

NUM News



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS
MARCH 1989

1989
Programme
of action



CARLETONVILLE
MINEWORKERS
BOYCOTT
AGAINST
RACIST TOWN
COUNCIL

Regional
congresses



Delegates
prepare
for NUM
National
Congress

MINEWORKERS RALLY TO DEFEND UNION

REGIONS and delegates are busily preparing for the NUM's National Congress in April.

National Congress is the highest governing body of the union. Delegates vote for the National Executive Committee and decide on the policy of the union.

This year the theme of National Congress is Defend and Consolidate the Union.

It is from the 12 to 16 April and will take place at the National Exhibition Centre (NASREC), Crown Mines, Johannesburg.

Miner unions from Germany, Sweden, Britain, America, Botswana, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and other countries will send observers in solidarity.

Among important resolutions to be discussed this year will be the anti-repression campaign, and the need to build union structures at local level.

Delegates will also have to decide whether the union should demand a national minimum wage and should enter wage bargaining with management asking for increases in percentages or in money terms.

SEVERAL thousand mineworkers flocked to an NUM mass rally to launch the campaign against repression on the mines.

The mass rally, held on the first Sunday of February at Wits University, Johannesburg, was a response to the worsening repression on South African mines after the 1987 miners strike.

The President of NUM, Comrade James Motlatsi, made a call to workers to defend the union and declare war on repressive measures existing on the mines.

Since the 1987 miners strike, the mines bosses of Chamber, Anglo, JCI, Gencor, Goldfields in collusion with the state have unleashed vicious attacks against the NUM and workers.

Motlatsi said in the past eighteen months four of our comrades had been sentenced to death for trade union activities, and 25 of our comrades faced prison sentences ranging from 3 years to 20 years.

Mine bosses are committed to destroying the NUM by forcing workers to resign from the union, retrenching thousands of mineworkers, dismissing union members for no apparent reason, refusing to negotiate and recognise shaft stewards and instigating faction fights amongst workers.

Direct attacks

"Faced with all these direct attacks and with the knowledge that the Chamber and the Government will continue in their intention to crush us, the National Executive Committee believes that 1989 must be the year when all NUM members will rise to the Defence of the NUM", said comrade Motlatsi.

The Anti-repression Campaign is to run parallel with other campaigns the NUM is conduct-

ing: the Living Wage, Recruitment and Health And Safety campaigns.

Anti-repression campaign committees have to be set up at to conduct the campaign through sub-committees at national, regional, branch and shaft levels. All repressive measures will be monitored through these committees and be reported to workers for analysis. All channels would be explored to challenge each incident of repression on the mines.

Speakers from trade unions and community organisations condemned repression by state and big business as a desperate attempt to salvage the ship of apartheid from sinking, by crushing the militant democratic and labour movement.

COSATU's Vice-President, Chris Dlamini said that the state and the bosses resorted to various repressive measures to forestall our struggle for national liberation. Treason: trials

like the UDF-Delmas Trial, death sentences imposed on political activists and trade unionists, bannings of democratic people's organisations, bombing union offices, security police raids on union offices and detentions and assassinations of activists were all examples.

He said the repression we are facing today is a reaction to the massive struggles that our people have been waging in all parts of the country.

Weaken trade unions

"It is meant to weaken the trade union movement and force workers to accept low wages, job reservation, the migrant labour system and reject sympathy strikes."

"However, there is no turning back, experience has taught and trained our people to fight and die for the future", said Dlamini.

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NUM members vowed to protect the union against attacks from the bosses and government at a union rally in February

1989: EVERY
MINEWORKER A
NUM MEMBER