamber's demand is impractical and a deviation from normal labour practice."

The bosses' failure to reach an agreement with workers could lead to lengthy and costly strike action which could shut down major portions of the gold and coal mining industry.

The NUM has applied for a conciliation board, which has to be appointed in 30 days by the Minister of Manpower.

However, the minister has only 21 days before May 1.

More than 350 000

As the post office and railway disputes continue, the NUM threatens bosses with 'a very costly strike'

mineworkers celebrated May Day last year and thousands more are certain to join this year.

And it is clear that workers will not accept deductions from their wages for their day off.

Mines talks on Mayday flounder

8-0ay ALAN FINE 8/4/87

TALKS between the Chamber of Mines and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) on the introduction of a labour day holiday on May 1 are floundering, according to the chamber's industrial relations advisor Johann Liebenberg.

He says this raises the prospect of workers who stay away on May 1 forfeiting pay.

The chamber has offered to introduce an optional paid holiday on May 1, whereby employees can choose whether to take the day off on full pay or whether to work and be paid a premium of 6% on monthly pay.

However, according to Liebenberg, the NUM has "summarily rejected" a chamber requirement that employees should notify management of their choice and has called off negotiations.

Liebenberg says this requirement is designed to enable management to plan operations on the day.

President P W Botha's proclamation of Workers' Day on the first Friday of May does not apply to the mining industry.

The NUM could not be reached for comment.

Miners reject Chamber proposal for May holiday

THE Chamber of Mines said last night that talks with the National Union of Mine Workers on the introduction of a Labour Day on Chamber member mines had foundered.

In a statement, the Chamber said that the State President's announcement of the introduction of a Worker's Day on the first Friday of May did not apply to mines.

Public holidays in the mining industry were determined by the Mines and Works Act, and by negotiation between mining industry employers and their employees, the statement said.

Negotiations between the Chamber and the union, which commenced on March 9 had progressed "reasonably well" until now. In the course of these negotiations, the Chamber "earnestly attempted" to resolve this issue and had offered to introduce a paid optional holiday on May 1 each year for members of the union employed in recognised

bargaining units.

In terms of these proposals, the employees concerned who were not employed in essential services would be able to choose whether to take Labour Day as a holiday or to work, in which case they would be paid a premium of six percent of their basic monthly pay for working on the optional holiday.

The employees concerned would merely have to notify the mine managements of their choice to enable managements to plan operations.

The NUM apparently accepted the Chamber's proposals, but had summarily rejected the requirement that employees should notify their managements of

Chamber gives May Day 'choice' to workers

By Sapa and
LOUISE BURGERS

THE Chamber of Mines said yesterday that all it wanted was for workers to exercise

their freedom of choice as to whether they wanted to work on May 1 or not.

The Chamber's Mr Johan Liebenberg told a

Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday that the Chamber was quite prepared to make Labour Day an optional public holiday and it wanted its workers to inform management whether they would be coming in or not.

Tuesday's talks between the National Union of Mineworkers and the Chamber broke down over the manner in which management was to be informed as to how many miners would take May 1 off.

Mr Liebenberg said the NUM had rejected a call by the Chamber that employees notify management to facilitate planning.

"We are not asking for our employees to apply for leave on May 1. . . All we want is to be able to tell how many people are going to be at work so we can plan shifts for the day," he said.

The mining industry is not governed by the Public Holidays Act and has only four statutory holidays a year when all except essential services on the mines close.

Miners who work on optional holidays are paid a premium of six percent of their monthly wage. Non-workers are still paid for the day at their regular rates.

Mr Liebenberg said that last year as a result of stayaway action 107 000 miners did not work on Labour Day but the rest of the Chamber's 550 000 workforce were on duty.

According to Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of the NUM, the situation is deadlocked. He feels that only those workers who want to work on the holiday should have to apply to do so.

Mr Liebenberg refused to comment on whether there would be a strike lasting more than one day if an agreement was not reached with the NUM before May 1.

May Day dispute ends

ALAN FINE

THE dispute between the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Chamber of Mines over May Day has been resolved.

NUM general secretary Cyril Ramaphosa said yesterday the chamber had "capitulated" by withdrawing its requirement that all workers should inform management whether they wished to take the day off. Instead, only those wishing to work will need to notify management.

The union objected to the requirement because it believed mine management would put undue pressure on employees to work.

Ramaphosa said he believed the chamber had relented because it realised it would otherwise face a costly strike. The NUM threatened industrial action over the issue two

weeks ago.

Chamber industrial relations advisor Johann Liebenberg denied the industry had capitulated. "It is purely a practical arrangement arrived at after talking to representatives of the NUM and other unions. All along we have sought a system to ensure that management knows in advance how many will be at work so that the necessary planning can be done," he said.

He added that the chamber had not yet received official acceptance from the NUM of its latest proposal, which was contained in a letter.

Workers are entitled to optional paid leave on May 1. Those who choose to work will receive a premium of about one-and-a-half days' pay.

Cosatu makes urgent court bid to hold May Day rallies

AN URGENT application is to be brought in the Durban Supreme Court this morning by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) against a ban on their planned May 1 rally.

Durban's chief magistrate J J Pienaar refused the union federation permission to hold their rally at Currie's Fountain as they have done in the past.

In response to Cosatu's original letter asking for permission for the outdoor gathering, Pienaar sent a nine point questionnaire asking for example whether the organisers would undertake to "ensure that order is maintained and that the State of Emergency is not mentioned at the meeting."

He also said: "There is the possibility that the South African Police will maintain a presence at the gathering and also film the entire

By CARMEL RICKARD, Durban

proceedings to ensure the safety of the persons attending the meeting. Do you undertake to see that none of the speakers addresses any remarks at the SAP which could incite the crowd and cause law and order to be disrupted?"

Pienaar sent a letter to Cosatu saying that he "advocated the application of the audi alterim (sic) partem rule" and therefore required certain information from Cosatu to consider along with an affidavit from the SAP.

One of the chief complaints from the police, according to this letter, is that Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign would be discussed at the rally and that this would not be in the interests of public safety.

"Furthermore, such discussion or advertising will in the opinion of the SAP promote the objects and aims of unlawful organisations such as the ANC and the SACP because it will initiate an attack on the free market system.

"The police are also of the opinion

that the LWC is based upon a philosophy, ideology or scheme which is developed from or which is relative to the doctrines and philosophies of Marx, Engels and Trotsky because it envisages common ownership."

Several meetings planned by Cosatu affiliates across the country have been banned, while permits to hold other open-air meetings have been refused, reports Mono Badela.

A Cosatu representative said yesterday lawyers would challenge some of the bans today.

However, former treason trialist and SA Allied Workers' Union (Saawu) president, Thozamile Gqweta, is scheduled to address a meeting at East London City Hall tomorrow.

In Port Elizabeth a meeting will be held in Korsten.

Permits were refused for organisers to hold open air meetings in Johannesburg and Pretoria. However, meetings will be held in church halls at Atteridgeville, Mamelodi and Soshanguve.

Rallies banned and confusion reigns on May Day run-up

By Jo-Anne Collinge

Manpower Minister Mr Pietie du Plessis is appealing to employers to "accommodate" workers and grant Workers' Day tomorrow as a paid holiday although it has not yet been made official by Parliament.

While magistrates in most major centres have refused permission for open-air May Day gatherings, a Supreme Court application over the right of the Congress of South African Trade Unions to hold a rally at Durban's Curries Fountain may be heard today.

Mr Du Plessis said yesterday that Workers' Day, as announced by the State President, was at present a paid public holiday only for office workers.

In other sectors, a paid holiday or pay rise for people working on May 1 was a matter for negotiation between employers and workers. The Government appealed to employers to be accommodating, Mr du Plessis said.

The Independent Labour Monitoring Group estimated at least 1.5 million workers stayed home on May 1 last year, when there was no holiday. Student action may have boosted that figure to 2.5 million.

Cosatu said its plans to observe May Day were thrown into confusion by magistrates refusing permission for outdoor gatherings.

Mass rallies had been planned in Durban, Cape Town, Pretoria, Soweto, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Kimberley, East London, the Vaal Triangle and other centres.

In no case had permission been granted at the time of going to Press. In most centres, permission was refused under the Internal Security Act.

Cosatu publicity secretary Mr Frank Meintjies said alternative indoor venues were being organised.

The reason for the ban on Cosatu's Durban meeting was given in correspondence between chief magistrate Mr J J Pienaar and the union group. Mr Pienaar wrote that police had advised him that Cosatu's Living Wage Campaign would be discussed at the rally and this would not be in the interests of public order.

Cosatu has the opportunity to respond to the police objection.

No deliveries on workers' holiday

There will be no milk or bread deliveries tomorrow.

The major bakeries and dairies that serve the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area will not operate on tomorrow's workers' holiday.

OK Bazaars and Pick 'n Pay supermarkets will not open but today Pick 'n Pay will stay open until 7pm.

Checkers supermarkets will be open tomorrow from 9am to 1pm.

Petrol stations will be open. The Star will publish tomorrow.

Citizen Reporter

SHOPS and offices will be closed on Workers' Day on Friday and most mineworkers are expected to take the day off, but in the industrial sector the situation varies from company to company.

The chief executive of the Association of Chambers of Commerce (Assocom), Mr Raymond Parsons told The Citizen last night the results of an Assocom survey of the industrial sector's intentions regarding Workers' Day would be available today.

But, he had gained the impression that a large number of companies had negotiated with employees for them to take the day off.

Shops, offices to close on Workers' Day

Last week, the National Union of Mineworkers and the Chamber of Mines agreed that workers would take the day off with pay if they chose to. Those who chose to work would be paid time-and-a-half.

Cafes are expected to treat the day as any other public holiday, opening at their discretion.

In terms of legislation

governing the number of public holidays granted to workers in the mining, construction and industrial sectors, Workers' Day is not automatically granted but needs to be negotiated.

A spokesman for the South African Transport Services told The Citizen the organisation would provide a Sunday service on Workers' Day.

Cosatu 'Workers' Day' rallies hampered by Government bans

May Day riots worldwide

2/5/67 Star

LONDON — Police fired on demonstrators at a Buddhist temple in Sri Lanka and Solidarity activists were beaten up in Poland during May Day rallies that brought anti-government dissent to several world capitals yesterday.

Many other May Day demonstrations focused on crucial national issues.

● In South Africa black unions held two restricted rallies after the Government banned 21 planned nationwide. South Africa was celebrating its first official May Day, called Workers' Day, in the midst of strikes by 25 000 black transport and post office workers, the nation's longest and most widespread public-sector strike. President Botha declared a Workers' Day for the first time on the first Friday each May — which happened to fall on May 1 this year.

Mr Jay Naidoo, secretary-general of the 600 000-member Congress of South African Trade Unions, said indoor rallies were scheduled after local magistrates and town councils refused permission for 20 outdoor rallies.

OVERCROWDING

But he said some unions were concerned that overcrowding at the indoor sites could yield incidents that police would use as an excuse to attack the workers.

● In Windhoek, Namibia's fledgling, black trade unions showed some of their growing political muscle by attracting one of the largest crowds yet seen to their Workers's Day rally.

Various estimates put the size of the crowd at between 6 000 and 8 000 — only slightly less than Swapo itself drew last year when it held its first "legal" meeting in five years in the city.

The unions represented at the gathering were the recently revived umbrella organisation, the National Union of Namibian Workers, the recently-formed Namibia Food and Allied Workers' Union and the Mineworkers' Union of Namibia.

All three organisations became active late last year after a major drive by Swapo to resuscitate the labour movement in Namibia, dormant since the 1970s, when crackdowns by the authorities forced prominent unionists into exile.

● The Soviet Union set its theme for the international labour festival with a Pravda editorial urging every effort to ensure Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev's reform policies would bring about a "revolutionary renewal" of society.



SLEEPING CITY: A quiet, peaceful and deserted scene in central Johannesburg yesterday greeted the dawn of South Africa's first official Workers' Day.

● But in neighbouring Poland, eyewitnesses said baton-wielding police smashed into a Solidarity demonstration in the city of Wroclaw and detained 150 people, including local leaders of the banned trade union.

● The worst May Day trouble flared in Colombo, Sri Lanka's capital, where witnesses said police fired submachine-guns outside a Buddhist temple to break up protestors defying a government ban on rallies. Hospital sources said one man was killed.

Nearly 2 000 demonstrators including Buddhist monks threw stones at security forces ringing a temple, where an anti-government rally was held.

● In Manila, troops were on full alert as workers marched across the capital to protest the government's failure to raise their wages. Left-wing union leaders snubbed a reception given by President Corazon Aquino.

● In Lusaka, President Kenneth Kaunda, grappling with economic crises, told Zambians yesterday to stand by for "momentous decisions". Labour leaders, whose relations with Kaunda's government are getting tense, boycotted the May Day rally addressed by the president after being told they would not be allowed to speak.

● About 20 000 Greek workers marched through the centre of Athens chanting slogans against

an austerity programme imposed by the socialist government.

● Trade unionists in Madrid attacked the Spanish socialist government's austerity policies, with one labour leader calling them "the worst attack against the working class under our democracy".

● In Paris, up to 10 000 people marched behind banners of the communist-led CGT trade union calling for more jobs. But political sources said the turnout was relatively small, a reflection of dwindling union support.

● Chinese officials used the occasion to continue a campaign against "bourgeois liberalisation".

● Zimbabweans marked May Day with street parades, political rallies, football games and a call by the national trade unions' leader for the socialist government to impose controls on multinational companies.

"The government should come up with a code of conduct for all multinationals operating in Zimbabwe," Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions president Mr Jeffrey Mutandare told a rally.

He blamed multinational companies for mounting shortages of essential commodities and ac-

cused them of holding a disproportionately high amount of wealth. He also urged the government to introduce reforms to curb capitalism.

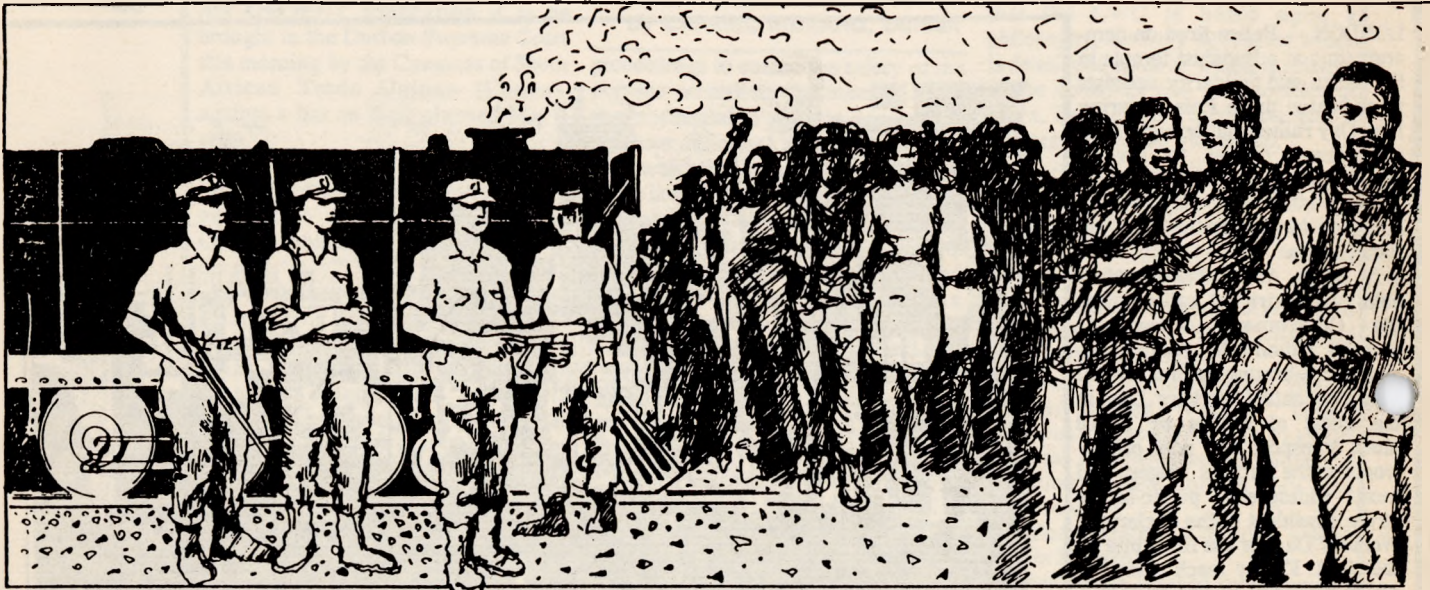
The unfavourable economic climate in Zimbabwe was aggravated by that country's proximity to the "South African apartheid regime which is bent on a course of naked destabilisation of all its black-ruled neighbours," Zimbabwe's Prime Minister, Mr Robert Mugabe, said.

● In Nigeria, President Major-General Ibrahim Babangida lifted a ban on 11 labour leaders saying they were free to rejoin any active labour organisation. An earlier military government barred the men from union activities in 1977.

● In Nairobi, President Daniel arap Moi used a Labour Day rally to repeat denials that his government was abusing human rights of jailed dissidents and to introduce higher minimum wages and a fund for workers in South Africa and Namibia.

● In Luanda, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and leaders of the ruling marxist party led hundreds of thousands of workers in May Day celebrations.

The State of



May Day, 1987: The state is everywhere — but then so is organised labour

By PHILLIP VAN NIEKERK

THE shootings and mass dismissals of South African Transport Services workers last week and other recent attacks on the workers' movement have pushed trade unions and the government close to the edge of all-out confrontation.

The question now is whether the angry mood among workers and unions and a desire in some state circles to crush what they see as a front for revolutionary forces will push the seething hostility over that edge.

The trade union movement is the best organised and most deeply entrenched opposition to the system inside South Africa.

Where township-based organisations have borne the brunt of the repression under the State of Emergency, the unions have emerged relatively unscathed.

The unions' response to the Emergency last June and July — industry-based strikes and legal challenges — put pressure on employers and the state, and shielded them from the worst of the crackdown.

The state's strategic aim was to smash the street committees and quell the township revolt — which was at least partially successful.

The state's security apparatus, including the Joint Security Management Committees, has been targeted at the townships.

True, the state has regularly interfered in labour relations through security force action and apartheid structures such as the migrant labour system.

But, however imperfectly, the doctrine of "self-governance" between employers and unions has created space and relegated the state to a peripheral role in labour relations.

This space has proved a curious double-edged sword. It has left organisations such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) more exposed and with more expected of them.

The sustained onslaught on their township allies has posed questions of political action and the development of correlative structures outside the factories in an era when Cosatu has embarked on the politics of alliance with community-based organisations.

Both the SA Transport Services (Sats) strike and state reactions to the escalation of labour unrest on the Reef in recent weeks have revealed that the state is divided in its response to the unions.

There is without doubt a large, security-oriented grouping who would favour an all-out confrontation to cripple the unions or at least force them to retreat from the political arena.

The Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, last week warned trade union leaders whose activities were not "in the interests of the country" that the security forces would take action against them.

Vlok said Cosatu was involved in "the polarisation, politicisation, organisation and mobilisation of the worker to plan for a so-called living wage campaign".

He said that the African National Congress's theme for 1987 was "Advance to People's Power" and that the labour terrain was "an ideal area in which to reach the masses."

"Repeated pronouncements by the organisation's leaders are known: they say that the trade unions must be used for this goal (to 'advance to people's power'). Certain events surrounding the recent strikes, especially the rail strike, must be seen in this light."

At the same time Alwyn Schlebusch, the Minister in the State President's Office, warned that the government was planning to introduce

new legislation to deal with strikes.

While Schlebusch's pronouncements could be dismissed as electioneering, Vlok's have a distinctly ominous ring.

Yet the director-general of the Department of Manpower, Piet van der Merwe, placed a completely different interpretation on the Sats strike.

Having repeatedly quoted the high rate of usage of the official disputes settling machinery as proof of the success of the labour dispensation, he saw the root of the problem in the fact that the public sector is excluded from this machinery.

Van der Merwe told *Business Day*: "One must weigh up the pros and cons of the government either providing for conciliation machinery in its own legislation or adopting the Labour Relations Act."

He pointed out that 50 percent of all strikes in the private sector ended within a day.

There is an influential school of thought within the state which blames the Sats and post office strikes not on the bloody-mindedness of workers, but on the absence of the machinery which has proved successful in regulating conflict in the private sector.

Uwusa: Celebrating May Day at home this year

By SEFAKO NYAKA

THE Inkatha-backed United Workers' Union of South Africa (Uwusa) has organised no fanfare to celebrate Workers' Day and their first anniversary on May 1.

Instead "we have announced to our members that we will have to celebrate in the relative safety of our homes," Uwusa secretary general Simon Conco said in an interview yesterday.

"With Cosatu rallies banned in Natal — despite our differences with them — and owing to our stringent financial position, we would have found it very difficult to celebrate the day."

Conco said State President PW Botha's declaration of Workers' Day as the first Friday in May was unacceptable. Celebrating this day would have compromised Uwusa's belief that the government was wrong in deciding on the public holiday without consulting the workers.

The lack of consultation on the part of the government confirms the view that they do the right things in a wrong way, he said.

Conco said he was not sure whether there was a growing militancy amongst workers. But the white elections will definitely have a bearing on the anger of every black South African as it confirms the view that whites are ganging up against blacks and in pursuing that goal they are co-opting the Indians and coloureds.

"That makes me very angry," Conco said. He warned against union leaders engaging workers in protest demonstrations if rallies were banned.

"South Africa is no stranger to senseless decisions and senseless killings. That is why we insist that before any decision is taken proper consultation should take place."

Uwusa secretary general Simon Conco on the issues facing his organisation on May Day 1987



He said anyone who organises workers to "indulge" in a demonstration that may cause death without studying carefully the pros and cons and discussing the matter with those who will be directly affected would be acting irresponsibly.

Conco said there was a tendency amongst the leadership of certain organisations "to use the anger of workers to achieve the ends that have not been canvassed with the workers."

Conco said despite a lack of funds, Uwusa has grown in expertise in industrial relations and managerial ability.

Uwusa has also been faced with very suspicious employer bodies. Most of its time had been used signing up membership and providing trade union training to workers and their leaders.

Uwusa has not been involved in any strike action but has been concentrating on improving the conditions of employment of its members and has signed several wage and recognition agreements.

"The federation," he said, "has also taken several offending employers to court and has concluded 50 recognition agreements in Natal and 20 in the Transvaal."

He said Uwusa was not an Inkatha union despite

the fact that facilities were provided by the cultural organisation.

"That was black money and we saw nothing wrong in availing ourselves of those funds."

Although Uwusa is a federation, no affiliate unions have been established yet.

"There is a policy that if any sector has a membership of 5 000 then they can form a union. But we have not yet gone around doing that."

He said unions might be formed in three weeks' time when Uwusa holds its first annual conference.

It was wrong to compare Uwusa's growth to that of Cosatu because "they have been in existence longer than we have."

Those who accused Uwusa of breaking the solidarity of workers should realise that "we desire everything that is desired by our opposite number in Cosatu, barring the change of the economic system in the country into socialism."

Uwusa believes it is the right of every worker to propagate his beliefs in the same manner as those with opposing views, without fear of victimisation or intimidation.

"Although the black man in South Africa has not benefited from the capitalist system as practised here, capitalism is the only known system that can change dust into loaves of bread," he said.

It is also the only system that can create jobs for people. "We have not yet found any successful mode of the socialist system in the African context."

Conco said Uwusa was opposed to violence and anybody who has got evidence of Uwusa involvement in attacks is "free to come forward or seek the recourse of the law".

Cusa-Azactu: Workers

By SEFAKO NYAKA

THE heightened militancy among South African workers will make this year's May Day celebrations different from other years.

Pandelani Nefolovhodwe, assistant general secretary of Cusa-Azactu, says events such as the killing of striking railway workers last week, the recent rent stayaway in Soweto, and the South African raid into Zambia had made workers more determined to challenge the state.

PW Botha's declaration of the first Friday of May as Workers' Day was a strategy to pre-empt this growing militancy, he said.

"The SA Transport Services (Sats) and post office strikes show there is a militancy, even among workers in the state sector."

Nefolovhodwe said his federation was determined to hold rallies tomorrow, regardless of possible state action.

"And, despite the fact that Cosatu and Cusa-Azactu will not be able to celebrate together, there will be more rallies — and we believe they will be more successful," he said.

But his federation has a problem: all its applications to use venues in the township have been referred to the community councils "and we refuse to negotiate with councillors for the use of public venues".

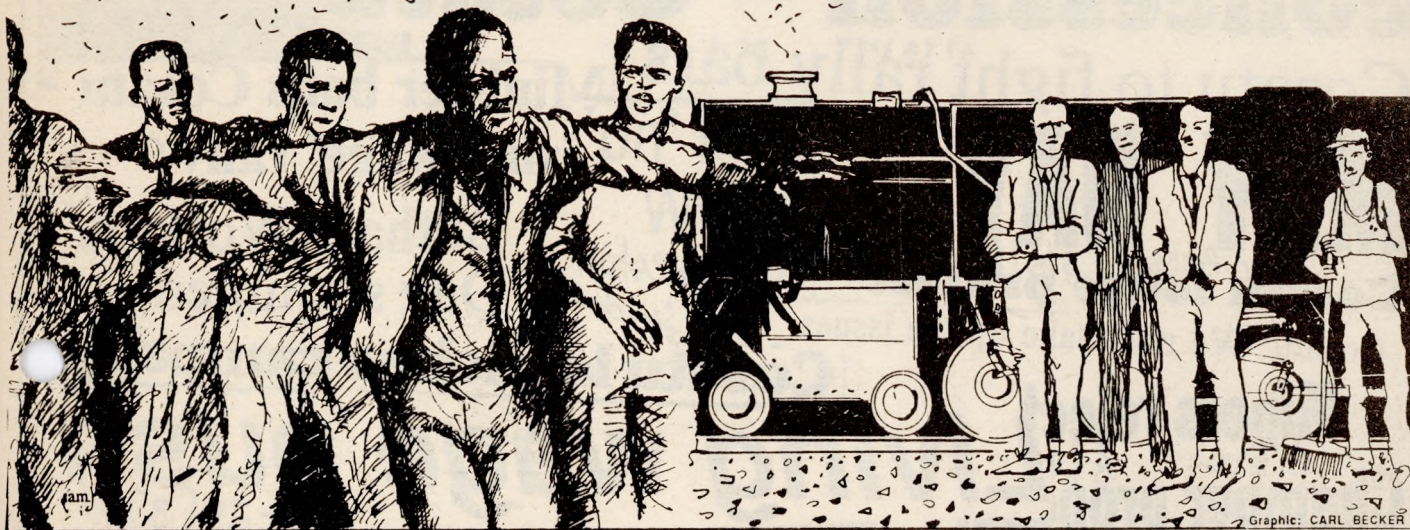
If these rallies go ahead, he warned people not to embark on a "defiance strategy" if confronted.

"It is not a sign of cowardice. The government has clearly shown that it wants to create a certain mood in the minds of the white electorate."

"If there is any defiance they are going to deal with it properly. At a time when the government is seeking a new mandate to govern the country it will crush, ruthlessly if need be, any opposition."

the Unions

B18



Graphic: CARL BECKER

Cosatu: We must take up the issues

By SEFAKO NYAKA

This school is also mindful of employer concerns that the heavy hand of the state could mean employers will have to bear the brunt of the political struggle in their factories.

Differences of opinion could also explain the length of time Sats allowed the strike to drag on before firing workers.

In 1982, when a few hundred General Workers' Union members went on a go-slow in the Port Elizabeth docks, demanding that Sats deal with them, it was only a matter of hours before they were fired and deported on buses back to the "homelands".

When the City Deep dispute erupted Sats had just been through its own Wiehahn Commission and was clearly hesitant about how to deal with the escalating problem.

The fact that Sats was willing to reinstate Andrew Nendzandza (who had been dismissed for a weekend delay in handing over R40 in 1982) was unprecedented, as the workers at the Port Elizabeth docks would testify to.

But by then the long-standing grievances of Sats' heavily discriminated against workforce came pouring out and other demands, such as recognition of the South African Railways and Harbours

Workers Union (Sarhwi), came to the fore.

At the same time the government — wary of the more than 100 000 white voters employed on the railways — could not afford to be seen to be giving in to the demands of black workers, particularly over recognition of a Cosatu affiliate.

In the end it was the brutality of the security forces which prevailed, and seemed to propel the dispute inevitably towards full-scale confrontation at the same time as giving warning of just what they were capable of.

The anger they have provoked, coinciding with the emotionally significant May Day celebrations on Friday and the white election next week, could only heap fuel on the volatile labour situation.

But Cosatu's strategic goal remains the establishment of a bridgehead into the railways, one of the most significant economic sectors still to be properly organised.

The next few days will tell whether the gap is still there, or whether the factories and mines will indeed become a battleground between the state and the workers. The choices confronting Cosatu are no less momentous than those which divide the state strategists.

THE government's threat to pass further legislation to curtail the activities of trade unions will only escalate a tense situation, according to Jay Naidoo, general secretary of the Congress of SA Trade Unions.

The SA Transport Services (Sats) strike, the killing of railway workers and last week's Cosatu House siege have had an impact on the community at large. It has made the community more aware of what they are fighting for, he said this week.

"Any action by the government to further curtail and impose more restrictions on the labour movement is going to radicalise even more the conflict and strategies of the labour movement.

"What we are going to see is a situation where there is anger, massive demonstrations of people's dissatisfaction in the way the regime is reacting to the democratic demands being made by the people.

"One sees throughout the country that workers are getting involved increasingly in using their main weapon, which is their labour, as leverage to gain what is legitimately ours.

"The state has claimed that Cosatu's Living Wage campaign and the Sats strike are a huge communist plot, a conspiracy by Cosatu, the United Democratic Front, the African National Congress and the SA Communist Party.

"We believe that taking up issues relating to problems of workers in the community is a legitimate extension of our activity, given the fact that our membership and the millions of black people in this country don't have political rights."

This year's May Day will be different from those in the past, he said. "A few years ago, it was just a few hundred workers meeting to celebrate May Day.

"But with the formation of Cosatu, and with Cosatu leading the May Day celebrations last year, one-and-a-half million people were involved in strike action."

Cosatu has not been granted permission to hold any open-air rallies.

"I think this attitude, especially in the light of the fact that (President PW) Botha was forced to make a concession of Workers' Day, is just going to further aggravate the situation and increase the conflict between workers and the state.

"There are alternative plans being made. We will use any venues that we can get but we are aware that the government might move even to ban indoor meetings."

Naidoo said next week's white elections would also have a bearing on this year's May Day.

"The fact that there is massive resistance in the country has put the issue of representation, of the right to elect a government of the people's choice, firmly on the agenda.

"We have a government that has plunged the country into political and economic chaos," he said. "There are six-million people unemployed; there is a massive housing and education crisis. The government has not been able to resolve any of these issues.

"The voters must realise that parliament no longer represents power. It is clear that the

Cosatu general secretary Jay Naidoo on the issues facing his federation on May Day 1987



struggle for political power rests outside parliament. It rests in the struggle between the real seat of political power, the National Security Council and its appendages, like regional and local Joint Management Committees, on the one side, and the mass democratic movement on the other side."

The growth of the labour movement since Cosatu's launch has brought problems with it, such as insufficient resources and consolidation.

"That is why in our executive message earlier this year we stressed that this is the year of consolidation and decisive action.

"In the past year, Cosatu has established itself and rooted itself more firmly in structures. Regions have been set up and we have seen a number of mergers taking place.

"We are running more cohesive campaigns, like the Living Wage campaign."

Cosatu's growth has been in relation to the most important sectors of the economy.

"We have the mineworkers union (NUM) which has a membership of 369 000. The metalworkers, with a merger going ahead around May 23/24, will bring together 120 000 workers in that sector. Then we have Food and Allied Workers, Paper Wood and Allied, Cawwusa.

"And in the public sector, you have seen massive activity. It is obviously a sector that is relatively badly organised, but it is one that has seen the most militant activity in the past month."

Naidoo conceded that the State of Emergency had had an impact on the growth of the labour movement.

"It has forced organisations to retreat and consolidate," he said.

"We would say that in this year there is a mood of mass militancy. Mass organisations have survived the imposition of the State of Emergency. People have learnt to live under repression; they have learnt to fight repression. It has definitely had a radicalising effect.

"In fact we have not only survived the State of Emergency but also the attacks on our members in the Natal area. When Uvusa was launched last year, some people predicted a mass exodus of our members in that area. Instead we have experienced tremendous growth in that region."

"What we have seen since the formation of Cosatu is that the workers are able to take decisive action. When one looks at mass action one finds that workers are very much in the forefront."

should strive for a new order

Cusa-Azactu assistant general secretary Pandelani Nefolovhodwe on the issues facing his federation on May Day 1987



The white elections have also played a part in heightening tensions between workers and the state, he said, as people are questioning the legitimacy of the government and its elections.

Nefolovhodwe believes that although the trade union movement has grown substantially, that growth has not been equalled in understanding and solidarity.

His federation has been able to consolidate its position, and more than 35 000 workers from the electrical sector and 20 000 from the furniture sector are affiliated to Cusa-Azactu.

This makes Cusa-Azactu — which tomorrow undergoes a name change to the National Council of Unions (Nactu) — the second largest union federation in the country, claiming 600 000 members.

But this growth in numbers does not impress Nefolovhodwe: "In certain quarters in the trade union movement we are still obsessed with the 'one-man-show-tendency' and legitimacy.

"I don't have any problems with that — but as soon as these are used as a fundamental feature of a united force towards attaining our goal, then it creates problems," he said.

He pointed to the OK strike, saying the solidarity of "the UDF, Azapo, Cusa-Azactu, Cosatu and other forces of differing political views made it very difficult to break".

He said separatism had, however, ruined several strikes: "We feel the Sats strike was easier to crush because of the lack of support from other organisations."

Nefolovhodwe believes unity would have broadened the pressure on Sats to resolve the strike.

He said it was Cusa-Azactu's policy to co-operate with all workers despite their affiliation. The only criteria is that they must be supportive of "the broad liberation struggle".

"On May Day workers should be more determined to see freedom and justice, and should resist efforts to divide them."

He said workers should strive for a new order where there will be no room for tribalism, regionalism and ethnicity.

"There should be no room for racial groups or cultural groups — there should be one people in one country."

Nefolovhodwe said the State of Emergency had only been a hindrance in as far as meetings were concerned.

"There is a new understanding of trade unionism and militancy and the Emergency will not be able to break that."

He said the workers have not yet taken over the leadership of the struggle and in many cases have been scared off by the battles of the youth.

"To some extent the youth has failed in fundamental issues like convincing the working class on the type of campaigns needed to bring about change."

Workers' Day under attack

May holiday is no concession - Cosatu

May Day:
strike
threat

Cosatu to fight rally bars

Minister bans Cosatu

MAY DAY

Still 'no' living wage' rally' to PW

Botha's Workers' Day slammed

Cosatu lodge protest

Cosatu: We must take up the issues

Cosatu launches campaign

Miners reject

Chamber proposal

for May holiday

Rally plan is refused

begins

UNIONS SLAM

NEW HOLIDAY

worldwide Campaigning for

a 'living wage'

WAGE

Cosatu 'Workers' Day' rallies hampered by Government

Trade unions want Workers' Day

on May 1 - May Day dispute ends

Unions angry at May Day rally ban

Soweto launch set to highlight Cosatu campaign

Shops, offices to close on Workers' Day