

LET'S ORGANISE ALL WOMEN



ABOVE: Women salute the third AGM of their organisation.
BELOW: "Where there are women, we also find children."

Childcare - our work theme for '83

MANY of the UWO branches have established children's creches. One delegate said, "Our resources are few, but my children are happy. They play, they learn games, they sing songs, they play with toys that teach them."

Many branches are discussing evening child care so that mothers can become involved in organization. Mothers are being drawn in. They realize that when many are sharing the same responsibility, it becomes easier.

Some of us like to have many children, and some only want one or two. It is clear that our mothers must decide for themselves. And then we will help them care for their children.

UWO is a women's organization and sometimes it must also be a children's organization. UWO will again have the theme of 'Childcare'. At the AGM, mothers came with their children. One speaker said, 'Where there are women, we also find children,' so together we will look after the children.



Work to be done

UWO sees women as women, but also as part of their community. It has supported the KTC squatters, the bread boycott.

A policy was taken of total rejection of the constitutional proposals of the PC and the Koornhof Bills. UWO pledges support to fight both the Constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills as two parts of our campaign.

UWO will co-operate with other organizations in a broad front against these state

attempts to divide the people. Especially, UWO will work in all areas where women are to be found to ensure a strong campaign.

In May of 1982, UWO decided to be based only in the Western Cape. This decision will not change. It is not yet ready to become a national organization. However, UWO will give every support to women in other regions to form their own regional women's organizations.

"LET'S organize all women. Let us organize women who are mothers, women who are wives, and women who are workers. And for each group of women we shall have to organize differently."

These were the opening words of the UWO AGM. "Our baby is 2 years old, it is growing, we must nurse it carefully," said Mama Zihlangu, elected for a second time as chairperson of UWO.

The AGM took place in Athlone. Branches sent delegates from all over the Western Cape: from Claremont, Worcester, Langa, KTC. Local community organizations and trade unions sent observers; 29 organizations sent messages of solidarity. Representatives of an East London

Womens Steering Committee hitch-hiked to be at the Conference.

There was one minute of silence for the condemned freedom fighters with Mama Mosolodi present. UWO read a message in support of Azaso's protest meeting.

The Conference worked hard at laying down UWO's work for the year. The greatest encouragement was that some great women leaders of our time were there: Granni Dora Tamana opened the Conference; Helen Joseph spoke of the Womens Federation of the 1950's; and Zora Mehlamakhulu gave concrete advice on how to organize. They all three saluted: Forward Women of UWO: the road is thorny but liberation is in the air.

Women are born leaders

IN this year, UWO has set its task as organizing working women. This is a difficult job. In our society, women are treated as children by the law and by their husbands. Women are deprived and exploited. Women work in the factories, they cook and clean for their children, where will they find time for organization?

But it is clear that 'a struggle such as ours can only be won if we work side by side with our men,' said a delegate.

Often it is the men who say, 'No, the women must stay at home, who will take care of me and the children?' With these men we must explain why women should join organization.



Zora Mehlamakhulu, a trade unionist, spoke about how to organise.

To the women we must give encouragement. We must be patient. Sometimes women will seldom come to meetings. It could be they are having a problem.

Because women are treated as minors, often they behave like minors: they are afraid to speak out, they feel they know nothing. But in our democratic organization, we must practice democracy. Decisions must be taken by the majority of our members.

"Let us not forget that women are born leaders, they must protect and lead their children," said Mama Zora.

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