

OFS/Northern Cape Seminar

How to strengthen union organisation - this was the focus of a seminar of Western Tvl and the OFS/Northern Cape regions of COSATU held in Soweto last month. Over 100 shopstewards and organisers, including local and regional office bearers, attended.

The OFS/N.Cape and Western Transvaal regions are big in area and in membership. But most unions there have a problem of weak structures. And there are divisions - especially among the organisers. These regions have not mobilised well around COSATU campaigns. The seminar aimed to address the problems.

The seminar dealt with: Why we need structures; the role of shopsteward councils in affiliates; the problems of locals; affiliate problems in the region; consolidating organisation in the factory; building leadership; qualities of leadership.

The seminar proposed:

- Organisers must motivate workers to attend locals from every workplace
- Local Office Bearers and members must be disciplined and punctual.

- There must be training on how to run meetings.
- COSATU should draft a guideline on the importance of Locals.
- Office Bearers must meet to plan the agenda.
- There must be general meetings.
- Office Bearers must attend affiliate Locals.
- There must be ongoing education within affiliates.

The workshop noted that affiliates in the Region need more education and resources, and that the problem of unpaid organisers must be sorted out.

On factory organisation, these ideas came up from shopstewards:

- Survey potential membership.
- Establish contacts in the factory.
- Form a Steering Committee.
- Arrange meetings during lunch time or after work.
- Introduce the union - aims and objectives.
- Identify problems of the workplace and discuss what workers can do.
- Sign up members
- Apply for recognition agreement and negotiate.
- Form structures - Shopsteward Committee.
- Educate workers through mass

- meetings and seminars.
- Educate workers about recognition agreement etc.
- Build the Shopsteward Committee.
- Encourage workers to take decisions.
- Establish capable and effective leadership.
- Distribute union pamphlets, newsletters etc.
- Members should be encouraged to take up small campaigns in the workplace.
- Link with other workers through participation in union and COSATU Locals.



ATTACKS

(Taken from reports sent to Head Office)

- 2 CAWU members shot dead by SAP at Crecey, Naboomspruit at building site of army base. CAWU starts investigations and calls meeting with management - 20/11/88.
- Isithebe. PPPWAWU member wearing t-shirts assaulted by UWUSA members. PPWAWU members strike. Later a COSATU member stabbed, another's house burned down - 21/11/88
- Isithebe. House of Siphos Sithole's burnt down. UWUSA member among the attackers. Windows and doors of COSATU local chairman broken down - 24/11/88.
- Isithebe. House of NUMSA worker attacked with petrol bombs which did not explode. Same attackers attack PPWAWU member and his wife with cane knives - both in hospital - 27/11/88.
- N. Tvl Regional congress in Mamelodi surrounded by SAP and SADF. Delegates searched 4 times. Police video Congress - 29/11/88.
- Dept. of Manpower tells CWIU that the union cannot represent workers at a CB unless they comply with certain sections of the

LRA. This section means the union must supply membership returns, names of office bearers and financial statements. Then the Registrar issues a certificate.

- Comrades Phillip Ziqubu and Raymond Sibanda of FAWU were released from detention. They had been detained for 8 months - 2/12/88.
- N. Natal region forced to cancel Culture Rally because hall sprayed with powder gas similar to teargas - 17/12/88
- Comrade Komane of CAWU severely beaten up. Told to report to SB offices to give name, address ID etc. SBs question comrade Morris of SARWHU about Save the Patriots t-shirt. Also to report to SB offices - 15/12/88
- CWIU organiser Vusi Mavusa released - but with heavy restrictions. Was detained for nearly a year - 19/1/89.
- Dunlop worker Gabriel Thanjekwayo shot, his brother killed and his son injured by imps. The attack followed Inkatha Rally in Inanda - 16/1/89.
- PPWAWU General Secretary detained at roadblocks in Beaufort West and Parys. Held for about 4 hours each time - 2/2/89.

Organise against repression!