

I. R. STRIKES

1998

JAN — ~~SEPT.~~ DEC

Strikes tipped to level out in

1998 as economy loses jobs

Wages forecast to rise between 9% and 10%

Johannesburg - Strikes, which cost 650 000 worker-days last year, are expected to level out in 1998 as the economy enters a new phase of job-shedding growth, says an industrial and labour law consultancy.

Jackie Kelly, editor of research and publications for Andrew Levy and Associates, said that with the inflation pegged at 9% in October 1997, wage settlements this year were likely to hover between 9% and 10%.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, established in November 1996, was likely to play a crucial role to "nip disputes in the bud". Since its inception, the CCMA's success rate had fluctuated between 62% and 72%, she said.

After reaching a peak of 3 million

during the state of emergency in 1987, the loss of 650 000 man-days in 1997 was a positive signal.

"It is significant that this drop coincides with the implementation of the new Labour Relations Act, which came into effect in November last year and has codified issues which in the past were considered to be good practice.

"The LRA has been specifically designed to bring about speedier resolution of disputes under the auspices of the CCMA," she said.

As in previous years, wage

'A disturbing feature of the current job market is the high level of retrenchment and downsizing'

disputes were the main causes of work stoppages and Ms Kelly said this was going to taper off because of retrenchments and the economic downturn.

Other factors such as dismissals, retrenchments, discipline and bargaining levels also contributed significantly to strikes last year.

"A disturbing feature of the current job market is the high level of retrenchment and downsizing which is taking place across industries in this ever-present threat of job displacement, strike action tends to taper off and wage demands are

moderated," Ms Kelly said.

Most strikes - about 51,5% - were of a national character while Kwa-Zulu Natal accounted for 27,5% - mainly because of the sugar industry and Beacon Sweets strikes. The Eastern Cape was next with 9%, followed by Gauteng with 5,7%.

The Food and Allied Workers Union was particularly active last year, with strikes at Nestlé, Premier Foods, South African Breweries, Beacon Sweets and Chapelat.

But strikes were also recorded in the mining, manufacturing, car, retail and the paper and printing industries.

Ms Kelly said outsourcing non-core functions was likely to continue, as would the narrowing of the wage gap - Sapa

ART 6/1/98

(152)

Uitenhage strike 'may affect VW's exports'

BD 14/1/98

(152)

Own Correspondent

PORT ELIZABETH — Volkswagen's R400m export order for Britain, as well as exports to Australia, could be hit by a work stoppage at the Uitenhage plant.

Although the plant still has stock in hand for the local market, the strike could affect the delivery of 5 000 Golfs to the UK by April.

Confirming that workers on both shifts had downed tools yesterday, Volkswagen spokesman Raymond

Hartle said "if the stoppage continues it could affect Volkswagen's export initiatives".

According to Hartle the strike, which started at 8.45am yesterday, related to a company loan scheme

"National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) shop stewards informed the company that their members were unhappy with a R1 500 revolving loan scheme agreed with the company, and are now demanding a R1 500 school uniform loan, to be made available to all employees, re-

gard less of take-home pay". Volkswagen said it had reached agreement with the union last November to implement a R1 500 revolving loan scheme through Standard Bank

About 4 400 Numsa members met the agreed requirements for the loan, but about 1 000 were not eligible because repayments would reduce their take-home pay to less than 35% of their gross earnings

Numsa was not available for comment last night

Row over school uniform loans threatens R400m exports

VW to seek order on Uitenhage strikers

ET (PR) 15/1/98

(152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg — Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) would apply for an urgent court interdict this morning if the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) was unable to persuade its striking members at the Uitenhage plant to return to work, Matt Gennrich, the VWSA spokesman, said yesterday

"The company has also warned Numsa that the strike seriously threatens to undermine the current export order of 5 000 Golf vehicles (valued at R400 million) to Britain. This order must be fulfilled by April this year and tight shipping deadlines are being compromised by the strike," Gennrich said

"In the current economic climate and in the face of very

tough competition in the local motor industry, it is imperative that all parties work together to ensure a viable industry and protect jobs," he said

Gennrich said Numsa shop stewards had informed the company that their members were unhappy with a R1 500 revolving loan scheme conditionally agreed with VW, and were instead demanding "a R1 500 school uniform loan to be made available to all workers" regardless of whether they met company conditions

He said more than 1 700 workers had already applied for the revolving loan scheme and would get it by Friday

Gennrich said it would appear the problem revolved around a group of about 1 000 workers who did not qualify for the loan scheme as they "were already

heavily in debt"

"The company is not prepared to deviate from this agreement as it would create further socio-economic problems for employees who are already experiencing financial difficulties as a result of previous loans and other financial commitments incurred," Gennrich said

"By not working today, the average employee will have lost R250 in wages, which certainly does not make sense if employees claim to be short of money"

However, the union said, whether the strike would continue would only be known after a mass meeting scheduled for this morning. "Workers have agreed to an urgent meeting to determine whether or not they will continue with the strike," said Dumisa Ntuli, Numsa's spokesman

Volkswagen threatens interdict on 'illegal' strike

PORT ELIZABETH — Volkswagen yesterday warned the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) that a strike at Volkswagen's Uitenhage plant was illegal.

If workers were not on the job by 9am today the company would apply for an interdict forcing them to return, it said.

Workers downed tools on Tuesday morning after a loan scheme dispute. Numsa said members were unhappy with a R1 500 revolving loan scheme. They were demanding a R1 500 school uniform loan for workers regardless

of their take home pay.

A spokesman for Volkswagen said that in terms of the agreement with Numsa signed on December 5 last year, the loan applied only to workers earning above a specified minimum. About 1 000 employees did not qualify.

Volkswagen said that more than 1 700 employees would receive loans under the agreement. "The company is not prepared to deviate from this agreement as it would create further socio-economic problems for employees who are already experiencing financial dif-

iculties as a result of previous loans and financial commitments incurred," the spokesman said.

Volkswagen warned Numsa the strike threatened to undermine an export order of 5 000 VW Golfs to Britain. The order must be fulfilled by April and tight shipping deadlines could be compromised, the company said.

Numsa general secretary Mauyi Ngwenda said yesterday the union understood the competitive nature of the motor industry and would try to resolve the issue as quickly as possible — Sapa.

BD 15 11198

Fewer strikes expected as threat of job loss increases

(152) Sowetan 15/1/98

By Abdul Milazi

SOUTH Africa should brace itself for more job losses this year as the economy moves into a phase of "job-shedding", economists have warned. Jackie Kelly of Andrew Levy and Associates said companies will continue to outsource most of their non-core services to cut down costs and make their operations competitive.

She said trade unions will continue fighting for the narrowing of the wage gap between the highly paid and lowly paid workers, commonly known as the "apartheid wage gap".

She said that this will lead to better increases for workers in the low-income bracket than average increases. "Remuneration rates will be boosted by the tightening of skills shortages as the economy enters its sixth successive year of expansion," said Kelly.

Kelly also said the two-year productivity agreement between the Chamber of Mines and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) was expected to set a trend with more deals of that nature likely to be negotiated this year.

"Wages will again form the main strike trigger as unions put pressure on employers during annual wage negotiations.

"Strike action, however, is expected to level out as job losses continue and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) intervenes to nip disputes in the bud."

Critical

She said the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) would remain committed to the African National Congress-South African Communist Party alliance, while remaining critical of key market-friendly ANC policies.

The ANC is also expected to remain sympathetic to Cosatu concerns, but within limits dictated by its need to address economic realities.

"The ANC and Cosatu are, however, expected to move closer to one another as the 1999 election approaches."

Kelly said strikes had dropped by 64 percent last year to 650 000 work days lost compared to 1,7 million days in 1996.

"This is the lowest figure since 1988 and is a positive sign which can be attributed to a number of factors."

She said one of these factors was that the bulk of centralised bargaining agreements were finalised without large scale industrial action.

These agreements set the tone and were an indication of the general level of sophistication reached in the collective bargaining arena.

The NUM-Chamber of Mines productivity agreement was one example of a creative approach to industrial relations problems, which other industries are expected to emulate in a bid to become more competitive and avoid retrenchment.

The NUM-Chamber agreement made it possible for employers to offer productivity-based wage increases, as opposed to inflation-based percentages demanded by trade unions as has been the tradition. Kelly said a disturbing feature of the current job market was the high level of retrenchment and the downsizing across industries. "With this ever present threat of job displacement, strike action tends to taper off and wage demands are moderate."

VW workers call off their strike

CT(AR) 16/1/98

(152) (152)

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — Striking workers at Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) in Uitenhage returned to work for the afternoon shift yesterday after production at the plant was disrupted for three days, a company spokesman said.

The strike resulted in a loss in production of 300 cars a day and cost R48 million in turnover, Raymond Hartle, the corporate relations manager for VWSA, said yesterday. Each worker also lost an average of R120 a day.

The strike was the result of unhappiness among members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) over a R1 500 revolving loan

scheme conditionally agreed upon by VWSA. The workers were instead demanding a R1 500 school uniform loan for all workers, regardless of whether they met company conditions.

Hartle said the return to work followed an undertaking given to VWSA's management by Numsa that all employees would resume normal duties from 2pm yesterday.

He said VWSA accepted this undertaking in good faith and on the strength of this undertaking had not proceeded to the Labour Court yesterday in an interdict application. No disciplinary action was currently planned against any employees.

However, Hartle said that if it

appeared that employees were not complying with Numsa's undertaking, the company would proceed with the interdict application as soon as it could be heard in court.

"Numsa has also accepted the company's offer of assistance for those employees who do not qualify for the revolving loan scheme," he said.

"In terms of the offer, if an individual employee can prove that his or her child will be excluded from school for not having a school uniform, the company will provide up to R400 for each employee.

"The repayment terms of this loan will be based on each individual's circumstances," he said.

Volkswagen, workers strike loan deal

BD161198 (152) (152)

Vuyo Mvoko

VOLKSWAGEN workers started returning to work yesterday, bringing an end to a dispute that started on Tuesday when they downed tools at the company's Uitenhage plant after some workers were refused loans for their dependants' school needs

National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said the workers agreed to return on the basis that their cases would be handled individually by the company. Workers dissatisfied with the compa-

ny's handling of their cases would be attended to by the union's shop stewards, it was agreed

Volkswagen spokesman Raymond Hartle said the illegal strike, if prolonged, would have affected the company's scheduled R400m export of cars to Britain

Sapa reports the strike cost the company almost R48m in turnover, Volkswagen communications GM Matt Gennrich said

He said Numsa representatives had accepted the company's offer of assistance for those workers who did not qualify for the revolving loan scheme at a meeting

with management yesterday. Numsa had given an undertaking that striking members would return to work immediately

Volkswagen, in turn, would not proceed with its planned application for a court interdict if strikers complied with this undertaking and returned to work

The agreement states that workers who do not qualify for the company's R1 500 revolving loan scheme can, under certain conditions, borrow up to R400 to buy school uniforms for their children

Repayment terms will be based on each worker's circumstances

ET(BR) 22/1/98
**Absa strike
likely to
be averted**

FRANK NXUMALO (152)

Johannesburg — The planned three-day strike at Absa, the banking group, could be averted as the South African Society of Bank Officers (Sasbo) said yesterday that Absa's revised offer was likely to be accepted.

The parties deadlocked last Friday at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) when Sasbo rejected a company offer of a 10,25 percent wage hike, sticking to its demand of 11 percent

Although Piet Heymans, Sasbo's assistant general secretary, would not be drawn into revealing the details of the revised offer because of the "sensitivity" of the issue, he said it was an offer "we could live with"

Meanwhile, Shaun Oelschig, a Sasbo spokesman, said hundreds of non-clerical staff at Standard Bank nationwide had been "invited to apply" for voluntary severance packages that could be worth about 10 months salary plus pension contributions

John Verster, Standard Bank's general manager for human resources, said the bank had been "looking at ways of reducing staff and costs in areas of non-core activities and operations"

ET(BR) 22/1/98

Engen and strikers 'close to settlement'

JONATHAN ROSENTHAL

INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

(152)

Cape Town — Management and 300 striking maintenance workers, who are members of the Engineering and Maintenance Workers' Union, at Engen's Durban refinery are close to settling the nearly two-week dispute in the wake of increasing violence and one death, sources close to last night's negotiations said.

Maintenance contract workers went out on strike last week to defend 77 jobs, accusing Brown & Root Group 5 Industrial Services, which is contracted to maintain the refinery, of replacing South African workers with American contractors.

Tempers flared last week when picketing workers were dispersed by police. Strikers responded by blockading the entrances to the refinery on Monday and disrupted deliveries of products from the refinery. Union officials claimed 27 strikers were beaten by soldiers of the South African National Defence Force, who were called in under the National Key Points Act.

Peter Dent, Engen's refinery manager, said yesterday that a striking worker was fatally stabbed on Monday — allegedly by other strikers as he attempted to return to work. He said the death had left both parties shaken, and union officials were keen to settle the dispute.

A union official said he believed that more than half of the 77 affected jobs could be saved and there was a possibility of placing the remaining workers elsewhere. He said the settlement could also include an offer to place all contract maintenance workers on three-year contracts.

Dent said negotiations between Brown & Root and the union were progressing well.

CT (BR) 29/1/98

'DAMAGE COULD RUN TO R1 MILLION'

Saldanha workers go on the rampage

CT 4/2/98

(152)

POLICE SAY that damage caused by workers at a West Coast construction site yesterday could be as much as R1 million. **MELANIE GOSLING** and **ERIC NTABAZALILA** report.

THOUSANDS of workers went on the rampage at the Saldanha Steel construction site on the West Coast yesterday, stoning staff and setting buildings and vehicles alight after a group of them had apparently been fired.

Saldanha Steel management said last night it was too early to estimate the extent of the damage, but police said it could run to R1 million.

Three vehicles were burned, a staff canteen, computer room and security post at the gate were gutted, the plant's main-frame computer was seriously damaged, and building plans went up in smoke. Several "minor injuries" were reported, no arrests were made.

Saldanha Steel project director Mr Ben Nel said "It was horrifying, with the staff forced to hide behind their desks. The fire brigade and police were called but the fire brigade could not do anything as the situation was too terrifying." He said the damage was done by about 2 000 to 3 000 workers.

Police spokesperson Inspector

Johan Loubser said members of the public order policing unit were called from Paarl to control the crowd and the SA Navy was brought in to help the local fire brigade douse the burning buildings.

Loubser said: "The computer room and the kitchen were burned. Several people who didn't join in the strike were stoned. Things calmed down by late afternoon."

Nel said the trouble started when about 20 workers were told they were to be "demobilised". The 20 had then "instigated the other workers", telling them they were all fired. The workers then marched on the company offices in their thousands with a list of demands.

But, Nel said, it was company policy not to negotiate with the body of workers, and they were told to return to work, and leave their representatives behind to negotiate with management.

According to worker representatives, employees' major gripes include poor working conditions and below-standard accommodation and food

They were also annoyed that while the company was allegedly deducting tax, it had not registered the staff with the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).

One staff member, who did not want to be named, said the strike had been triggered when CBI Construction, working on the Saldanha Steel site, "fired" about 20 workers.

"The other workers got really angry. They started grouping. Management made the mistake of telling all the supervisors and foreign workers to group in one area, so they became targets."

"CBI is an American company and they've got a lot of foreigners working for them — Turks and Filipinos — which also makes the (local) workers angry."

"Then the crowd started moving towards the Corex structure, where there were about 100 staff in white hats, supervisors and foreigners, mainly. We were told to move behind a crane and a large truck, but the crowd came towards us, throwing stones."

The man said he marched with the workers until he could sneak away on the back of a bakkie.

Nel said the company would be closed last night and today. Management intended to hold a news conference at 11am today.



Gutted Langebaan fireman Kenneth Parker douses the remains of what was once the project office of the Chicago Bridge and Iron company at Saldanha Steel Rampage leaves swathe of destruction, page 3

Sacking sparks big rampage

From page 1

ARG 4/2/98 (152) (152)
 where 16 people share a shower, two toilets and a wash basin. The floors of the compounds are cement and windows have wooden shutters instead of glass panes.

The workers say they are given chicken for supper every night. On the rare occasions the menu changes they are served braised brisket.

Head of the Community Forum Ebrahim Daiwai said matters had come to a head when five people chosen by the workers to represent them in talks with management were fired. Although no trade unions are active on the site, the workers have formed a workers' forum.

A forum spokesman who wished to remain anonymous for fear of losing his job said while the unrest at the site was regrettable it was also inevitable as people could not live and work under such harsh conditions without incidents.

"We have no rights here. Most of us work 108 hours a fortnight and don't get paid overtime. We are heavily taxed but never get any forms to submit to the Receiver of Revenue."

The flare-up comes just 10 days before the opening by President Mandela of a conference to bolster economic development in the region through the West Coast Investment Initiative.

Laurine Platzky, co-ordinator of the West Coast Investment Initiative, said the unrest was the result of "appalling labour relations" between Chicago Bridge and workers.

Crisis meeting after riot by Saldanha Steel workers

JOSEPH ARANES and AUDE DASNOIS
 STAFF REPORTERS

The Commission for Conciliation, Arbitration and Mediation has been asked to try to resolve the construction site dispute at Saldanha Steel, where workers rioted yesterday.

The sacking of 20 workers by the United States-based Chicago Bridge and Iron, a con-

tractor on the site, triggered the anger of 2000 colleagues.

Buildings were razed and cars torched. The police, called to restore order, fired tear gas and several rounds of rubber bullets. No serious injuries were reported. Seven people were arrested for looting, and public violence.

Sarah Christie, senior commissioner in Cape Town, said the commission had been

(152)

ARG 4/2/98

(152)

called in by the West Coast Investment Initiative, which is co-ordinating development in the area for the Department of Trade and Industry. She and a colleague were to go to the site today to meet employers and workers. Work on the R6-billion project ground to a halt after the violence broke out yesterday. Project management was locked in emergency meetings today.

Workers complain that they are badly housed on the site and that pay is irregular. But foreign workers employed by Chicago Bridge stay in upmarket accommodation in nearby holiday village Club Mykonos and are paid regularly, they say. The local workers complain of harsh living conditions on the construction site.

Rampage leaves swathe of destruction in its wake

ART 4/2/98 (152) (152)

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

The R6-billion Saldanha Steel construction site is as secure as a fort from outside - but yesterday it was trashed from inside by incensed workers, who caused millions of rands' damage.

In a two-hour rampage yesterday afternoon, at least 2 000 workers terrorised colleagues, razed a project office and torched several vehicles. They also looted a bar in their housing compound and set it and two canteens alight.

The workers are staff of various subcontractors building the giant steel mill near Saldanha Bay.

By late afternoon the huge construction site was deserted and resembled a set for a science fiction horror movie. Construction vehicles were parked in the middle of roads, and cranes, some with their loads still hanging in mid-air, stood abandoned. The smashed windows of site offices were a grim reminder of what had gone before.

A few firemen and managers were hosing down the smouldering remains of what only a few hours before had been the bustling offices of the United States-based company Chicago Bridge and Steel.

The burnt casings of computers, filing cabinets and other office equipment were an indication of the valuable information lost in the riot. A few metres away stood the shells of several burnt cars.

Dennis le Sueur of Superlag Insulations and Sheetmetal arrived at the site to find that while little equipment was damaged, other expensive items like generators were missing.

He said his day had started out normally - but just after lunch all hell broke loose. "There was no warning. We heard the chants of workers and at the same time rocks and stones were flying everywhere. They forced us to abandon our posts and join the march."

One worker was slightly injured when a stone struck him on the head.

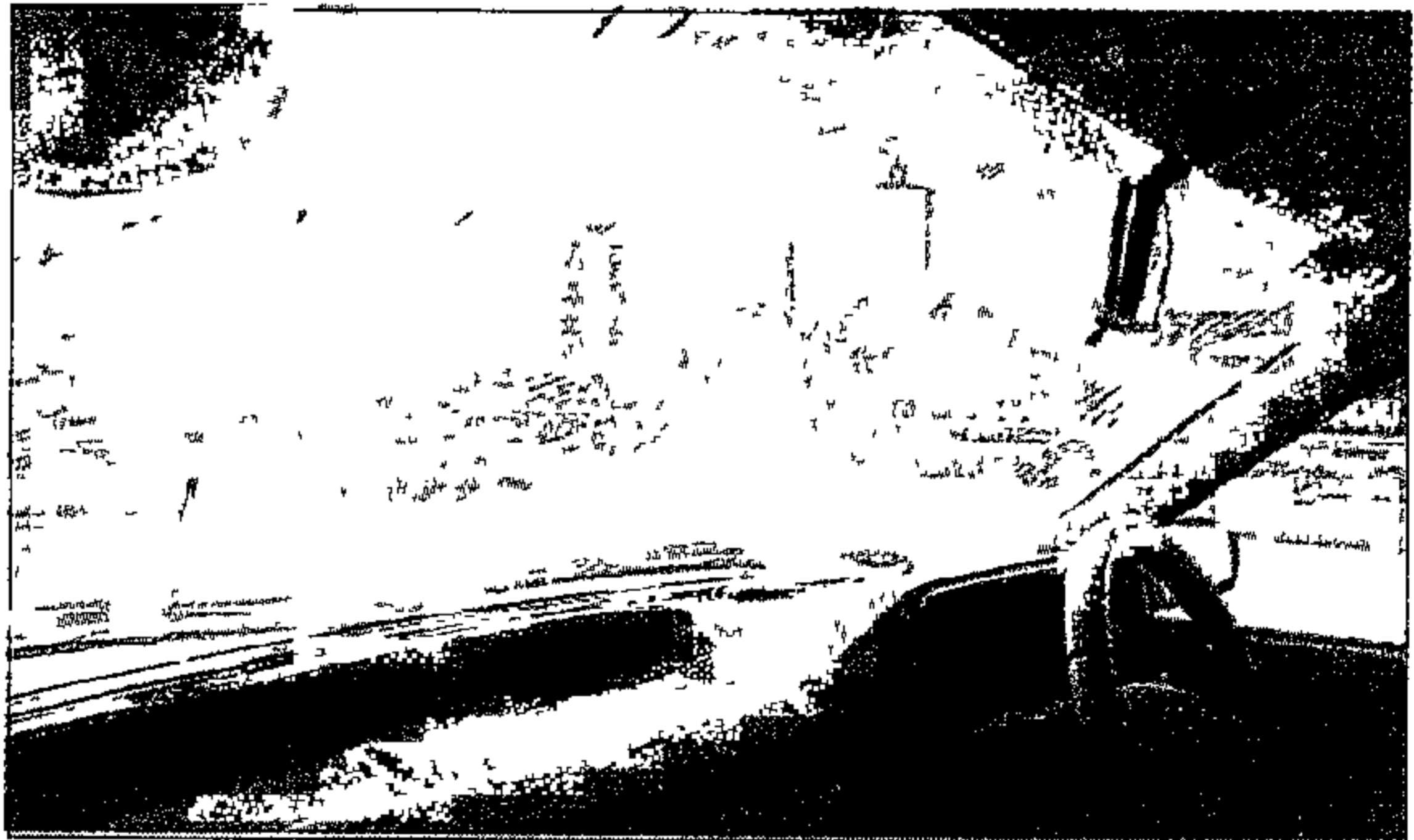
They joined the march and after things quietened down they returned to the site to pack up their equipment. "We will come back here only on Monday, if things are back to normal."

On the other side of the huge site, David Isaacs said he had been working in one of the sub-stations when he was ordered to down tools by "hooligans".

"They invited me to join them. As I



Homeward bound: workers head for home after violence at the construction site



Distorted view: one of the many vehicles that were damaged

emerged from the station they started stoning me. It was very difficult to dodge and escape unscathed. They were really letting us have it and you could sense how angry they were. I could not believe what was happening and ran like hell to get away."

Mr Isaacs said he would want to find out what was happening at the site before returning to work.

A worker said he had joined the march because it was the safe thing to do.

"We were all very nervous and scared and didn't know what to expect. I feel sorry for the people who were trapped in the offices when they were stoned. At the same time I do understand how frustrated the workers are for having to work and live under such conditions.

The workers have grievances relating to retrenchments and living conditions.

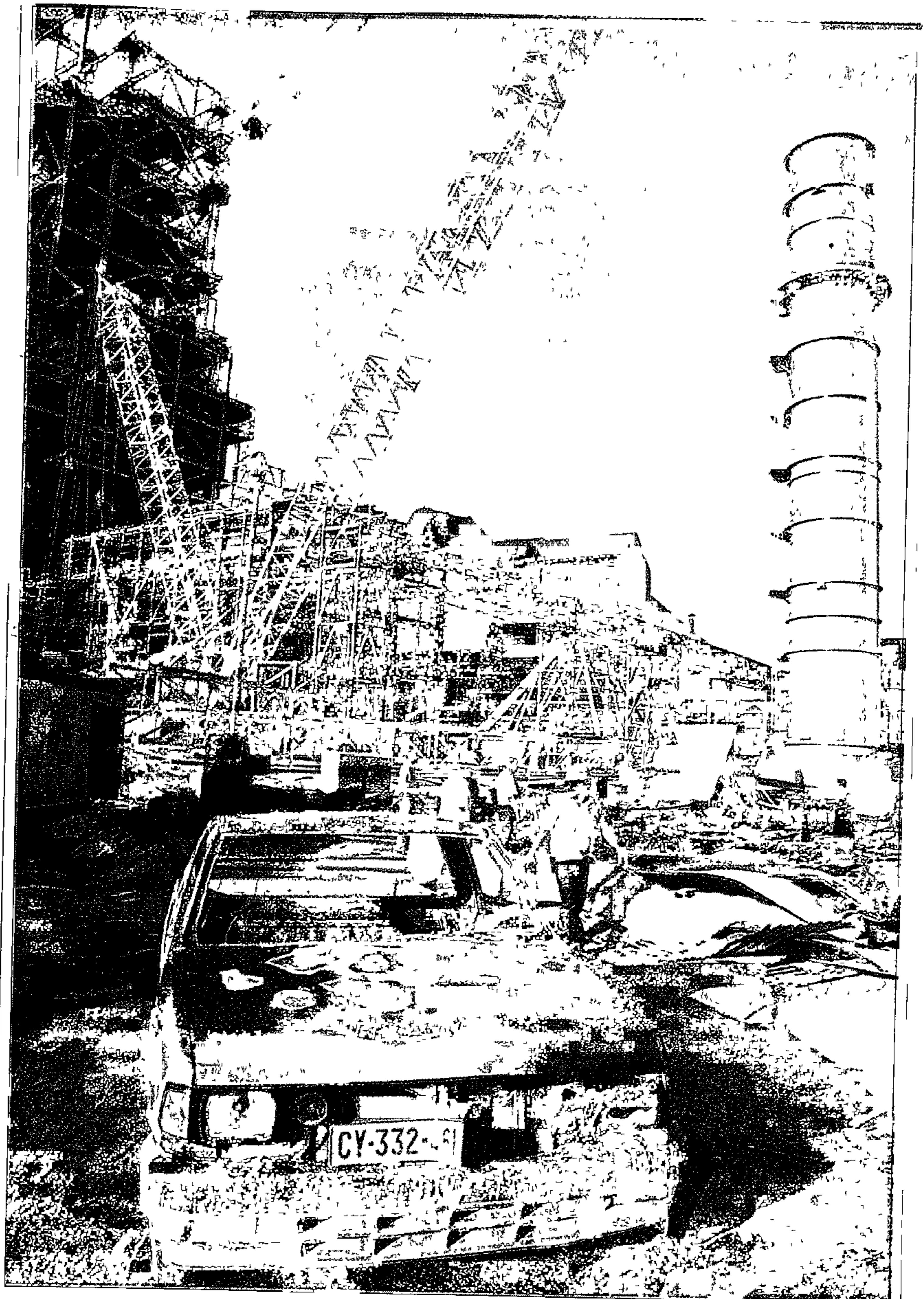
Project director Ben Nel said there was a site agreement in place with the workers that talks could be held only if they continued working.

"We explained this to them in the morning but for some reason they refused and went on the rampage. The issue of retrenchments has also been discussed with them and the principle of 'last in, first out' was agreed to. There is no excuse for their behaviour." Mr Nel said they were forced to call the police to restore order and minimise damage.

Last night hundreds of the workers packed their belongings and headed home after a day of violence.

The site will be closed today.

Cont.



Wrecked: Saldanha Steel managers inspect some of the damage caused to the construction site after workers went on the rampage

ROY WIGLEY

Work at Saldanha Steel site to resume next week

ET (OR) 5/12/98

(152) (88)

FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg — Work on the Saldanha Steel site in the Western Cape would resume on Tuesday next week after about 6 500 workers went on the rampage earlier this week, Bernard Smith, the company's chairman said yesterday

"As a result, the scheduled start-up in the second quarter of 1998 is unlikely to be unduly affected," Smith said

All was quiet at the site, a joint venture between Iscor and the Industrial Development Corporation, yesterday after the workers were given a long weekend to cool off.

"It was necessary to do that. Emotions ran very high, and it was miraculous that nobody was

injured," Smith said

Although management was still assessing on-site damage, he estimated it to be between R1 million to R2 million

"As a result, the delay in restarting this construction could possibly be larger than is expected in the steel-making section, but I am convinced the iron-making facilities will be commissioned in the second half of 1998. I therefore believe that the financial impact on Saldanha Steel will be minimal."

The workers, who are employed by CBI, a US company subcontracted to Saldanha, reportedly went on a wildcat strike on Tuesday, hurling missiles and burning cars and buildings after Saldanha allegedly terminated their contracts

Saldanha Steel workers defiant

Leaders vow they will not take sackings lying down

ARTS/2/198

(152)

(152)

THABO MABASO AND LINDSAY BARNES
STAFF REPORTERS

Leaders of workers who went on a rampage at the R6-billion Saldanha Steel construction site have vowed not to take the sacking of 20 colleagues lying down, saying they will fight for their jobs

A spokesman for the group, Jumbo Solomons, told the Cape Argus that problems at the plant had been simmering for a while

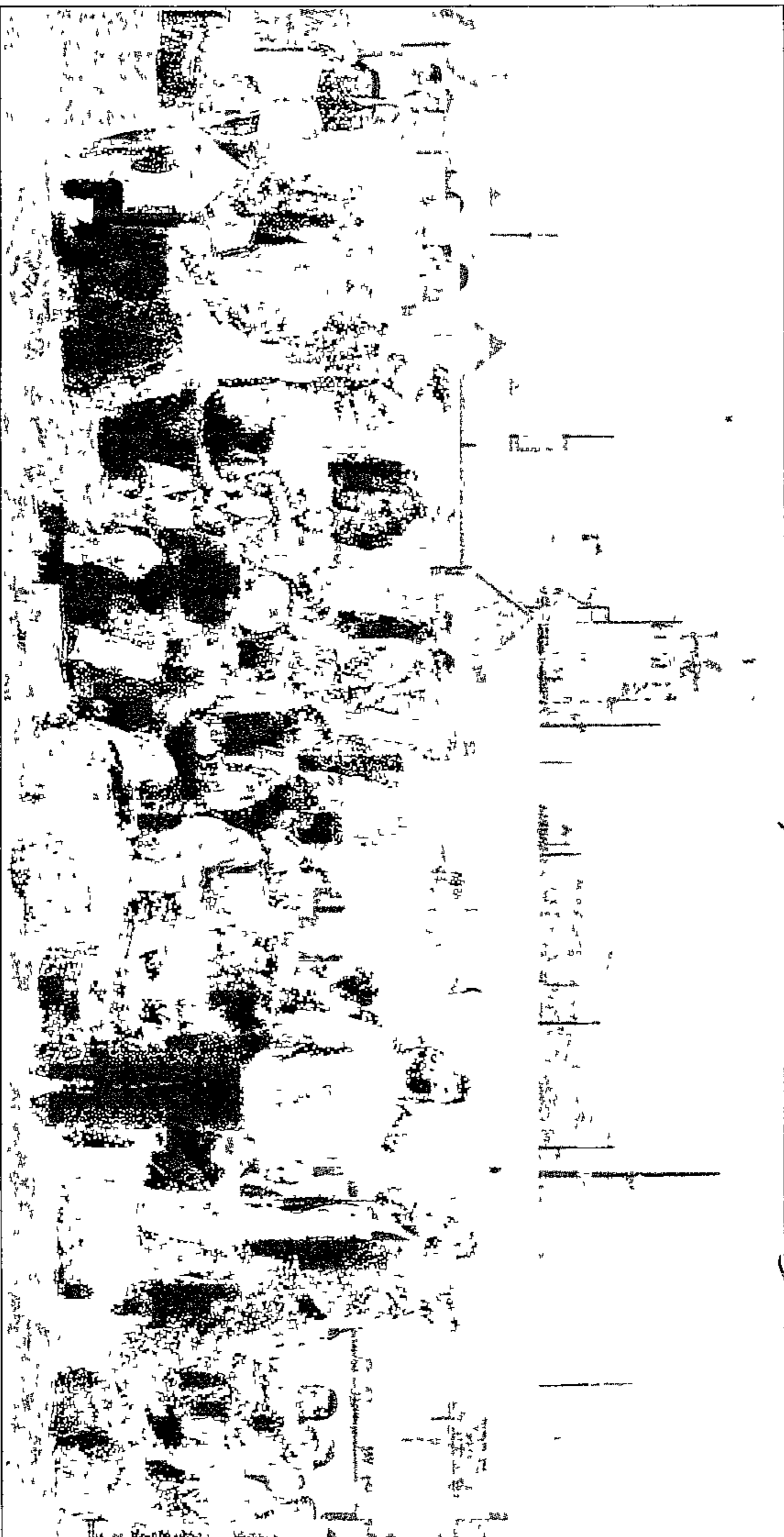
Workers had petitioned the management of the main contractor, the US-based Chicago Bridge and Iron, several times to change what he said were unfair labour practices, but to no avail

Temper boiled over at a protest meeting on Tuesday after managers refused to listen to workers' grievances, Mr Solomons said. Workers complain about irregular payments, the employment of Lebanese, Turks and Filipinos, sub-standard food and poor housing

"As far as food is concerned, chicken is the main menu item - in the four weeks that I have been here I have had nothing but chicken," said Mr Solomons, one of those sacked.

Main reason for worker dissatisfaction was that the bulk of the local workforce employed by Chicago Bridge had been made independent contractors, meaning they enjoyed no rights under the Labour Relations Act

Paul Benjamin, a partner in the



ROY WISLEY

Bags packed: construction workers wait outside their hostels at the Saldanha Steel site for transport to take them home for an enforced long weekend

Cape Town office of labour lawyers Cheadle Thompson and Haysom, recently wrote in the Cape Argus that making workers independent contractors absolved bosses from paying overtime, sick pay and giving leave

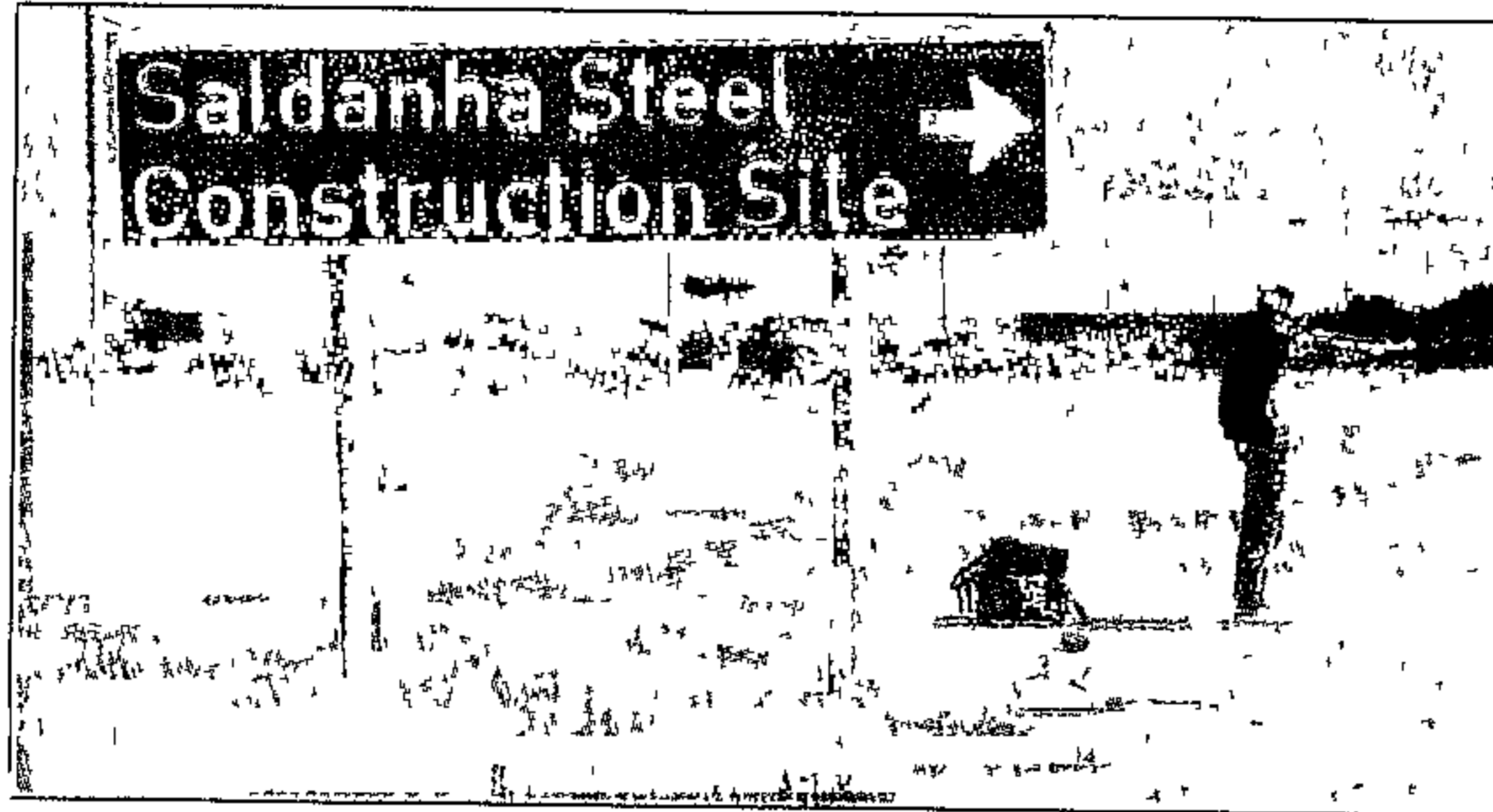
Mr Solomons said employees were made individual contractors without having the choice and were informed of the consequences only when they complained about work conditions

Sandy Nairn, project director for Chicago Bridge and Iron, said if any issues raised by workers were "valid", they would be dealt with

But the main grievances arose from independent contractors' failure to understand their situation

"When you are self employed you pay less tax. But they didn't understand they would lose out on benefits such as medical aid that you get while working for an employer. They don't understand why they are not treated as employees now," he said

On their return to work, a committee of some sort would be formed to discuss the conflict, he said



Tools down: a worker thumbs a lift home after the construction site was closed

Thousands ordered home after R1,5-million rampage

ARG 5/2/98 (152)

LINDSAY BARNES
STAFF REPORTER

Thousands of Saldanha Steel construction workers were bused home yesterday to "cool off" while management took stock of riot damage that will set part of the R6-billion project back more than a month.

Most of the workforce would return to work on Tuesday, amounting to the loss of a week to labour unrest, said Saldanha Steel general manager Piet Pretorius

But people working for the main contractor, United States-based Chicago Bridge and Iron, could be unemployed for as long as six weeks until its office is fully operational again

Damage caused to the steel mill construction site by workers on Tuesday is estimated at R1,5-million

Yesterday Chicago Bridge sus-

ended its independent contractors - 35% of its 1 800 workforce - and laid off the rest, promising they would be "brought back as soon as possible"

As they were hired on contracts, the workers will not be paid in their absence

Sandy Nairn, Chicago Bridge project director, said the delay was the result of the loss of the company's project office, including the computers, staff records, documents and construction drawings

The loss of all documentation and paper work for the past six months was mestimable and would have to be recovered, he said

Mr Nairn blamed the damage on a few rabblers and said most of the workers were "decent people"

It was rumoured that a few who had been retrenched misinformed 500 of their colleagues that they had all been sacked and this triggered the violence, he said

AK



Hundreds of commuters had to squeeze themselves into packed trains while others were left stranded during yesterday's afternoon rush hour after train control officers went on strike following a dispute over wages with management. PIC. MBUZENI ZULU

Thousands stranded by strike

By Muzi Mkhwanazi and Sapa

THOUSANDS of train commuters were stranded as train control officers went on a wildcat strike during the afternoon rush hour yesterday

The officers went on strike soon after wage negotiations between their unions and Metrorail reached a deadlock at 4pm yesterday

Thousands of people were seen standing in long queues at various Johannesburg taxi ranks. The situation was apparently exacerbated by the fact that thousands of pupils, who had come from the townships to take part in a march, had swarmed the city rail-

way stations

A regular commuter, Ms Jabulile Mabaso, said she was angry at Metrorail upon learning she would have to find another means to get home

"I used my last money to buy a train ticket hoping I would be ferried home as usual, only to be informed that trains were not operating

"How are we supposed to go home now? Why did they not provide us with alternative transport? We bought tickets and it is their responsibility to keep their side of the bargain," she said

Another disgruntled commuter, Mr John Dlamini, said he was patient and

understood the daily problems of trains running behind schedule. But he never expected to be told that trains would not operate at all

"The train service in the country has gone from bad to worse. In the past commuters would have been informed about such an incident"

Metrorail spokesperson Mrs Bantu Petsana confirmed that trains from the whole of Johannesburg to surrounding areas were not operating. She attributed the problem to the strike by train control officers. "We were not aware that the workers were going to embark on a strike. They never indicated during the wage negotiations that they

Trains returning to normal as strike ends

Star 5/2/98

STAFF REPORTER

Train services throughout Johannesburg were expected to resume by noon today after a wild-cat strike during peak hours left thousands of commuters stranded last night.

Metrorail spokesman Annemarie Strydom said express trains were operating as normal on the Soweto, Pretoria/Germiston and Vereeniging to Germiston route over Meyerton, while a shuttle service is operating on the smaller routes and stopping at all stations.

She said all services were expected to be operating as normal by noon.

"Many of our drivers

(152)
worked overtime last night to ensure that there were some trains running, and supervisory personnel occupied the important signal control points which were left unmanned by the strikers," she said.

"Because of the disruption many trains were backed up in shunting yards," said Strydom. She was unsure why some people stayed overnight at Johannesburg station because every effort was made to ensure there were trains operating.

Talks between the union and management were called off at 10pm last night and an agreement was only reached when discussions resumed this morning.

LABOUR

CT (Bk) 6/2/98 (325)

Metrorail strikers go back to work (162)

Striking Metrorail train control officers agreed to go back to work yesterday pending a resolution of the industrial dispute by the Transnet Industrial Council, said the South African Railworkers' Union (Sarwu). The workers had gone on an illegal strike on Wednesday while the union was still negotiating with management over leave allocation.

Barnabas Wondo, Sarwu's Southern Transvaal regional vice-chairman, said he expected the passenger train service to be 80 percent operational by yesterday evening. Wondo said the workers, who were currently working the whole calendar month without rest unless they applied for leave, were demanding at least one weekend off a month. — *Frank Nxumalo, Johannesburg*

Saldanha steels itself for fallout in wake of riots

CHARL DE VILLIERS

ORGANISERS of one of the West Coast's most import investment conferences are concerned that this week's mob violence at the grant Saldanha Steel Project plant could chase away potential investment in the Western Cape.

Rioting workers caused damage estimated at R5-million just three weeks before Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin was scheduled to open the West Coast Investment Initiative's international investor conference at Saldanha Bay on February 25.

The conference is aimed at attracting investment to the region, one of eight development corridors set up to accelerate investment in areas ranging from the West Coast to Mozambique.

This week key players in the West Coast Initiative said the riot had been an isolated incident, but admitted that it could not have come at a worse time.

"I have not received one phone call from a sceptical investor, but of course we're worried," West Coast Investment Initiative project manager Dr Laurine Platky said on Friday.

A local official, who asked not to be named, said the investor conference would be the real litmus test. "Until then we'll not really know what the repercussions of the Saldanha incident are," she added.

Wesgro economist Nigel Gwynne-Evans said Tuesday's riot was a one-off incident.

"It took place in a very localised and isolated area in relation to the entire SPP plant. But it cannot have been good for the SDI, or positive for the region."

Platzky said Saldanha Steel was being built in phases, which meant workers would be laid off when their contracts expired.

"The basic concept of an industrial development zone is predicated on predictable industrial and environmental regulation."

"This is to make sure that investors and employees know exactly what is expected of everyone," she added.

(152) ST (com) 21 98



Security, road freight, motor ferry unions threaten wage strike

Pearl Sebolao

TRADE unions in the security, road freight and motor ferry industries announced at the weekend they would embark on a nationwide strike if the stalemate in wage negotiations with employers was not resolved.

Ballooning of members had begun. Transport and General Workers' Union president John Dube said the

decision to strike and embark on go-slows followed a deadlock in wage negotiations between unions and the Security Service Employers' Association and Road Freight Employers' Association.

Dube warned that the strike would have major implications for financial institutions and other related sectors as the unions' members included the cash-in-transit sector.

Phulani Dlamini, a union representative in the road freight industry, said the dispute over wages and conditions of employment was unnecessary.

"This industry was a top

earner last year, with an improvement in profit of a whopping 47%. So they cannot argue that they would not be able to afford reasonable increases," Dlamini said. Workers are demanding a 12% across-the-board wage increase, establishment of an industry provident fund with an equal contribution of 6%, and a 13th cheque equivalent to 75% of salary.

Nico Badenhorst, road freight employers' labour relations director, said the package demanded by the unions reflected in some instances demands for increases of about 50% and 80%.

The employers' wage offer of a 10% increase was above inflation in

many respects, Badenhorst said. Badenhorst believed the dispute could be resolved through negotiations. "We believe the unions demand for a union-controlled provident fund is hampering the negotiation of a settlement on other issues," he said.

The demand, which was contrary to provisions of the national bargaining council constitution, had been referred to arbitration.

Security industry chief negotiator Don Masterson said. "A meeting has been arranged with some of the trade unions for Monday night, so that we can have further talks" and perhaps avert a strike.

Tea farmers in Kenya set to continue strike

BD 9/2/98 (152)
 NAIROBI — The Kenyan tea growers union called on members to continue their one-week strike, newspapers reported yesterday.

On Friday, Agriculture Minister Musalia Mudavadi called a meeting of the union and the parastatal Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA) to thrash out the dispute. Farmers were demanding 20 shillings a kilogram of green leaf and 30 shillings as a second payment bonus. The meeting agreed on 12 shillings a kilogram and 18 shillings bonus, to be paid quarterly. However, the union said on Saturday that members should continue strike action until the agreed payments were made.

The call to stop picking was made by the powerful but unregistered Kenya Union of Small-scale Tea Owners to protest against the KTDA's monopoly powers. "We have stopped picking our tea and since we are the owners of the tea farms, the KTDA should listen to our grievances or else we will continue the strike which will definitely affect the quality and price of tea," a striking farmer said.

The boycott, which got off to a slow start on Monday, came at the same time as a total work stoppage in Sri Lanka over wages. The two countries are the biggest tea producers. Sri Lanka had a record crop of 276,8-million kilograms last year, while Kenya's was 220,7-million kilograms.

Kenyan agriculture ministry statistics show that small-scale farmers produce 60% of Kenya's tea crop.

Traders said increased demand resulted in a surge in prices at the Mombasa auctions. At last week's Monday auction, green leaf was selling at \$3,28/kg compared to \$3,25 the previous Monday.

A shortage caused by rains has also resulted in higher prices for Burundian tea — Sapa-AFP.

Saldanha ~~1989~~ workers to ¹⁹⁸² return to work

Reneé Grawitzky

BO 10/2/98
THOUSANDS of workers are expected to resume work on one section of Saldanha Steel today after the operation was closed last Wednesday after striking workers went on a rampage causing millions of rands damage

An estimated 2 000 workers ran amok, burning buildings and other facilities after a group of workers had been laid off as part of the winding down of construction.

Initial estimates of damage amount to R5m, excluding the costs of closing the operation for nearly a week.

Saldanha Steel chairman Bernard Smith yesterday was still unable to indicate total losses incurred. The construction of Saldanha is supposed to be completed later this year, at which point all of its original workforce of 9 000 workers will be laid off. Once operational, the plant will be manned by 600 people.

The company said yesterday construction would resume at the steel plant today

Uncertainty still surrounded the resumption of operations on the iron-making plant after Saldanha's major contractor, Chicago Brick and Iron (CBI), suffered huge losses when their computer system and documentation were burnt down in one of the fires.

On Sunday CBI published a notice in the media advising workers not to return to work until notified

Saldanha believed construction could resume on the iron-making side by Thursday. Smith said CBI had no infrastructure as yet to take workers back.

Discussions with unions would have to resolve whether workers would be paid for the time this section remained closed

Town struggling to
adjust: Page 12

20 000 truckers vote to strike over pensions ⁽¹⁵²⁾

sowetan 13/2/98

(333)

By Abdul Milazi

ABOUT 20 000 truck drivers will embark on a national strike next week in a move that threatens to bring business to its knees

Transport and General Workers Union (T&G) president June Dube said they had no option but to ballot for a strike when employers refused to accede to workers' wage and conditions of service demands after five months of negotiations

Dube said the major stumbling block was the issue of transferring the control of the road freight industry's provident fund to workers "Workers want to have control over their money and employers are not

willing to accept that"

He said attempts at mediation and arbitration by the the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) failed to resolve the dispute

"We decided to ballot our members last week and the majority voted in favour of a strike"

The Road Freight Employers Association (RFEA) said "We still believe that the existing dispute can be resolved through negotiation"

RFEA director of labour relations Nico Badenhorst said "We believe that the unions' demand for a union-controlled provident fund is hampering the progress of negotiating a settlement on other issues"

The two parties have been negotiating since last September but have not made any progress on other demands since deadlocking on who should control the provident fund

Dube said T&G and six other unions had not placed any other demands on the negotiating table

Badenhorst said the provident fund demand was contrary to the provisions of the National Bargaining Council constitution to which the seven unions were signatories

A national strike by truckers in 1994 almost brought the economy to a standstill until Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and Labour Minister Tito Mboweni intervened to resolve the causes



Motor Transport Workers' Union supporters protested outside the Johannesburg central prison on Friday.

Picture TYRONE ARTHUR

(152)

Cash-in-transit guards plan strike

~~152~~
Dustin Chick

20/6/2/98

THE Motor Transport Workers' Union, which represents cash-in-transit guards and employees, planned to start a country-wide strike as soon as this week, deputy general secretary Emily Fourie, said at the weekend.

Fourie said the union rejected poor working conditions and "arrogance" from management.

Fidelity Guards cash-in-transit CE Pieter Bezuidenhout said the union's action was taken without fully informing the company.

He said a meeting was arranged with the union, which was cancelled after it introduced new conditions.

Bezuidenhout said he was not prepared to fight with the union in the media.

Bezuidenhout claimed the union represented less than 30% of the firm's employees.

He said Fidelity Guards was part of the industry's bargaining council and complied with the Labour Relations Act.

100 000 security guards plan to strike on Monday

Reneé Grawitzky

BD 18/2/98 (152)
 THE security industry could be brought to a standstill on Monday when more than 100 000 security guards plan to embark on a wage strike — unless a deal is struck between eight unions and two employer organisations ahead of the action.

Employers said yesterday the action could have devastating consequences for law and order, while unions accused employers of "divide and rule" tactics to settle individually with unions and workers outside the formal negotiations.

Eight unions in the contract security industry gave employers 48 hours' notice yesterday of their intention to strike in support of a 12% across-the-board increase plus other issues related to the establishment of an industry provident fund.

Employers represented by two employer bodies, the SA National Employers' Association (Sansa) and the Security Service Employer Organisation, have offered a total package of 10%.

Union sources said the formation of the second employer body after a breakaway of a number of security companies from Sansa had caused problems in negotiations.

Sansa chief negotiator Don Masterson said attempts would be made to avert the strike. "If all security guards go on strike, law and order will take a knock as our security guards match the police force in numbers."

The employer bodies requested a meeting with the unions and would call in a facilitator from the commission for conciliation mediation and arbitration to assist in resolving the dispute, he said.

Tourism council looks at new ways to raise funds

Janet Parker

BD 18/2/98
 THE Business Tourism Council was exploring various voluntary levies following the recent resignation of major hotel groups from the national grading and classification scheme.

The resignation had resulted in 80% of the SA Tourism Board's (Satour's) bed levy funding mechanism drying up.

Satour executive director Michael Farr said that while the resignation had not affected the budget for the coming financial year, the loss of about R6m in income had resulted in cutbacks of certain planned activities.

These included a moratorium on staff appointments and savings on marketing in low-yield Asian markets such as Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Acting executive director Colin Walker said the council was discussing voluntary levy options with the industry such as the reintroduction of bed levies, and creating other mechanisms involving airlines, car-hire companies, tour operators, and travel agents. There could be no prescription to the industry, and all levies would be voluntary, he stressed.

The council was also looking to create an awareness campaign on the value of tourism and the role which the public could play in promoting it.

Tourism was one of only two industries in SA in which job creation was growing, said Walker.

In a meeting with Environment and Tourism Minister Pallo Jordan next week, the tourism council aims for progress towards a dedicated tourism fund, which would lead to the phasing out of state funding of Satour.

The fund would need the co-operation of the entire tourism industry, and together with the transformation of Satour, a closer partnership between the private and public sectors could be fostered in which the private sector would have a greater say, he said.

WHITE RIVER — Attorneys yesterday ordered the White River sheriff to confiscate furniture worth R14 000 and electronic goods from Mpumalanga education MEC David Mabuza.

The order against Mabuza by attorneys Hough & Bremner follows his alleged failure to honour an out-of-court settlement to pay accident damages to Medsen Chemist of Nelspruit.

According to court papers, Mabuza rode into a Medsen Chemist delivery bike on the N4 highway in 1996, causing damage estimated at R6 500.

Mabuza was driving a state vehicle at the time, so the damages were not covered by insurance.

After refusing to pay the damages himself, Mabuza was sued by Medsen. Mabuza finally agreed on August 15 last

year to an out-of-court settlement of R13 800 which included Medsen's legal expenses of R7 300.

Sheriff Henry Meyer refused to say yesterday whether he had carried out the order to seize Mabuza's possessions which included, in his leather lounge suite, dining-room suite, fridge freezer and television.

Mabuza was not available for comment yesterday — Sapa.

Electricity

Continued from Page 1

BD 18/2/98
 briefing to the minister as possible, but it will not be a lengthy process. We hope to submit the proposal within weeks." He said Maduna would probably make specific recommendations to the cabinet for a final decision.

However, industry sources expressed concern that the decision on restructuring would be delayed fur-

ther. One person involved in the talks said "The decision is highly politically sensitive and, with a lack of stakeholder consensus, there are fears that government will not make a firm decision until after the 1999 election. This would be disastrous for the sector."

Nonpayment by electricity users is causing grave financial difficulties among local governments, which rely on electricity payments for about 41% of their total income. The problems have also harmed Eskom's ability to meet its electrification targets.

Judgment

Continued from Page 1

BD 18/2/98
 argument that it had been forced to allow flat rates in that year because many townships were not equipped with functioning meters to measure consumption. The flat-rate system was scrapped once meters were installed.

There was no evidence that Walker had suffered materially as a result of the policy. There was no deterioration in services and he was not asked to pay more than he had consumed.

The court rejected the argument that the council was justified in

temporarily suspending legal action against township defaulters to avoid hostility and the vandalism of meters during installation. This amounted to the unfair "singling out" of white residents for credit control action.

The court was obliged, however, to overturn the high court's ruling because the council's incorrect behaviour did not vindicate Walker's refusal to pay for services rendered. He should have sought an order compelling the council to correct its unfair actions.

While this meant the council had succeeded in its appeal, Walker, as the losing party, was not liable for costs because he had been unfairly discriminated against.

Stockbroking

Continued from Page 1

eventually to put at least 13% of BJM in black hands," he said.

The Public Investments Corporation's Isibaya Fund injected R30m for Masimo debentures.

In return Isibaya has received the right to subscribe for preference shares valued at R25m.

Through the scheme, previously disadvantaged people were being

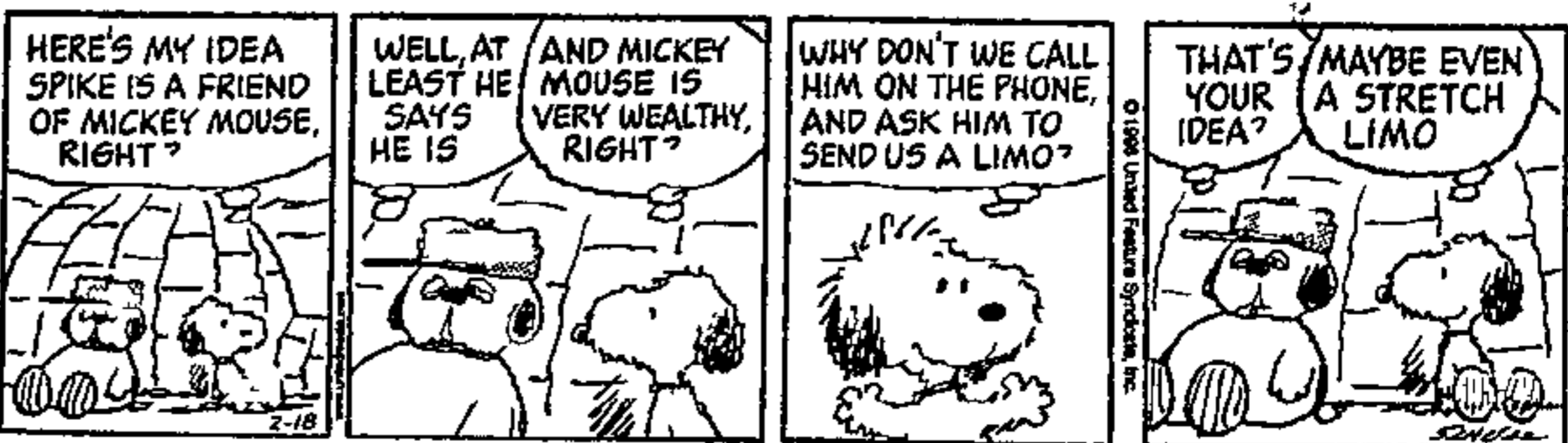
offered 7,5-million convertible debentures valued at 400c each. These would be converted automatically into ordinary shares in 2001.

To qualify for participation in the scheme, applicants were required to make a 10% initial payment of the listing value of the ordinary shares before the offer closed at noon on March 20.

The minimum amount applicants would require to participate was R40. A maximum of 100,000 shares may be purchased. The outstanding balance plus finance charges and costs would be paid by the participants in 2001.

PEANUTS

By Charles Schulz



Guards go on strike

SECURITY guards from 11 trade unions will strike from tomorrow to demand better wages and other benefits. Sunday work. (152) (287)

At a press briefing in Johannesburg yesterday, Ms Emily Fourie of the Professional Transport Workers Union of South Africa said unions wanted a salary increase of 12 percent, an annual bonus which equalled a monthly salary and double pay for Sunday work. The matter was referred to the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) but no solution was found. Unions to participate in the strike include the Transport and General Workers Union, Food and General Workers Union and the National Security Workers Union.

Fourie said employers had offered a six percent salary increase and 20 percent of monthly salary as an annual bonus. Employers were prepared to pay for a day and a half for Sunday work. The strikers will march from Johannesburg's Library Gardens to their employers' premises. The strike will continue until employers agreed to the unions' demands, Fourie said. — Sapa

19/12/1981
Newspaper 19/12/1981

Security guards strike for ⁽¹⁵²⁾ better wages

Star 19/2/98
By VIDA LI SIK

At least 10 000 security guards are expected to leave their posts at shopping malls, supermarkets and financial institutions and take their demands for better pay to the streets tomorrow.

The announcement of a wildcat strike has sparked fears for the safety of consumers at supermarkets, banks and companies employing security guards as they could be the target of criminal elements.

Security guards will gather at the Library Gardens from 7am before marching to the Department of Labour to present a memorandum containing their grievances.

"It will not be a full-blown strike because not all of the centres were notified in time, but it will have horrific implications for guarding in general," said Motor Transport Workers' Union (MTWU) spokesman Emily Fourie.

"The employers' organisation has asked for a meeting with the 10 unions involved, but the workers want them to be presented with something concrete before they call off the strike," she said.

Security guards are demanding a 12% increase in wages, a provident fund and a holiday bonus. If today's talks fail to bring agreement, about 130 000 guards could strike.

Security guards on strike

(182) ARG 20/2/98
Johannesburg - Thousands of security guards went on strike today to push for improved salary packages after attempts to avert the industrial action failed last night.

Employees from more than 15

Gauteng security firms assembled in the Library Gardens at 8.30am to protest against working conditions and poor pay. They planned to hand a petition to Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni. - Argus Correspondent

Thousands of guards go on strike

577
STAFF REPORTERS

In a "show of force", thousands of security guards went on strike this morning to push for improved salary packages after last-minute attempts to avert industrial action failed last night.

Representatives from more than 15 Gauteng security companies began assembling in the Library Gardens at 8.30am as part of the one-day stoppage to protest about working conditions and poor pay.

Later in the morning they will be addressed by representatives from their eight major unions, and a petition will be handed to Labour Minister Tito Mboweni.

Union members are hoping for a 99% turnout of night shift

workers, while some day workers may also join the stoppage.

Chairman of the SA National Security Employers' Association and deputy chairman of Khulani Springbok Patrols, Mick Bartmann, said companies around the country had reported that their workers were taking part in the strike.

"At this stage we are not sure how many guys are involved, but an early guesstimate is that 1 500 to 2 000 from security firms in Johannesburg and Pretoria are involved."

Serious acts of intimidation had been reported, he added.

"We hear that the guys are serious, and the strike will intensify on Monday."

But Fidelity Guards and Coin Security said they noted

no significant action from branches across Gauteng.

According to Emily Fourie, deputy secretary-general of the Professional Transport Workers' Union, the strike would spread nationwide by Monday. About 130 000 guards would participate, she claimed.

Only bank-owned cash-in-transit company SBV Security would not be affected, as staff belonged to the SA Society of Bank Officials, which was not one of the unions in the dispute.

Workers are asking for a 12% increase and employers are offering 10%. The amount of the annual bonus and a provident fund are also on the table.

Armoured vehicles
P.J. 11

Security unions face threat of interdict

DO 27/2/98

(152)

Reneé Grawitzky

SECURITY employers threatened yesterday to apply for an interdict on the eve of a strike which could bring the security industry to a standstill, as close to 100 000 security guards take to the streets today in support of a 12% across-the-board wage increase.

Tension began mounting on Friday when members of the Transport and General Workers' Union went on strike ahead of the start of the national strike today. During a march in Johannesburg an altercation broke out between union members and police. Employers accused the union of attempting to intimidate nonstriking workers.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration has intervened and called on all parties to attend a meeting tomorrow in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

Eight unions in the contract security industry gave employers 48 hours notice on Tuesday of their intention to strike in support of a range of demands, including the establishment of an industry provident fund. The minimum wage for security guards, who work on average a 60-hour week,

range from the lowest of R700 a month to R1 130 a month.

Employers represented by two employer bodies, the SA National Employers' Association (Sansea) and the Security Service Employer Organisation said they had consulted senior counsel. Sansea chief negotiator Don Masterson said employers would give the unions 48 hours notice today of their intention to interdict the strike, which would have a devastating effect on the whole country if it went ahead.

Masterson refused to say on what basis the strike would be interdicted. A labour lawyer believed that the unions had complied with the requirements of the Labour Relations Act.

Professional Transport Workers' Union spokesman Emilie Fourie said it was sad that the parties had to come to this point, especially in an industry which had to be uplifted and an "industry so crucial for the safety and security of all South Africans".

A source said the dispute had been exacerbated by a division between major employers, since a group of employers had split from Sansea late last year. Fourie said divisions also appeared to be looming between the eight unions.

Security guards take hard line on strike action

AKG 23/2/98

Hundreds of security industry workers gathered at the Library Gardens in central Johannesburg today to take part in a protest march to the Department of Labour offices.

The workers planned to hand over a memorandum outlining their demands for better working conditions. (203) (152)

They have embarked on a country-wide strike to demand a 12% wage increase, a 13th cheque and an upgraded status for security guards who have to carry firearms

SA National Security Employment Association chief negotiator Don Masterson said employers would today apply for an urgent interdict in the Labour Court to have the strike declared unprotected.

Meanwhile, employers and unions have been issued with an order by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to attend a joint meeting tomorrow to try to resolve the dispute. - Sapa

Guards vow to embark on strike

Cash-in-transit security men may not be part of striking union members

UNION representatives of security guards warned at the weekend that a full-blown strike would start today if their demand for a 12 percent pay increase is not met.

A protest by security guards at Johannesburg Library Gardens ended peacefully on Friday after 2 000 guards gathered to demand higher wages.

Security guards from Johannesburg, Pretoria and Vereeniging toyed around Library Gardens in central Johannesburg in preparation for a full-blown strike today.

The deputy general secretary of the Professional Transport Workers Union, Ms Emily Fourie, said the strike could cripple South Africa within hours if the

security industry did not accede to their demands.

Spokesman for the union Mr Isaac Khumalo said they expected at least 150 000 security guards from all over Gauteng to join the strike. Employer bodies represented had offered a six percent wage increase earlier this month.

"We will start here again on Monday morning if they do not meet our demands," Khumalo said.

Meanwhile, security employers will today apply for an urgent interdict in the Labour Court to have the planned strike declared unprotected.

Mr Don Masterson, chief negotiator for the SA National Security Employment Association, said last night if the interdict was granted, it would in terms of the Labour Relations Act give employers the power to terminate the services of strikers.

Eleven unions, including the giant Transport and General Workers' Union which started its strike on Friday, would join in, Khumalo said.

It was not clear whether the cash-in-transit security men would also join. Most cash-in-transit workers belong to non-affiliated unions.

Council of South African Banks spokesman Mr Lincoln Mali said the operations of the country's largest cash-in-transit company, SBV, would not be affected by the strike.

Sapa

Guards desert banks, shops

(152)

130 000 staff expected to strike for better working conditions

STAFF REPORTER

Star 23/2/98

Security guards gathered at the Johannesburg Library Gardens from early today on a strike for better working conditions which is expected to affect banks, businesses, shops and homes as they are left unguarded

Bank ATMs were unguarded this morning and entrances to businesses, usually occupied by several security

'10% rise not much on a wage of R700'

guards, were deserted.

More than 130 000 workers nationwide were expected to participate in the strike, upsetting the entire security industry as mass meetings are held in Pretoria, Durban, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. In the smaller centres workers are expected to gather outside their places of work. In Johannesburg, guards gathered to march to the Department of Labour to present a memorandum to minister Tito Mboweni.

The group of toyi-toying guards in Library Gardens said: "Our employers are offering us a 10% wage increase, but we'd like to get a 13th cheque and leave pay. A 10% increase is fine when you earn about

R3 000 but it's not much when you earn R700." The guards will be given 24 hours before the action is declared illegal.

South African National Security Employers' Association chairman Mick Bartmann said "quite a few thousand" security personnel had participated in a run-up protest march on Friday, which had been "a serious day" for the industry.

"We received reports of serious intimidation over the weekend. People were injured, cars were stoned and damaged, and shots were fired on the premises of an East Rand security company on Saturday."

Bartmann said employers and workers were deadlocked over guards' salaries and benefits, and the dispute was now countrywide.

"We have obtained legal opinion and the 11 unions concerned are being served with letters ordering them to call off the strike within 24 hours. If they fail to do so, we will apply for an urgent court interdict."

Employers and security industry unions have been issued with an intervention order by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, requiring them to attend a joint meeting tomorrow.

But Emily Fourie, spokesman for the guarding division's Professional Transport Workers' Union and the cash-in-transit industry's Motor Transport Workers' Union, said the strike would go ahead.

Unhappy security guard says it's time to fight

By Gill Gifford

Vusi (45), a guard who has been employed by one of the largest private, national security companies for seven years, earns a R1 130 salary.

He often puts in 12-hour overtime shifts but still takes home only about R800 at the end of the month.

He has no medical aid or provident fund, and had to pay for his work uniform, which cost R300. Vusi is an E-grade security guard, meaning that he has only basic training for which he had to pay R250. He may not carry a firearm.

He is assigned as a security guard at several premises, where he is required to patrol areas such as parking lots.

"If it rains or it gets very

cold you are exposed. You aren't provided with anything," says Vusi.

Transport costs to and from his daily assignments are deducted from his salary, and are in addition to the costs of getting to work and back.

Vusi lives with his wife, a domestic worker, and four young children in a rented backroom of a house in KwaThema, East Rand. He works from 6am to 6pm, five days a week. He sometimes works a six-day week, for which he is paid one-and-a-half-times the normal rate, he says.

"I wake at about 3am so that I can go by train to work as it is the cheapest. A one-way train ticket is R10, but if I take taxis it's about R40 a day," he claims.

"So today it's time to fight. We can't carry on like this"

Guards' strike hits local security industry

BD 24/2/98

Pule Molebeledi (1572)

THE security industry lost millions yesterday when thousands of security guards joined a countrywide "unprotected" and "unlawful" strike organised by 11 unions, the SA National Security Employers' Association said.

Don Masterson, the association's chief negotiator, said they had notified individual unions to instruct workers to return to work within 24 hours.

Masterson, who said he feared that the industry would lose more money if the strike continued, said the association was preparing an urgent court interdict against the unions.

Jerry Ngcobo, national co-ordinator of the Transport and General Workers' Union, confirmed receipt of notification from the employers' lawyers. He said the strike would continue today despite the threat of an interdict. Thousands of security guards coun-

trywide left bank ATMs, businesses and homes unattended and took to the streets demanding a 12% wage increase across the board.

In Johannesburg security guards marched to the offices of Labour Minister Tito Mboweni and handed in a memorandum detailing their demands. These included a 13th cheque, a bonus scheme, double-time payment for Sundays and the establishment of a national bargaining council.

Unions and employers are due to meet at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration today. They failed to settle earlier this month.

Despite reports of isolated incidents of intimidation, banks, including Absa and Standard, said the strike did not have a significant impact on business. Carina Potgieter, Absa's media manager, said "it was business as usual, except for one case where we were delayed in delivering money. We then ar-

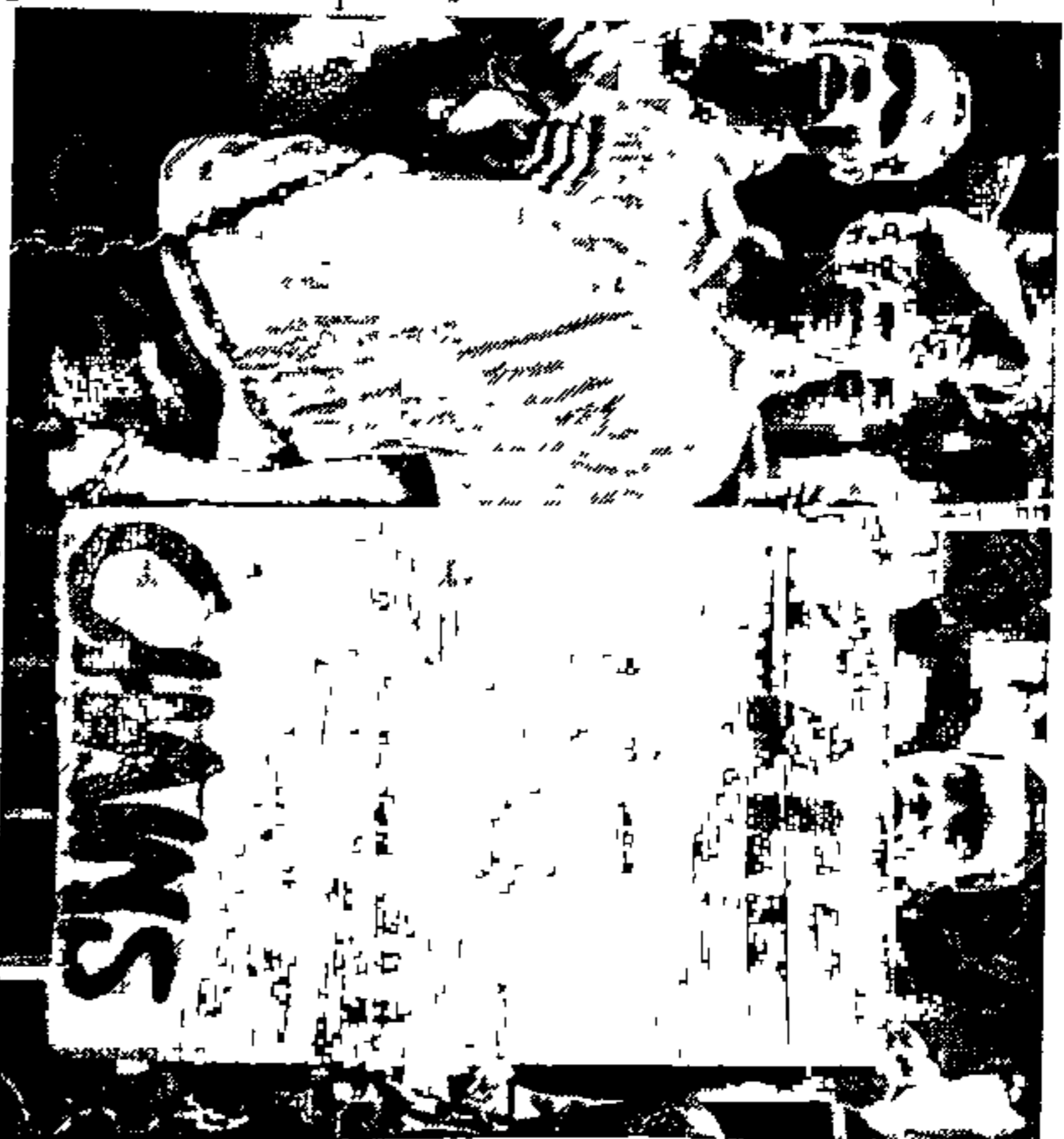
ranged with an independent contractor to deliver money for us."

Standard Bank media relations manager Eric Larsen said the bank was not affected by the strike as most security workers reported for work.

Workers alleged that the industry was exploitative and paid "peanuts". They cited examples of workers earning R300 a month.

A shop steward alleged that some inspectors within the Security Officers' Board — a body regulating the industry — were receiving bribes and ignored unfair labour practices.

Sapa reports three participants in a security guard march in Johannesburg were arrested for assault and intimidation. Police spokesman Supt Chris Wilken said groups on their way to Liberty Gardens pulled security guards on duty into the march. At about 11 20am two guards who refused to take part in the march were beaten up.



Security guards yesterday marched to the Johannesburg offices of Tito Mboweni where they handed over a memorandum.

tion. H
er, S
which
charg

B

Ki

PRET
day at
forme
(CCB
to kill
Webel
Tel
Jacqu
1996,
about
Eugel
Barns
"I
did w
bath
sume

Interdict sought against security strikers

CT (MOR) 24/2/98 (152) (887)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The South African National Security Employment Association (Sansea) had applied for a court interdict against striking security workers after 11 unions ignored the organisation's call to end their strike by 5pm yesterday, said Don Masterson, the chief negotiator of Sansea.

Sansea would be seeking legal opinion on the legality of the nationwide strike, which started last Friday, by an estimated 130 000 security guards

"We are claiming that the strike is not protected, therefore unlawful," Masterson said

The strike was triggered by a deadlock between the parties at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) over a pay rise and conditions of work



INSECURE Frank Chepape, a municipal security worker, with union members during the security officers' strike in Johannesburg yesterday. He was released unharmed. PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

Workers rejected a revised offer by employers of a 10 percent wage increase and a 3 percent contribution for either a provident fund or an annual bonus

Workers are demanding a 12 percent wage rise, a 4 percent contribution by employers towards a provident fund, a thirteenth cheque and double pay for Sunday work

Masterson said he "hoped" a Labour Court hearing on the matter would be granted for Thursday, but the parties were expected to meet at the CCMA offices this morning

Striking unions clash on streets

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — A ban on gatherings of striking security workers in Johannesburg was announced yesterday evening after clashes with police and strikers in the city centre yesterday afternoon

Violence broke out when police tried to move more than 3 000 striking security guards at the Library Gardens to make space for a National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) march

The peaceful NUM march, calling for a moratorium on gold mine retrenchments, proceeded to the Chamber of Mines, where the marchers handed over a memorandum of their demands

The chamber promised to

(287) (152) CT(BR) 25/2/98
look into the mineworkers' grievances during the two-day gold summit scheduled for tomorrow in Johannesburg.

Meanwhile, police used stun grenades, teargas and bird shot when striking security guards, who were armed with bricks, bottles and traditional weapons, charged them Chris Wilken, the police spokesman, said that at least 10 policemen were injured and at least five security guards hospitalised

The nationwide guards' strike will continue today, pending the outcome of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) meeting between the parties

The CCMA meeting was adjourned yesterday to allow the unions to prepare their case

against the employers' application for a court order regarding the legality of the strike

On Thursday, the unions rejected a revised offer of a 10 percent salary increase against their demand of 12 percent

The South African Society of Bank Officials denied claims by the Professional Transport and General Workers' Union that it might join the striking security guards this morning

But more than 50 000 transport workers allied to the Transport and General Workers' Union might join in if there is no settlement over a wage dispute

Transport workers' representatives were still locked in talks with employers late yesterday



A traffic officer extinguishes a car set alight by striking security guards in Johannesburg yesterday.

Picture AP

Police, security guards clash in city centre

Pule Molelebedi
and Pearl Sebolao

POLICE threw stun grenades and opened fire with rubber bullets at striking security guards in the Johannesburg city centre yesterday

Police said there had been some shooting from the crowd, and security guards had thrown stones and bricks at police. At least six policemen and three security guards were injured.

A bakkie belonging to Peaceforce security company was set alight.

Police spokesman Supt Chris Wilken said nobody had been arrested.

BD 25/2/95
Police used razor wire to cordon off the area around the Library Gardens when security guards, who had been there since the morning, refused to make way for a National Union of Mineworkers' protest march.

Police cordoned off the area to prevent the guards from interfering with the NUM march. The guards were trapped behind the barricade until 6pm when the police removed the razor wire, after the NUM march ended.

The security guards were protesting in support of a three-day old wage strike. Jerry Ngcobo, national coordinator of the Transport and General

(152)
Workers' Union, said security guards from the Western Cape and Eastern Cape would join the 11 unions already on strike today.

The security guards are demanding a 12% wage increase across the board plus a 13th cheque, a bonus scheme, double time payment for Sundays and a national bargaining council.

Negotiations in the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration stalled when the unions indicated they would begin discussions only after employers agreed to withdraw their interdict application against the strike. Talks will, however, resume today.

Governmental organ...
...arged yesterday

caul... of... to bare... in a...
... chairman...





THE STAR

Protest smash: a non-striking security guard douses a flaming van which strikers deliberately crashed into the wall of a furniture shop

Police ready for strike violence

ARG 25/2/98

Johannesburg - Police will throw a security net around the Johannesburg city centre today after yesterday's march by striking security guards led to mayhem

In the most violent day in the city centre since the Shell House shootings four years ago, police fired tear-gas, rubber bullets, stun grenades and threw a razor-wire cordon around the Library Gardens, where thousands of security guards had gathered for the second day. Strikers pelted the police with half-bricks and bottles, and crashed a van into a furniture shop - Argus Correspondent



Confrontation: policemen arrest a striking security guard during the protest



10 cops injured in clashes with striking security men

Sowetan 25/2/98

(152) (207)

By Muzi Mkhwanazi

SEVERAL civilians and at least 10 policemen were injured in clashes between thousands of striking security workers and police in Johannesburg yesterday afternoon.

The clashes caused parts of the city centre to come to a virtual standstill.

Police had to use razor wire to cordon off some streets and block off the striking security guards who had earlier demonstrated at Johannesburg's Library Gardens in support of a demand for a 12 percent pay increase from their employers, the South African National Security Employers' Association.

Chaos broke out when the strikers refused to make way for a National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) march.

Police fired stun grenades, teargas and rubber bullets to disperse the striking workers. They were also accused of using live ammunition but this could not be confirmed.

Johannesburg police spokesman Superintendent Chris Wilken said police were forced to fire at the workers because they were throwing stones and bottles at them.

He denied police had used live ammunition.

"Members of the NUM were supposed to have used the same venue to stage a picket demonstration.

"They have obtained permission for the event. We are trying to disperse the crowd so that the NUM members can stage their demonstration," Wilken told *Sowetan* during the chaos.

Wilken said five policemen were

seriously injured and had to be taken to hospital. The others received minor injuries.

Last night police announced a ban on gatherings by the striking security industry workers in Johannesburg.

However, Transport and General Worker's Union general secretary Randall Howard urged workers to turn out in large numbers today to continue their pressure on the employers to accede to their demands for a 12 percent pay increase, company contributions to a provident fund and an annual 13th cheque.

Howard also said the union's lawyers were planning to oppose an application for an interdict declaring the strike unlawful.

● See page 6

Employers in bid to ⁽¹⁵²⁾ ~~(207)~~ end strike ^{ARG 26/1/98} by guards

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - Security industry employers will apply for an interdict in the Labour Court today to prevent security guards continuing a strike which has already cost the industry millions of rands and resulted in violence and chaos in Johannesburg.

The South African National Security Employers' associations and unions have deadlocked in talks aimed at reaching agreement on wage increases.

Employers are offering a 10% across-the-board salary increase, a 3% contribution towards the workers' provident fund and a 20% annual bonus.

Emily Fourie, a spokesman for the Professional Transport Workers' Union, said the offer was unacceptable, considering that the majority of workers earned only about R1 130 a month. The unions are demanding a 12% salary increase, a 100% 13th cheque, double pay on Sundays and improved benefits.

Mr Fourie said last night that the unions would oppose the interdict application and would meet early today to discuss the issue before going to court.

The strike, which began on Monday, turned ugly when guards and police clashed violently in the Library Gardens on Tuesday.

Don Masterson, president of the South African National Security Employers' Association, said they wanted the strikers back at work as soon as possible to restore some normality to the industry.

Police spokesman Chris Wilken said the unions had successfully applied to continue gathering in a field next to the Workers' Library in Newtown until March 3. He confirmed police had opened a case against the unions for gathering illegally at Library Gardens on Tuesday and that the six policemen who were injured in the clashes had laid charges of assault.

Security guards' strike deepens

Two uniformed security men run for their lives after being stripped naked

By Abdul Mliazi

ESTERDAY'S third protest gathering of disgruntled security guards in Johannesburg was marred by ugly incidents of intimidation and assault of a shopkeeper and two guards who were going to work.

The two uniformed guards were passing Library Gardens when they were assaulted and stripped naked by some of the strikers, and had to run for their lives only in their underpants.

The second incident occurred at 11 30am in Jeppe Street where a small group of strikers, who were marching to the Workers' Library in Newtown, forced open the door at CMC Wholesalers and forced shopkeeper Mr Bruce Shabalala to join the march.

They allegedly stole two dozens of towels from the shop. Shabalala said about five or six people burst into the shop as he was trying to close the door when the marchers passed by.

grabbed him and dragged him outside, while one of them took two packets containing two dozens of body towels. The strikers were moved to the Workers' Library after a ban on Tuesday night prohibiting them from gathering in the city centre. Their permit to gather at Library Gardens had also expired.

Leaders of the 11 security industry unions taking part in the strike yesterday appealed for discipline from their members and asked the strikers not to attack anyone on their way home.

Transport and General Workers' Union national chairman Mr Jackson Simon said the unions and employers had failed yet again to reach a settlement, and the employers had threatened to go ahead today with their application for an interdict against the strike.

"Tomorrow we are still gathering here. Employers have not moved, they have instead said we have until five o'clock to respond to their 10 percent offer or they will go ahead with their application tomorrow," Simon said.

Employers have also rejected the workers' demand for a provident fund in the industry and for security guards to get bonuses.

"We are going back to the CCMA (Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration), not to negotiate this time but to honour our commitment," Simon said.

Chief negotiator for the unions Ms Emily Fourie said "We have sought legal opinion and our case is very strong. But we will wait until tomorrow to see what the employers do."

(152) ~~152~~ 26/2/98

newspaper



Journal 26/2/98

Codes of conduct for picketing out

By Shadrack Mashalaba

THE Management Committee of the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) yesterday released codes of conduct for picketing and retrenchments which will serve as key guidelines in the labour market

Addressing a media briefing in Johannesburg yesterday, Nedlac executive director Jayendra Naidoo said it was up to all stakeholders to ensure the codes reached factory workers

The codes will provide guidelines to assist employers, employees, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, the Labour Courts and the South African Police Services in interpreting and applying the Act

Key aspects of the picketing code includes a registered trade union must organise a picket, pickets on the company premises require permission from the employer, picketing rules must be negotiated by the employer and trade union before it begins and the police have a duty to uphold the law, and may take reasonable measures to keep the

peace during picketing

Nedlac agreed that the picketing code will determine the outcome of the way police behave in situations of labour disputes, where they will be ultimately put to the test

If the iron-fist attitude of police in the unfolding security guards strike, is anything to go by, things do not bode well

The guidelines covering retrenchments includes clarity on the understanding of structural needs of the employer, and consultation should be an alternative measure to avoid dismissals of workers

The Last in First Out principle, sometimes referred to as the "Lifo" principle, should apply only if it does not undermine an agreed affirmative action programme

Ministry of Labour director-general Les Kettleidas said the Government was relieved that an agreement had been reached to deal with the adversarial relationship which previously existed in the labour market

Both business and labour welcomed the code

Y Security bosses seek ban on strike

STAFF REPORTERS

The security industry will seek an interdict in the Labour Court today to prevent security guards from continuing their strike which has cost millions of rands and brought violence and chaos to the Johannesburg CBD.

Employers and unions have struggled all week to reach agreement on wage increases, but the talks have deadlocked.

Employers are offering a 10% across-the-board increase, but unions have rejected the offer.

"We want a 12% increase, which is not unreasonable if you consider that most security workers earn about R1 130. It's only an extra R137 a month that we want," said Emily Fourie, spokesman for the Professional Transport Workers' Union.

Workers also want a 4% company contribution to a

provident fund and a 13th cheque. Employers have offered a 3% provident fund contribution and no annual bonus unless it comes from the provident fund contribution.

Security guards were bitter because they felt cheated by their employers, Fourie said.

"They face death at the hands of violent criminals every day, and when they die or are injured there is not even any life assurance or disability benefit for them

"They guard beautiful homes and expensive office complexes where they see all these luxuries, and they haven't even got food to put on their tables at home

"They see an industry that is expanding and flourishing because there's such a demand for security guards, but they don't see any of the profits coming to them," she said.

Employers did not seem to

have a social conscience, Fourie said.

"We're only asking for the basics. Everyone should have a provident fund because it's a drain on the country that people should be dependent on the Government when they retire."

Unions would oppose the interdict that employers were seeking, Fourie said.

Don Masterson, president of the South African National Security Employers' Association, said employers wanted the strikers back at work as soon as possible to restore some normality to the industry

The unions also wanted the dispute resolved quickly, Fourie said.

Yesterday guards gathered at Johannesburg's Library Gardens and marched to Newtown.

Six policemen injured in Tuesday's clashes with strikers in the CBD had laid charges of assault, Wilken added.

SPAW 26/2/98

Deadlock in talks between security guards and employers

60 26/2/98 TALKS between striking security union representatives and the SA National Security Employers Association (Sansea) deadlocked yesterday, with unions set to contest an interdict application by employers that the strike be declared illegal.

Professional Transport Workers' Union spokesman Emily Fourie said the union would oppose the interdict application at the Labour Court in Johannesburg today.

Fourie said the unions would meet to discuss a plan for the day before going to court.

She said Sansea sent representatives to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration offices yesterday.

It was still taking part in negotiations, she said, although the delegation disappeared after a caucus session earlier in the day.

Security guards started a nationwide strike on Monday, demanding a 12% salary increase, a 13th cheque and double pay on Sundays.

Employers have offered a 10% increase and a 13th cheque of 20% of one month's salary. They threatened to apply for a court interdict today if the unions did not accept their salary offer.

The Transport and General Workers' Union's (TGWU's) Jackson Simon told a gathering of about 3 000 strikers in Newtown, Johannesburg, that Sansea had to withdraw its threat to seek a court interdict.

"We are not going to negotiate under intimidation.

"We cannot negotiate while guns are pointed at our heads," he said.

Union leaders asked workers to step forward with the names of strikers who were injured in Tuesday's clashes with police at the Library Gardens.

TGWU spokesman Jerry Ngcobo said about eight guards were injured in the clashes.

He said police at Johannesburg Central police station refused to open a case of assault on workers by police — Sapa

Employer body warns striking security guards of dismissals

DD 27/2/98 (152)

Pule Molebeledi

LAWYERS representing the SA National Security Employers' Association yesterday warned security guards of dismissals if they persisted with their unprotected strike.

The warning came during arguments in the Labour Court in Johannesburg, where the association's lawyers said that their clients were suffering damages running into millions a day as a result of the strike.

A Loxton, representing the association, argued that the strike was illegal and unprotected as it contravened a binding collective wage agreement reached by the two parties. The agreement expires in April.

The association applied for a court interdict after failing to reach a wage settlement with eight unions in the industry at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration this week.

Employers wanted the court to interdict the unions from participating in an illegal and unprotected strike.

Thousands of security guards

started strike action on Monday, demanding a 12% wage increase, double pay for Sundays and a 13th cheque. Employers offered a 10% increase and a 13th cheque of 20% of one month's salary.

Judgment on the urgent interdict would be made today, Judge Raymond Zondo told the court yesterday.

Hilton Cheadle, representing the eight unions, opposed the application and argued that the employers' construction of a contract was inconsistent with collective bargaining practices.

He said that it was general practice in labour relations in SA to start negotiations for the next agreement during the currency of the agreement concluded in the previous round of collective bargaining.

Cheadle submitted that the dispute brought by employers before the court was not genuine and that the approach was not reasonable.

Dustin Chick reports that the Institute for Security Studies has come out against moves to grant security guards more policing powers until the debate surrounding the transformation of the en-

tire industry was completed.

The institute said arguments by the Security Officers' Board that the extension of its powers was compatible with the constitution, on the grounds that it was aimed at allowing them to make a meaningful contribution to the safeguarding of the public, was flawed.

Mark Shaw, head of the institute's Safety in Governance Programme, said granting security officers the same powers as the police was effectively a move which would allow the public to buy their own police. The national police service was empowered by government and was in turn accountable to it, while private police forces would be accountable to paying customers, he said.

Shaw said that the constitution (and especially the Bill of Rights) guaranteed equality for all South Africans, which the creation of a number of private police forces would take away.

The rapid growth of the security industry has prompted a series of calls for greater regulation, with government passing the Security Officers' Board Amendment Act.

Court ousts bid to end guard strike

(152)

Johannesburg - A bid by security guard employers to have a strike by union members declared illegal was dismissed by the Labour Court today.

In his judgment, Judge Raymond Zondo said the unions' wage demands related to the 1998/99 period, which was not covered by a previous collective agreement between employers and unions.

Security guards went on strike on Monday over demands for a 12% wage increase.

They took to the streets of Johannesburg this week in protest against the South African National Security Employers' Association offer of 10% increases.

"It is artificial to define issues of disputes without giving a period of implementation," said Judge Zondo.

"The date of implementation is as essential an element in the issue of the dispute as the amount which is demanded."

The association was granted leave to appeal against the judgment. - Sapa

ART 27/2/98

Guards assemble again

(152) *Sowetan 27/2/98*
SECURITY guards will assemble at the Workers Garden in Newtown, Johannesburg, this morning to hear what progress has been made with an interdict application by employers to stop them from continued strike action, Transport and General Workers Union spokesman Mr Jerry Ngcobo said yesterday

The SA National Security Employers Association (Sansea) applied to the Labour Court in Johannesburg yesterday for an interdict to have the strike action declared illegal. Eight unions representing security workers opposed the application.

Security guards embarked on a nationwide strike on Monday, demanding a 12 percent salary increase, a six percent provident fund contribution, a 100 percent annual bonus and double pay on Sundays.

Employers have offered a 10 percent increase, a three percent provident fund contribution with an annual bonus worked into the package, and argued that workers already received double pay on Sundays.

In its application Sansea is arguing that unions had failed to comply with a section of the new Labour Relations Act - Sapa

Help us wash dirty (152) linen, Duarte is told

Star 27/2/98 (27)
BY CECILIA RUSSELL

Gauteng MEC for safety and security Jessie Duarte and her departmental head, Mkhabela Sibeko, had not fully co-operated with the commission, said Niel de Villiers, who is leading evidence for the commission.

The commission had not been able to limit the scope of the inquiry to specific allegations because we "have not received or been provided with any relevant documents from Mr Sibeko or Mrs Duarte," De Villiers said yesterday. He was speaking during the fourth day of public hearings into allegations of corruption and mismanagement on the part of Duarte and her department.

De Villiers said that many of the allegations could be settled without leading evidence but his investigation was hamstrung without Duarte's and Sibeko's co-operation and he called on them to "help him".

This particularly applied to allegations of mismanagement which needed to be dealt with sensitively, De Villiers said.

"We are airing the dirty linen of the department in public. If it (the department) has to

function with integrity and without the impression among the public that it's a waste of time .. then we need to deal with the matter with sensitivity," De Villiers said.

However, he said the allegations were serious.

"There is evidence that the department was not a happy ship, there are great divisions in the department and allegations of favouritism," he added.

De Villiers said there were allegations that rules were not uniformly applied.

Edmund Wessels, advocate for Theo Burgers the departmental official who Duarte suspended and later had to reinstate, said this favouritism could be demonstrated by the R75 000 used to attempt "convict" Lerato Maruping last year for making an overpayment, when no disciplinary procedures had been brought against a member of the department who was involved in three accidents using state vehicles, all without having a valid driving licence.

The commission was adjourned until Monday after Duarte's advocate, Reenen Potgieter, assured the inquiry of his clients' co-operation.

Angry guards' dispute set to continue

By ZOLILE NQAYI

THE LABOUR dispute between security industry employers and security guards is set to continue this week after the Labour Court ruled on Friday that the security guards' strike action was legal.

Security guards have been on strike since Monday and the strike is believed to have cost the industry millions.

Last week the striking guards clashed with the police in the Johannesburg CBD. Six policemen and a number of security guards were injured.

The court's decision followed an application by

the South African National Security Employers for a court interdict declaring the strike illegal, and therefore preventing them from continuing with the action.

The strike came after negotiations between employers and guards had deadlocked. Unions representing the guards are demanding a 12-percent wage increase and a number of benefits - including a 4-percent contribution from employers to a provident fund - and an annual bonus.

Employers are offering a 10-percent increase across-



GUARDING THE GUARDS... A security guard is escorted away by cops after allegedly being beaten by another security guard.

the-board, but union representatives have rejected the offer.

George Mabitla, the general secretary of the South African Security Workers' Union, said the employers' offer was "too little in view of the fact that some of the security guards are earning as little as R1 300 a month" without any benefits.

"The strike is still on, but that does not close the door on negotiations with employers," Mabitla told City Press.

□ Meanwhile, the security guards' strike action has affected most retailers.

Some of the major chain stores in the CBD were forced to use a single entrance manned by casual staff.

(152)

~~(152)~~

CP 113/98

Star 2/3/98
Parties optimistic over agreement
to end strike by security guards
(152)

By MBANGWA KABA

As the strike by security guards enters its 11th day, workers' unions and employers are optimistic about reaching an agreement today.

Last night, delegates from both parties were in a positive mood as they prepared for today's meeting.

Mick Bartmann, chairman of the South African National Security Employers Association (Sansea), said: "We shall be making new proposals to the unions and we hope to reach agreement."

Transport and General Workers' Union national coordinator Gerry Ngcobo said: "We are keen to have agreement on this matter."

During the last round of talks between the groups, workers demanded a 12% salary increase, a 4% company contribution to a provident fund and an annual 13th cheque bonus. But a deadlock was reached when employers refused to move on their offer of a 10% salary increase, a 3% provident fund contribution, and no bonus unless it is drawn from the provident fund money.

On Friday an interdict lodged in the Labour Court by Sansea to declare the strike illegal was dismissed with costs by Mr Justice Zondo.

The strikers were expected to gather again this morning at the Workers' Library in Newtown.

Victory for security guards

Labour Court dismisses employers' application against employees' action

By Abdul Milazi

A GROUNDSWELL of anger among security industry workers may reach a crescendo as the one-week strike by security guards intensifies this week after the Labour Court dismissed the employers' application for an interdict against the workers' action at the weekend.

The South African National Security Employers Association (Sansca) applied for an interdict on Friday to declare the security guards' strike illegal and unprotected in a bid to force workers to return to work.

Judge Raymond Zondo said the issue of wage demands by the unions related to the 1998-99 period, which was not regulated by the previous collective agreement between employers and unions in the sector.

At the centre of the strike, which has been marred by violence, is the workers' demand for better working conditions, including the establishment

of a pension-provident fund, medical aid scheme and danger allowance.

These are in addition to a 12 per cent wage increase demand, while employers are only prepared to offer 10 per cent.

According to the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) the unions have for years only negotiated wage increases and not other benefits. Employers argue that the other demands were not part of the wage package.

Basic benefits

The eleven unions in the security industry, led by the TGWU, the sector's largest union, say it is time security guards enjoyed certain basic benefits. Currently there are no benefits in the industry.

A number of non-striking security guards have been assaulted by the strikers since the strike began, as black guards gathered at the Library Gardens from Monday to Friday without fail to voice their grievances.

~~152~~
152
Sowetan
2/3/98

Security strike unresolved

Pearl Sebolao

(152) (287) BD 3/3/98

A MEETING between security worker's unions and employers failed to reach an agreement yesterday

Union sources said the unions yesterday revised their overall demand from 19% to 17%, to encourage employers to increase their offer

However, security industry chief negotiator Don Masterson denied this and said the revised 17% package was tabled last week and had been rejected by employers

Masterson said the employers had lodged an appeal against the Labour Court decision on Friday which dismissed their application for an interdict against the workers to have the strike declared illegal and unprotected. The hearing would be held tomorrow

He said, however, they would continue negotiating with the unions and were also "looking at their position"

He said the strike, which was marred by incidents of intimidation and violence last week, had cost employers about R30m in lost revenue. The workers were estimated to have lost about R20m in earnings since the strike began

Transport & General Workers' Union spokesman Jerry Ngcobo said the unions would intensify strike action this week and workers would continue to gather at the Workers Library in Newton every day

Police spokesman Inspector Mark Reynolds said the gathering by about 1 000 striking security workers at the Workers' Library yesterday was without incident. However, the police would continue to monitor the area

The Pretoria High Court last night granted an urgent interdict in favour of Coin Security Group prohibiting certain workers from intimidating management and employees, Masterson said

Guards' strike: no end in sight

THE strike by security guards entered its second week yesterday with no end in sight as talks between unions and employers remain deadlocked

According to South African National Security Employers Association (Sansea) chief negotiator Mr Don Masterson, the strike has so far cost about R70 million. Workers have lost about R16,5 million in earnings.

About 30 000 workers from nine unions embarked on a nationwide strike last Monday, demanding a 12 percent salary increase, a six percent provident fund contribution, a 100 percent annual bonus and double pay on Sundays.

Employers have offered a 10 percent increase, a three percent provident fund contribution and an annual bonus worked into the package. They argued that workers already received double pay on Sundays.

Sansea's application to the Labour Court to declare the strike illegal and unprotected was dismissed with costs last Friday.

Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) national industry coordinator Mr Jerry Ngcobo said there had been no talks at the weekend. They had asked for a meeting with employers to resolve the dispute.

Sansea will lodge an appeal against the Labour Court ruling tomorrow.

Ngcobo said employers were wasting their money. "I think the appeal is a racist thing because the ruling was made by a black judge" - *Sowetan*.

Sowetan 3/13/98



ANC-Aids scandal on the brew

Sowetan 3/3/98

DP wants drug link investigated

THE Democratic Party has asked public protector Mr Selby Baqwa to investigate whether the African National Congress had a financial interest in the development of the Aids drug Virodene P058

Documents in the party's possession indicated that the ANC was promised a six percent stake in the company developing the drug, Cryopreservation Technologies (CPT), DP health spokesman Mike Ellis said at a media briefing yesterday

"We also know that the Minister of Health (Dr Nkosazana Zuma) has at least considered taking legislative steps to help Virodene circumvent the problems it faced - particularly with the Medicines Control Council (MCC)"

Ellis said Zuma had told a World Aids Day rally in Pretoria last year that

dying Aids patients "willing to take responsibility for their actions" should not be prevented from using Virodene

She was also quoted as having said she wanted "an enabling law that will allow me to overrule the Medicines Control Council"

Ellis said the DP also had evidence that Deputy President Thabo Mbeki - during a series of meetings with warning members of CPT between December 6 and 9 last year - brokered an agreement in terms of which the affairs of the company would have been administered by a government appointee, paid out of the public purse

"There are very strong grounds for suspecting that these interventions by senior members of the Cabinet were made to advance the financial interests of the ANC" - *Sapa*

Pick 'n Pay staff down tools

By Abdul Milazi (152)

CLERICAL staff and junior management employees at Pick 'n Pay in Highgate, Johannesburg, downed tools yesterday in protest against written warnings handed out to them by head office for "holding an unauthorised meeting" at the weekend

A manager, who did not want to be named, said the problem started when head office unilaterally transferred the Highgate branch's administration responsibilities to the Steeldale branch

"When the administration was moved to Steeldale, management at head office did not employ more staff to deal with the work load. We held a meeting with our Steeldale colleagues on Friday to ask them what action we should take," said the manager

Pick 'n Pay spokesman Mr Frans van der Walt said staff from the Highgate, Boksburg and Steeldale branches had requested a meeting on Friday, but head office had objected because it was the busiest day of the week

Sowetan 3/3/98



After retirement ... no

mercy for security guard

Sowetan 3/3/98

By Abdul Millazi

AFTER working in the security industry for 46 years, Boy Wilfred Thabethe (62) will not have a cent to his name when he retires in three years' time

Since he started working as a security guard at the age of 16, the only money Thabethe has received has been his monthly wages - the industry offers no benefits whatsoever (not even pension or medical aid)

He is one of the thousands of security guards from 11 trade unions who took to the streets last week to demand better working conditions

They are demanding the establishment of a provident fund, medical aid scheme, overtime pay and double pay for Sunday work. They are also demanding a 12 percent pay increase (employers are offering 10 percent)

Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) national industry coordinator Jerry Ngcobo says it is high time the security industry treated workers with respect. Security guards face life-threatening dangers at work but are not insured by employers and do not receive danger pay. Thabethe says the establishment of

a pension or provident fund in the industry would be a step forward "to at least have something to take care of a person when he retires"

"Time is not on my side and I have no hope of getting anything for my old age. I will retire with nothing after all these years," he says

"We are not supposed to become ill. When one falls ill, employers deduct money even if you produce a doctor's certificate"

Physical violence

He says they are subjected to physical violence by their white supervisors when they are found sleeping or resting and are often fired without warning, sometimes without pay

For the past week Thabethe and his colleagues have been gathering at the Library Gardens in Johannesburg to draw attention to their plight

Scores of security guards were injured when members of the South African Police Service fired rubber bullets at strikers in a confrontation between the two groups in the city centre

The police claim they were provoked by the strikers, who allegedly threw stones at them. Strikers claim

they were provoked by members of the SAPS

For Thabethe it does not matter who is right or wrong, all he is concerned about is seeing an improvement in his working conditions. He says the city violence overshadowed the workers' "justified" grievances

He cannot remember how many times he has been attacked at work and while going to work. "In all instances I lost my pay while I was hospitalised"

He argues that security guards are in a hopeless situation as the Security Officers' Board, which is supposed to look after their interests, is manned by their employers

"How can we take our grievances to them when they are the problem?" asks Thabethe

South African National Security Employers Association (Sansa) chief negotiator Don Masterson told *Sowetan* they were "very keen to resolve the matter as soon as possible"

An application to declare the security guards' strike illegal and unprotected was dismissed with costs by the Labour Court in Johannesburg at the weekend



Boy Thabethe ... he will not have a cent to his name when he retires after almost five decades in the security industry.

PIC ANTONIO MUCHAVE

Security unions reject Mboweni involvement

Pule Molebeledi

(152)

UNIONS representing striking security guards yesterday rejected employers' moves to request Labour Minister Tito Mboweni to intervene in the labour dispute which looks set to enter its third week unresolved.

Employers and unions failed once again to reach a settlement at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration yesterday.

Workers, who have been on strike since last week, are demanding a revised 17% from 19% overall package while the employers are offering a 13% package.

Don Masterson, chief negotiator of the SA National Security Employers' Association, said they had not reached any agreement at the commission.

Realising that neither party could move on its stance, Masterson said, the association had then proposed to involve Mboweni and

request him to refer the matter to the wage board.

Randall Howard, secretary general of the Transport and General Workers' Union, rejected the employers' proposal to request Mboweni to intervene as the unions believed parties must demonstrate maturity and the political will to resolve the matter themselves. "We will take legal advice, but insist that primary parties must find a resolution to this matter," he said.



Norwich Holdings S.A Limited

Reg No 95/10366/06

Additional disclosures:

Norwich provides the following information in addition to information set out in paragraph 2 ("Holdings") on page 23 of, and on the same basis as the information set out in the defence document dated and issued on Monday, 2 March 1998;

1. Funds, the investments of which are managed by a subsidiary of Norwich, held 1 120 274 Aflife shares on 31 August 1998, being the last practicable date prior to the finalisation of the defence document.
2. Funds, the investments of which are managed by a subsidiary of Norwich, held 10 679 883 Norwich shares on 20 February 1998, being the last practicable date prior to the finalisation of the defence document.
3. Save as set out in the table below there were no dealings by funds, the investments of which are managed by a subsidiary of Norwich, in Aflife and Norwich shares in the period commencing six months prior to the date on which Aflife's firm intention to make the offer was published in the press, and ending on 20 February 1998, being the last practicable date prior to finalisation of the defence document.

Date	Dealings in Norwich Shares			Dealings in Aflife Shares	
	Purchases	Sales	Average share price (cents per share)	Purchases	Sales
04-Aug-97	30 000		938		
05-Aug-97	56 300		951		
06-Aug-97	32 200		951		

'Plot to sow chaos' at Saldanha

From page 1

ARG 4/3/98

When it seems that construction deadlines will not be met, a labour broker approaches management and offers the services of skilled artisans at a fee above the market rate to finish the project, the report says. Labour brokers are alleged to be behind the syndicate.

Initially, workers at Saldanha said violence erupted when 20 of their colleagues were randomly fired. They said they were not happy with their diet and on-site living conditions.

The report says the workers' 18 grievances were not of such a nature that they would have led to violence.

Mr Williams has had meetings with police, intelligence officers and various ministries over the past week to brief them about the situation.

The report names Jumbo Solomons, the outspoken self-appointed leader of workers at Saldanha Steel, as leader of the instigators. He was among 20 independent contractors demobilised last month.

He was arrested last week on allegations relating to the violence and burning of property at the plant.

He is out on bail, but attempts to speak to him have been unsuccessful. His brother, Mario Solomons, told the Cape Argus Jumbo Solomons was in Durban and couldn't be reached.

Mr Williams's allegations have been confirmed by Numsa and the Metal and Electrical Workers Union, which have conducted their own investigations into the causes of the violence at Saldanha Steel.

Numsa organiser for the Saldanha area Karl Cloete also has compiled a confidential report on the causes of the violence. It names Jumbo Solomons as the alleged ringleader of the instigators.

"The bottom line of this sinister group is that they stop at nothing short of their aims and objectives. In the event of there being opposition to their plans, they would simply kill those who stood in their way," he said.

Mr Cloete added that in the past two weeks he had had death threats. He had told police about this.

Mr Cloete's report also suggests the involvement of well-known Cape Flats gangsters. This allegation could not be confirmed, however.

Mr Cloete said: "Labour has become an expensive and profitable commodity to sell. That is why you have syndicates of this nature wanting to invade the labour market."

Saldanha Steel chairman Bernhard Smith confirmed that management had similar suspicions.

Sinister syndicate 'behind Saldanha chaos'

THABO MABASO
BUSINESS REPORTER

A sinister syndicate which preys on construction sites, fomenting labour unrest for profit, has been blamed for violence that halted the multi-million-rand Saldanha Steel project last month.

The claim is contained in a confidential report to Labour Minister Tito Mboweni by

the provincial director of the Department of Labour, Brian Williams.

The allegation is supported by the powerful National Union of Metal Workers, which says the group will stop at nothing in pursuit of its aims and will simply kill those who stand in its way.

Mr Williams's report recommends that Mr Mboweni facilitates the establishment of a taskforce, comprising police, intelligence

personnel and the ministries of finance and trade and industry, to investigate the activities of the syndicate.

The report alleges the syndicate's modus operandi is to infiltrate construction sites using artisans who instigate uprisings by exploiting workers' demands.

In most instances, the workers go on the

To page 2

(152)

ARG 4/3/98

(152)

ARG 4/3/98

Pule Molebeledi

AN end to the two-week security guards' strike that has cost more than R60m in lost earnings and wages seemed to be in sight with both parties likely to settle at 14%

Employers were still in caucus late last night, considering labour's re-

Security guards gun for 14% settlement in wage dispute

~~207~~ (15) vided demand at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

But sources have indicated that employers had moved to 13,5%

They are expected to move up to 14% and settle with the unions

Employers have until yesterday stuck to the 13% wage package offer while the unions moved

last week from their demand of a 19% wage increase to 17%

Last week, an application by the employers to have the strike declared illegal was dismissed by the Labour Court. They subsequently lodged an appeal which is scheduled to be heard today

BD 5/3/98

Textile union backs plan to strike over education cuts

Province slated for teacher crisis

THABO MABASO
BUSINESS REPORTER

The Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) has thrown its weight behind the planned strike by the Congress of South African Trade Unions in protest against cuts in the provincial education budget.

Sactwu is Cosatu's largest affiliate in the Western Cape and wields considerable power in the clothing, textile and leather sectors of the provincial economy

The strike is planned as a protest against teacher cuts in the Western Cape. Cosatu accuses the department of unnecessarily retrenching teachers

Sactwu national education officer André Kriel said his organisation was not convinced that the provincial budget met the need to transform the lives of working peo-

'Province must accept the financial assistance offered by the Government'

ARG 5/3/98

ple. The gap between rich and poor was growing, he said

Cosatu provincial secretary general Tony Ehrenreich said "The provincial government must accept the financial assistance offered by the Government and use these finances to remedy the funding crisis in education"

Finance Minister Trevor Manuel has offered grants to cash-strapped provinces on

condition that they commit themselves to better financial management and cut down on unnecessary expenses

The provincial government has rejected the offer

Meanwhile, Cosatu has given notice to the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) that it intends to strike over the education crisis

The notice was filed on Tuesday in terms of the Labour Relations Act

Cosatu can legally strike only if all attempts to resolve its dispute with the provincial Department of Education have been exhausted

Nedlac executive director Jayendra Naidoo said the body would convene a meeting soon to try to resolve the dispute

Mr Ehrenreich said Cosatu would decide on the date of the strike at a meeting in two weeks time

Labour scam syndicate may strike at Capricorn industrial park next

THABO MABASO AND ALUDE DISKONS
Business Staff

The new multi million rand Capricorn industrial park in Matzenberg could be the next target of the syndicate accused of being behind the labour unrest that brought Saldanha Steel to a halt.

The Department of Trade and Industry's national co-ordinator for industrial development, Allister

Smith told the Cape Argus that projects such as Capricorn were in danger and community organisations and unions and the Government should act in unison against syndicates.

Two confidential reports, compiled separately by the provincial Department of Labour and the industrial National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (Numsa), allege that corrupt labour brokers were behind the violence which left the

Saldanha Steel site in ruins early last month.

Numsa says employers, particularly American group CB&I, must bear the main responsibility for the Saldanha flare-up.

But the workers' grievances against the company were exploited by a network of "sinister forces", including labour brokers acting with the criminal underworld. Numsa says these networks, in

conjunction with selected managers and "trade unions" set up for the purpose, have been operating on big projects across South Africa, causing disruption in the chaos, the brokers move in and sell labour at a higher rate.

"Part of the problem is that there is no structured relationship between unions, departments of the Government and community organisations that prevents dubious characters like

thus from manipulating people's concerns for their benefit," said Mr Smith.

"We also are concerned that this seems to be happening at a fairly high level."

Numsa claims the "sinister forces", which are said to plan their actions using coded jail slang, have operated not only at Saldanha Steel, but at Mosses, the Coega project in the Eastern Cape, Columbus Steel

and Alusaf in KwaZulu Natal.

Neither Div Malherbe, industrial relations manager for Mosses, nor Charles Meiniques, head of industrial relations at Alusaf, would comment.

Labour brokers were excluded from the Saldanha site as part of a deal with the unions, including Numsa, but the union says brokers entered the arena under the guise of "administrators". The Numsa report names

Ebrahim Saboodien, a Cape Town based "administrator" whose duty is to file the tax returns of independent contractors, as being part of the syndicate Mr Saboodien's son, Reza denied this. "We are actually new on the site and had been there for only two weeks when violence started."

Ron Samuels, of contractor Firwell Piping in Durban said two former employees were plotting to foment violence on sites across the country



Retrenchments lead to strike (152)

TROYE LUND
EDUCATION WRITER

ET 5/3/98
SOUTH AFRICA'S National Economic and Development Labour Council (Nedlac) has agreed to begin strike proceedings on behalf of 300 000 Western Cape Cosatu members who aim to force the provincial government to end its mass teacher retrenchment and cost-saving campaign

Cosatu's national secretary-general, Mr Sam Shilowa, has endorsed a notice to Nedlac about the strike, to ensure that workers are protected from pay or job loss

"Sewer education" in working-class areas was being entrenched, Cosatu claimed after Nedlac confirmed that it would set up an urgent meeting next week between the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and Cosatu, including its affiliated South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu)

If the meeting solves nothing, the union will begin a protracted industrial action campaign with a one-day strike

While business estimates that a Cosatu strike will cost the province nearly R200 million a day, the department appealed to Cosatu not to strike because of the debilitating effect such action would have on an already fragile culture of teaching and learning

WCED chief Mr Brian O'Connell said "I pray that Cosatu will come and engage with us so that we can share the same knowledge base and arrive at a point where we can empower teachers, pupils and parents to accept finan-

□ Turn to Page 3

Education (152) department to meet Cosatu

□ Turn from Page 1

ET 5/3/98
cial realities and take hold of the challenges of development "

Cosatu's provincial secretary, Mr Tony Ehrenreich said a strike was not the "objective" it was necessary because the province had refused to negotiate alternative ways to cut costs

So far, Cosatu's Western Cape branch is the only province acting on the national threat of a strike

Ehrenreich said "Other provinces have entered into good faith bargaining over the issues. The Western Cape has not

"We are compelled to highlight education that is falling apart in black working-class areas. The provincial government has ignored requests to negotiate and if they continue to do this Nedlac will force them to meet us. The first prize is to resolve the education situation "

The WCED confirmed that it had received an invitation yesterday to discuss the issue and has agreed to meet the union

Cosatu's demands are:

- The provincial government must accept the government's offer of assistance.

- "Black working-class" areas must be given priority

- Province must pay schools' municipal bills

- Teacher retrenchments must be halted and pupil/teacher ratios kept to 32:1

- Imbalances between historically black and white schools must be addressed.

- Province must stop passing on additional costs to parents

Security-guard talks deadlocked

(152) (2/27)

Talks between unions representing employers and striking security guards deadlocked again yesterday at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Employers were meeting privately last night to see if they could improve their offer, which represented an effective 13% increase. The unions have revised their demands to a 17% increase.

Employers will today appeal against a Labour Court ruling that the strike is legal.

About 30 000 workers from nine unions are on strike. Yesterday workers assembled again at the Workers' Library in Newtown, Johannesburg, awaiting developments.

Police spokesman Inspector Mark Reynolds said the assembly had been illegal because no permission had been granted. - Staff Reporter and Sapa

Star 5/3/98

Sowetan 5/3/98
Striking workers sacked

(152) (90) (23)
By Abdul Millazi

MORE than 30 Pick 'n Pay employees, including managers, supervisors and clerical staff who had been on an illegal strike at Highgate since Monday, were all dismissed yesterday

Trouble started when the workers, all members of the Joint Affirmative Management Forum (Jamafo), defied an order by Pick 'n Pay head office not to hold a meeting on Friday because it was a busy day

The company then served written notices to all workers who had attended the meeting aimed at discussing problems arising from the unilateral transfer of administrative duties from Highgate to Steeldale by head office

Workers responded by embarking on a strike on Monday and have been out since Pick 'n Pay decided to dismiss them for refusing to return to work

In a statement Jamafo spokeswoman Jacky Masuku said Pick 'n Pay acknowledged that the workload at Steeldale increased by 50 percent since the transfer but refused to compensate or allocate more staff to the branch

Pick 'n Pay group human resources manager Frans van der Walt said the company served notice on the workers because they had decided to go ahead with an unauthorised meeting despite senior management's objection

He said management had suggested that the meeting be held on Monday because Friday was the busiest day of the week "They decided to go ahead with the meeting anyway"

Jamafo said on Tuesday that the Highgate, Steeldale and Boksburg branches were on strike, a statement disputed by senior management who said only the Highgate branch was on strike

Masuku said Pick 'n Pay was not willing to embrace transformation

Court rules for striking security guards

Pearl Sebolao

BO 6/3/98

THE Labour Appeal Court yesterday dismissed with costs an appeal by the SA National Security Employers' Association (Sansea) to have the security guards' strike declared illegal, upholding a Labour Court decision that the strike was legal and protected.

Judge JP Myburgh said the unions had complied with all requirements. They had referred the dispute to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and had notified employers timeously of their intention to strike.

He said the unions were also not precluded from striking as the issues in dispute were not regulated by their

collective agreement with employers. The unions submitted demands on wages and other conditions of employment applicable when the collective agreement expired on April 8.

Professional and Transport Workers' Union spokesman Emily Fourie told workers in Newtown yesterday that employers had increased their offer by 0,5% to 13,5%. This meant a 10% increase for salaries, 3% on provident fund contributions and 0,5% for the yearly bonus, "which for Grade E security guards translated into about R70 a year", Fourie said.

Workers rejected the employers' offer, Transport and General Workers' Union national co-ordinator Jerry Ngcobo said. The workers instructed the

unions to revise their demand to 14,5%, he said.

Sansea chief negotiator Don Masterson would not comment on the unions' revised demand as employers had not been notified.

The guards will today march to the offices of Springbok Patrol in Johannesburg in support of the strike.

Meanwhile, the SA Footplate Staff Association yesterday wrote to Labour Minister Tito Mboweni asking him to intervene and protect its members from being intimidated and attacked by the striking security guards.

If the safety of its members could not be guaranteed, De Vos said the association would "withdraw them from the work situation".

Key Market Movements — 4/3 to 5/3

Gold				Currencies			Stock Markets						
Lon close \$/oz	Lon PM \$/oz	Lon PM R/oz	Krugerrand	R per \$	\$ per R	Europe close DM/\$	Europe close R/£	3 month NCD	FTSE 100	Nikkei Index	JSE Overall	JSE Gold	JSE Indus
297,15	296,75	1 462,83	1 473,0	4,9455	0,2029	1,8182	8,1404	14,13	5 733,1	17 095,60	7 052,0	766,6	8 304,6
↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↓	↓	↑	NO MOVE	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
293,65	293,70	1 452,49	1 468,0	4,9295	0,2022	1,8163	8,1328	14,13	5 695,6	16 848,55	6 861,8	744,8	8 117,3

More violence feared if ET 6/3/98 guards continue strike (162) (237)

OWN CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG Police fear that violence will increase if the two-week long strike by security guards continues

Local police spokesperson Inspector Mark Reynolds said 50 cases relating to the activities of striking guards were being investigated, including possession of firearms, theft, attempted murder, robbery, assault and public violence

The police warning came as unions threatened to intensify the strike following the Labour Appeal Court upholding last Friday's Labour Court judgment that the strike was legal and protected. It dismissed with costs an appeal by employers against the judgment

And Metrorail, whose properties and railway stations have been left unprotected over the past two weeks, has experienced violent incidents in the Wits area.

SA Footplate Staff Association (Safsa) spokesperson Mr Chris de Vos said there had been five murders, three attempted murders, seven assaults and eight robberies on Metrorail properties in the area in the past two weeks

There had also been seven attacks on non-striking guards, 26 incidents of cable theft, 12 incidents in which Metrorail staff and guards were intimidated and 20 break-ins at stations and sidings

Safsa demanded yesterday that the government deploy soldiers and police along the Metrorail system

Metrorail operations manager Mr Frikkie Gouws said Metrorail supported the plea for the government to intervene "We are having discussions with the police"

National co-ordinator for the Transport and General Workers' Union, Mr Gerry Ngcobo, said the workers were going to intensify the strike as the employers' revised offer was "a smack in the face"

The South African National Security Employers' Association (Sansea) are now offering an effective 13,5% increase. The unions earlier this week have revised their demands from 19% to 17%

Sansea's chief negotiator, Mr Don Masterson, said yesterday that if the 13,5% offer was refused, the association would ask Labour Minister Tito Mboweni to instruct the chairperson of the wage board to make a determination

Syndicate 'provoked Saldanha labour unrest'

(152) (152)

CT 6/3/98

MELANIE GOSLING

A WORK stoppage at Saldanha Steel construction site yesterday was directly linked to a syndicate which provoked labour unrest for profit, a union official said.

National Union of Metal Workers organiser for the Saldanha region, Mr Karl Cloete, said yesterday the work stoppage was a "last ditch attempt" by the syndicate to gain credibility among workers.

"These guys in the syndicate come from Durban and have infiltrated the labour market all over South Africa.

"They move onto the site as part of the workforce, and when they hear of any workers' problem, they grab it and cause chaos. When the site has been disrupted, a labour broker comes and offers labour at expensive prices so the syndicate can make a profit."

This bears out the findings of a report to Labour Minister Tito Mboweni, which alleges that the syndicate operates by infiltrating construction sites using artisans who instigate uprisings by exploiting workers' demands. The workers go on the rampage, as happened at Saldanha Steel last month.

The report outlines exactly the same method — including the labour broker's role and the higher wage angle — as explained by the union.

Said Cloete: "There is definitely an organised syndicate involved at Saldanha, and these people are known to us. We're now putting mechanisms in place to deal with the situation.

"We've had meetings with key roleplayers like the Department of Labour, Trade and Industry and the unions. Names of the syndicate were shared at these meetings.

"The unions are also ensuring that workers at Saldanha are not intimidated into striking by these guys. Of course there are worker problems on site, but the unions were using the structures available to deal with them," he said.

It is unclear how many workers downed tools yesterday, but when the *Cape Times* visited the site in the afternoon, most were back at work. No equipment was damaged.

Police were on standby.

Saldanha Steel spokesperson Mr Bernard Smith said yesterday about 40 workers were holding talks with management late yesterday. "There are 6 500 workers on site, and only 40 are not at work."

He said there was "a lot of truth" in the report given to Mboweni.

"Two people have been charged after the violence on site last time. One is out on bail.

"There are always workers' demands. But there are structures which deal with them. If a solution can't be found, then labour can strike.

"But what happened last month was not a strike, it was a riot. It was premeditated and all happened in about a quarter of an hour," Smith said.

He said the damaged caused when workers had gone on the rampage, burning buildings, destroying vehicles and computers, had come to about R4 million.

"The delay it caused meant we lost about R40m," Smith said.

'What happened last month was not a strike, it was a riot' — Saldanha Steel spokesperson

Security strike gains momentum

CT(BR) 6/3/98 (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — More than 70 000 security guards are expected to intensify their two-week-old strike today after the Labour Appeal Court yesterday upheld last week's labour court judgment that the strike was legal and protected in terms of the new Labour Relations Act.

Jerry Ngcobo, the president of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said he expected more guards to join the strike as the court's ruling had removed any grey areas concerning the legality of the industrial action.

Ngcobo said the unions rejected an employers' final wage offer of 13,5 percent — 10 percent on wages, 3 percent on provident

fund contributions, and 0,5 percent as the annual bonus.

He said the unions were demanding a total package of 14,5 percent, which they would divide in terms of "their own understanding".

He said employers had lost an estimated R30 million during the strike, including wages for "alternative labour", who were being paid higher rates, and that guards had lost about R6 million in wages.

Ngcobo said Tito Mboweni, the labour minister, "would be committing a political blunder" if he heeded the threat by Don Masterson, the chief negotiator of the South African National Security Association (Sansea), to lobby Mboweni to instruct the chairman of the Wage Board to

make a determination in the event of the union's rejecting the employers' final offer.

Sansea's appeal against the judgment was dismissed with costs, and the parties must go back to the negotiating table.

Last week, the unions refused to continue talks unless Sansea withdrew the appeal. Sansea said it needed legal opinion before further negotiations could take place.

"It was not disputed that the unions involved complied with the requirements for a strike because they referred the issue in dispute to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) and they notified employers timeously of their intention to strike," said JP Myburgh, the labour appeal court judge.

Guard strike results in 50 violent cases

BY MBANGWA XABA AND
RODNEY VICTOR

Police fear that violence will increase if the two-week-long strike by security guards continues any longer.

Johannesburg police spokesman Inspector Mark Reynolds said 50 cases relating to the activities of striking guards were being investigated. The cases involved possession of firearms, theft, attempted murder, robbery, assault, and public violence, he said.

The police warning came as unions threatened to intensify the strike after the Labour Appeal Court yesterday upheld last Friday's Labour Court

Stray 6/7/98
judgment that the strike was legal and protected. It dismissed with costs an appeal by employers against the judgment.

Labour Appeal Court Judge J.P. Myburgh said the unions involved had complied with the requirements for a strike because they had referred the issue in dispute to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and had notified employers timeously of their intention to strike.

Meanwhile, numerous violent incidents have been reported by Metrorail, whose properties and railway stations in Johannesburg, the East Rand, the West Rand and Vereeniging have been left

unprotected for two weeks

SA Footplate Staff Association (Safsa) spokesman Chris de Vos said there had been five murders, three attempted murders, seven assaults, eight robberies and one attempted theft of a firearm.

There had also been seven attacks on guards, 26 incidents of cable theft, eight incidents in which shots were fired at stations, 12 incidents in which Metrorail staff and guards were intimidated, and 20 break-ins at stations and sidings.

Safsa yesterday demanded that the Government deploy soldiers and police to prevent crime and the intimidation of non-strikers.

Security strike gets court's OK

THE LABOUR APPEAL Court in Johannesburg yesterday upheld last Friday's labour court judgment that the strike by security guards was legal and protected

The appeal by the SA National Security Employers Association against the judgment was dismissed with costs. The association last week applied to have an urgent appeal after last Friday's judgment.

Labour Appeal Court Judge JP Myburgh said it was not disputed that the unions involved complied with the requirements for a strike because they referred the issue in dispute to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) and they notified employers timeously of their

solomon 6/3/98
Requirements met as unions had referred dispute to CCMA

intention to strike

Myburgh said while the parties were bound by the terms of the collective agreement for the period that was operative, and were precluded from resorting to industrial action to change its terms, the unions were not prohibited from embarking on a strike.

The issue in dispute is the wage increase for 1998-1999, which is not regulated by the period between April 7 1997 to April 8 1998.

Myburgh said on appeal employers raised a new point that the strike was unprotected because

unions demanded wage increases be implemented from March 1 1998.

He said unions submitted that the demands were "in respect of wages and other terms and conditions of employment which will be applicable after the expiry of the present collective agreement regulating wages and working conditions".

Security workers began a nationwide strike last Monday, demanding a 12 percent across-the-board salary increase, a six percent company provident fund contribution, a 100 percent annual bonus and double pay on Sundays - Sapa

Settlement ends strike

Security guards accept deal after two weeks of demonstration

8/11/78
152

By BENITA VAN EYSSEN

Days of intense negotiations, often violent protests and the intimidation of non-striking workers ended yesterday when unions representing striking security guards and their employers reached a settlement.

Late yesterday, security guards and their employees settled on a 10% wage increase, a provident fund increment of 3% and a 1% bonus.

This comes two weeks after dissatisfied security guards across South Africa embarked on mass strike action demanding an across-the-board salary increase of 12%, a company provident fund contribution of 6%, double pay on Sundays and an annual bonus for security guards.

At the start of the strike, violence erupted when demonstrating workers clashed with police deployed to Johannesburg's city centre to monitor the protest, while employer organisations attempted to have the strike declared illegal.

Scores of strikers were reported



EVASIVE ACTION: Razor wire, teargas, rubber bullets and violence ruled for two weeks across the country - and in the Johannesburg CBD (above)

injured during the demonstrations.

The matter was referred to the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) after the Labour

Appeal Court in Johannesburg upheld the Labour Court judgment that the strike had indeed been legal.

"The past nine days have been a

gruelling period for employee organisations and unions," CCMA director Thandi Orleyn told a press conference. "It's been a long and hard battle, but a battle well fought," said Don Masters, chief negotiator for the SA National Security Employers' Association.

He said the damage to property in the city during several marches by the striking workers was unfortunate.

Randall Howard, a spokesman for the unions, said: "It is a compromise settlement, but one that we can live with," adding that the agreement would take the workers in the industry "one step closer to what we want".

He said the 3% provident fund contribution by employees agreed upon by the CCMA was necessary for the industry and therefore "a victory".

However, he said the industry needed a serious overhaul to standardise conditions: "The issue of 'seab labour' was brought to the fore during negotiations, but left unresolved.

■ AFP reports an on-duty guard was shot dead by strikers in KwaZulu Natal on Thursday

Security union unhappy about settlement

By TUMO MOKONE and Sapa

SECURITY Officers Civil Rights Union (Socru) has distanced itself from the "compromise" settlement reached on Friday by the employer's organisation and other unions which represented its members in a two-week long strike

Socru organiser Nketse Nkadimeng yesterday told City Press that his union was presented with the details of the settlement showing that the unions had accepted a 14-percent wage and benefits offer

"Socru was not present during the Friday negotiations because we knew the other unions would accept only a one percent increase from the employers' initial offer of 13 percent. We refused to sign the agreement but we will not keep our members on the streets to continue with the strike, lest they are victimised when other workers return to work tomorrow," said Nkadimeng

Nkadimeng said Socru's demand when they met with SA National Security Employers Association (Sansea) at Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) on February 23 was a 19-percent wage and benefits package

"After negotiations we backed down to 16 percent which was agreed upon by all unions. But the employers saw red and successfully applied for a court interdict that declared the strike illegal," he said

He said the Labour Court withdrew the interdict on February 27 and on Wednesday, the unions caucus reiterated their 16 percent standpoint with a fallback of 15,5 percent. Sansea offered 13,5

"On Thursday the Labour Court dismissed the employers' appeal with costs before entering the Friday 14 percent agreement with other unions. So we urge our members to return to work tomorrow. They cannot suffer for one percent they have seen enough trouble," concluded Nkadimeng, alluding to the arrests and harassment the security guards suffered during the strike.

□ Sapa reports that while Sansea chief negotiator Don Masterson declared the settlement a victory for both parties, the Congress of SA Trade Unions



FUTURE IMPERFECT ... Nketse Nkadimeng pondering the future ■ Pic: GIDEON NHLAPO

CP 8/3/98 expressed support for the strike and disappointment with the employers "who had no interest in the rights of their own employees"

Sansea and unions (except Socru) agreed on a 14 percent wage and benefits package - 10 percent in wage increases, three percent in provident fund contributions and one percent as an annual bonus - at CCMA's Johannesburg offices

About 30 000 security workers began a nationwide strike on February 23, demanding a 12 percent across-the-board salary increase, a six percent company provident fund contribution, a 100 percent annual bonus, and double pay on Sundays

(152) (287)

BTRR compensation unresolved

René Grawitzky

THE National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) was likely to argue that the 970 workers dismissed by BTRR Sarnacol after a three-day strike in 1985 over recognition coupled with May Day could not receive compensation based on salaries earned 13 years ago.

This emerged at the weekend after the Appellate division of the High Court on Friday overturned a decision handed down by the Labour Appeal Court in December 1995 and held the dismissals to be unfair.

The 13-year legal battle is still not over as the court has referred the case back to the Industrial Court to determine the compensation for the dismissed workers, some of whom have died in the intervening years.

Pam Stein of the law firm Cheadle, Haysom & Thompson, acting on behalf of the dismissed workers, said yesterday the referral back to the Industrial

Court could result in further protracted litigation. If the matter could not be settled in a acceptable manner, "we could be looking at completely new hearings on compensation".

It is understood that last year during a visit to Howick, President Nelson Mandela appealed to BTRR management to settle the matter.

The company resurrected a previous offer of R1,5m, which amounted to R1 500 a worker, while the average worker had 25 years' service. This was again rejected.

After six hearings by various courts since 1987, three Appeal Court judges held the dismissals to be unfair and two argued against this.

Judge Pierre Olivier supported by two judges found that although the strike had been unlawful in terms of the old Labour Relations Act, BTRR had been to a large extent to blame for the strike and that its real desire was to get rid of the Met-

al and Allied Workers Union (Mawu) and its members. In addition, BTRR had pursued a pre-conceived policy of selective re-employment to ensure that Mawu and its members would not return to the factory.

Olivier said BTRR's true motive had been borne out by the fact that after the dismissals, union grouping Uwusa got access to recruitment "without having to overcome obstacles placed by BTRR in Mawu's path".

The Labour Appeal Court, however, held, had misdirected itself and on that basis it did not preclude the court from holding the opposite view. In a minority judgment, Judge DG Scott argued that the appellate division was not entitled to interfere with any of the factual findings of the Labour Appeal Court.

Olivier said there was a basic "misconception in the reasoning" of the court "It perceived a correlation between a strike, which it characterised as the ultimate weapon for the union

and dismissal, which it saw as the employers' ultimate weapon." The judgement suggested, recourse to the one automatically legitimised recourse to the other.

The Labour Appeal Court, he said, reached its decision that workers were fairly dismissed because they did not capitulate completely and were consequently not entitled to reinstatement, "on a faulty perspective of the legal position".

Judge JW Smalberger, in a minority ruling held the dismissals to be fair and, in line with the Labour Appeal Court, said workers' "loss of employment was essentially of Mawu's and their own making and not due to an unfair labour practice on the part of BTRR".

Numsa welcomed the decision and said "we won the case on merit and we knew that our members were unfairly dismissed, thus we persuaded our members not to give up".

BTRR buyout: Page 14

Advertisement

Deal ends security strike

Pearl Sebolao

9/3/98

(152)

AN agreement on wages and social benefits in the security industry was signed by employers and trade unions at the weekend, finally putting to an end a two-week national strike by security guards

The SA National Employers' Association (Sansea) and unions agreed on a 14% package to be divided between wage increases (10%), provident fund contribution (3%) and an annual bonus of 1%

Provision was also made for a committee to be formed to deal with the mechanisms of the provident fund and set up the time frames for implementation.

Transport and General Workers' Union secretary-general Randall Howard said although the agreement was a "compromise settlement", it took them "one step closer to the type of conditions we would like to see in the industry".

Sansea chief negotiator Don Masterson said the settlement was a victory for both parties. However, it was unfortunate that there had been injuries and damage to property, he said.



The long haul ... truck driver Simon Khumalo's job takes him away from his family for lengthy periods, and the threat of hijacking is a constant concern.

Low pay, days away from home, that's the life of a trucker

By **MELAME-ANN FERIS**

Simon Khumalo hates his job. A long-distance truck driver for a Johannesburg company, he spends hours on the road, sees his family once a month if he is lucky and knows the possibility of being hijacked is a constant threat.

Ironically, being a driver is something he has always wanted to do.

Khumalo was forced to stop studying in Grade 7 because his parents could no longer afford to send him to school. After two years of unemployment, he secured a job as a winch driver for a mining company in KwaZulu Natal.

A salary of R80 a month and constant fear while working underground eventually forced him to leave.

"When I left that job I de-

clined to get my driver's licence. I took all my money and went to a driving school. It was difficult and it took four or five times before I got my licence," he said.

Khumalo was confident he would soon find a job. But his hopes were dashed as company after company turned him away because of his lack of experience.

He eventually found work as a taxi driver in Soweto and his

salary increased to R150 a week. After five years as a taxi driver, and later a bus driver, he secured a job as a long-distance driver.

His days are spent driving long distances, transporting goods ranging from cigarettes to chemicals. He says he takes a few hours' rest in his truck where and whenever he can.

For this he receives a salary of R450 a week - hardly enough

to feed, clothe and house his wife and five children.

"My family need me and they love me, but I only see them once a month ... maybe even once every two months. I don't want any of my sons to be drivers, it is a no-good job."

Khumalo is one of thousands of drivers around the country who are striking to force their bosses to pay higher annual increases this year

(152)

(152)

(1522)
~~(1522)~~
Security
guards back
on the block

Star 9/3/98

Security guards across the country returned to work today after their wage dispute with employers was resolved on Friday.

SA National Security Employers' Association spokesman Mick Bartmann warned that certain unions may have had trouble getting the message that guards should return to work to their members at the weekend.

The two parties settled on a 10% increase in wages, a 3% increase in pension fund contribution and a 1% bonus.

The strike by thousands of workers lasted two weeks, during which many guards chose to continue working, but dressed in civilian clothing. Reports of intimidation were rife.

The dispute was eventually settled by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in Johannesburg. — Own Correspondent

Labour broker denies link with sinister syndicate

THABO MABASO
BUSINESS REPORTER

A labour broker cited in confidential reports about a syndicate which instigates violence at construction sites for profit has applied for an urgent court order to stop Saldanha Steel linking him to the syndicate.

ABC Recruitment managing director Gavin Zietsman alleged in papers in the Cape High Court yesterday that Saldanha Steel industrial relations manager George Kerridge had been spreading rumours about him that stood to harm his business.

Mr Zietsman's company and black empowerment group, Daluxolo, formed a joint venture, Saldanha Central Services, last year to

ARG 10/3/98
supply labour to the steel project.

Mr Zietsman told the Cape Argus Mr Kerridge had accused him of being involved in a country-wide syndicate of labour brokers which destabilises sites for profit.

Separate reports compiled by the Western Cape Department of Labour and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa allege that the violence at the Saldanha Steel project in February was perpetrated by agents of the syndicate. The reports recommend the establishment of a task-team to investigate the syndicate.

The syndicate is said to infiltrate construction sites using artisans who instigate uprisings by exploiting workers' demands. Labour brokers then approach site managers offering them the services of their artisans at fees above

(157)
the market rate.

Mr Zietsman has denied the allegations. The reports also name Jumbo Solomons, the outspoken self-appointed leader of workers at Saldanha Steel, as one of the instigators.

Mr Zietsman said: "I categorically deny that labour brokers were behind the events of February 3 at Saldanha Steel."

Lawyers for Mr Kerridge will oppose the application. The hearing has been postponed to June.

Meanwhile, Mr Solomons, whom the Cape Argus tracked to his home in Durban, has denied reports that he is employed by corrupt labour brokers. "To say I work with brokers is silly. Labour brokers have been exploiting workers so I do not work for them," he said.



BRENTON GEACH

Welcome: German President Roman Herzog and President Mandela in the city today

Mandela and Herzog sign housing loans

ARG 10/3/98 (123)
Cape Town - President Mandela and German President Roman Herzog today signed accords including almost DM90-million (R243-m) in low-cost housing loans.

"We are very, very proud to have the German president here," Mr Mandela told tourists who had gathered at the gate to Tuynhuys to watch a brass band and navy guard formally welcome Mr Herzog.

"Germany was one of our strongest supporters," he said as the crowd cheered and clapped.

Mr Herzog arrived in South Africa on Sunday on a five-day state visit accompanied by a 100-strong delegation, including prominent business people.

Agreements signed included loans to improve urban housing, a maritime shipping pact and an environmental co-operation accord.

Mr Herzog was due to meet Deputy President Thabo Mbeki later today and address Parliament before a state banquet hosted by Mr Mandela - Reuters

Strikers tell council to quit ⁽¹⁵²⁾

Bütterworth – Municipal workers here vow to continue their strike until the council resigns.

About 300 workers, who embarked on the strike after not being paid on February 25, met in the garbage-filled municipal garden in the town centre

A representative of the workers, Luvuyo Centane,

said the council was not co-operating and they wanted it to resign immediately

They had informed the provincial government of their grievances

Another worker told the crowd the problem was no longer about salaries, but about incompetence

“Even if we are paid today or tomorrow, this

problem ⁽²⁰²⁵⁾ could happen again and again. We have families to feed, children to send to school and bills to pay. The council must go.”

Deputy mayor Welcome Tshetu said council funds were exhausted because striking workers had promoted a culture of non-payment among residents and businesses. – Sapa

Truckers strike - but W Cape is not affected

SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

ARG 16/3/98

Transport unions claimed up to 100% support in most parts of the country for the strike by road and freight industry workers today, but Western Cape operators said the local effect was "not noticeable".

The strike was called by eight unions, including the Transport and General Workers' Union whose national co-ordinator Thulani Dlamini warned the strike would be open-ended and workers would not return until agreement was reached.

"This is a legal strike after negotiations on wages and working conditions broke down," he said.

"I have been up since 4am with telephone calls coming from all over and I would say the strike is at least 80% to 100% effective in Gauteng and most other areas."

He emphasised that employers could not afford not to meet workers' demands and avoid things getting "ugly".

The last time transport workers went on strike there were huge delivery delays and chaos on major roads when drivers blockaded highways with their trucks.

In the Western Cape, heavy haulage operators described the strike as "negligible in comparison to the normal daily rate of absenteeism", and one company reported a full turnout today.

Gary Ristow, regional director of Long Distance Transport, reported a 100% turnout today, with all outgoing regional trucks on the road. But he added "It may be too early to say. The strike has probably not reached us yet."

To page 2

W Cape truckers keep going

ARG 16/3/98

From page 1

Meanwhile, road and freight industry workers were due to meet in Johannesburg today after their failure last week to reach agreement with employers. Emily Fourie, spokeswoman for the Professional Transport Workers' Union, said air freight, oil tankers and the delivery of furniture, clothes and fresh and frozen food might be affected.

Unions involved in the strike would approach the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration. "The gap between workers' demand and the employers' offer is not very wide. I'm confident their differences will be resolved quickly," she said.

Nico Badenhorst, spokesman for the employers' association, said he believed this year's offer was "one of the highest in the country".

Transport strike 'may cost millions'

BD 17/3/98

(152)

Pearl Sebolao
and Dustin Chick

UP TO half of the 40 000 transport industry workers started a nationwide strike yesterday, sparking fears that major sectors of the economy could be hit if it was not resolved soon.

Sources said it was too early to assess the impact of the strike on other industries. About 90% of companies relied on road transport to distribute their products and a protracted strike was expected to cost millions of rands.

Talks on wages and subsistence allowances between the Road Freight Employers' Association and unions broke down last week, and seven unions said they would strike.

Professional Transport Workers' Union spokesman Emily Fourie said there was no great discrepancy between what the workers demanded and what the employers were offering. "On average it was a difference of about R10," she said.

Fourie said the unions were prepared to settle for a R40 increase on the subsistence allowance instead of the R50 they were demanding, provided that "the other issues are resolved".

The unions are also demanding the inclusion of "additional categories" of workers, such as office workers, into the transport bargaining council. The Labour Court ruled on Friday that they could strike over this matter.

The association's labour relations director Nico Badenhorst said the employers' final offer to the unions was "generous". Increases ranged from 11,5% to 18% for minimum wages, and an increase on actual wages of 10,5%.

Fourie said the Commission For Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) had contacted both parties to set up a meeting to try to resolve the dispute. This could take place today or tomorrow. Badenhorst said the association was not opposed to the CCMA's intervention.

In Johannesburg about 3 000 striking workers gathered at the Workers' Library in Newtown where union leaders addressed them. En route to the library two truck drivers were attacked in an attempt to force them to join the strike. Workers also attacked trucks parked near the Market Theatre with sticks and metal poles.

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesman Thulani Dlamini appealed for calm, saying some workers were not notified of the strike on time.

Striking workers will today march to the offices of the National Bargaining Council for the road freight industry in Braamfontein. Dlamini said workers would also start gathering in other major cities.

Dlamini said numerous meetings with employers had failed to resolve the issue. The unions gave employers a week's notice that the strike would start yesterday, but nothing was done to avert it.

□ Reuter reports that the transport sector could face further disruptions on Thursday if a deadlock in wage talks in the bus sector is not resolved. More than 20 000 workers employed by 18 companies plan to strike.

The SA Bus Employers' Association said a strike might lead to further job losses in an industry already struggling for financial survival.

been
ary
ary-
een
has
hou
ntre
ade
uar
94
hat
er
to
e.
an
he
st
ar
he
g
m
d
e

N
b
b
G
GO
int
on
the
fav
aly
go
th
in
a
10
ne
wa
"T
go
te
se
se
ra
Z
m
in
o
"C
ti
b
b
m
h
r
a
fi
i
s
o
r
a



Truck dispute threatens city booze supplies

THABO MABASO
Business Reporter

Capetonians could soon be without beer or wine if the strike by truck drivers continues, a company affected by the industrial action warned today.

Robert Zijp, Norman's Transport Lines Bellville branch manager, said his trucks transported large quantities of beer and wine bottles for companies such as South

African Breweries. "All our trucks are in the yard. The strike is affecting the industry very badly. Of my 65 drivers, only four are working," said Mr Zijp.

Truck drivers went on strike yesterday after the breakdown in wage talks between seven employers' unions and the Road Freight Employers' Association on Friday.

The unions want an increase of R40 a week for workers who earn an average of

R323 a week. Employers are offering R35. They are also demanding a weekly R50 subsistence allowance and three meals for drivers when they are away from their home depots. Employers offer only a weekly allowance of R95.

Thulam Dlamini, Transport and General Workers' Union national organiser and chief spokesman for the seven unions, said 40 000 drivers throughout the country had heeded the call to strike.

In the Western Cape, 12 000 workers topped work.

Sapa reports that thousands of strikers met outside the Workers' Library in central Johannesburg today ahead of a march to the road freight bargaining council to hand in a list of demands.

The strikers were disciplined today, but yesterday some drivers working in the city centre were pulled from their trucks.

(152)
ARL 17/12/98



ROCK, DON'T ROLL An angry member of the Transport and General Workers' Union hurls a rock at a truck driver in the Johannesburg CBD who did not support the call of seven transport unions to a strike which started yesterday PHOTO JOHN WOODROOF

Transport strike may cost up to R160m

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — South Africa's transport industry may lose up to R160 million worth of business a week if the strike started by truckers yesterday continues, according to union estimates

Unions and industry representatives differed widely on estimates of the disruption caused.

Sources close to the industry, who described the situation as "serious", conceded that at least 30 percent of the day's

operations had been hit by the strike. Unions, however, said that for "obvious reasons" employers would not admit to an "80 percent to 90 percent disruption in terms of productivity"

The latter estimate amounts to about R160 million, based on 80 percent of the R200 million weekly average of the industry's annual turnover of R11 billion. The 30 percent estimate would yield a weekly loss of R60 million.

The seven striking unions include the Transport and

General Workers' Union, the Professional Transport Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, the Turning Wheels' Workers' Union, the South African Transport Workers' Union and the Motor Transport Association.

Thulani Dlamini, the spokesman for the unions, predicted a 100 percent disruption this morning as the strike, which has been marred by some violence, gathers momentum

A parallel Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and

Arbitration mediation meeting — the first since the parties deadlocked on Friday — is also scheduled for today

In Johannesburg, about 20 000 workers are expected to march to the industry's national bargaining council in Braamfontein to hand in a memorandum of their demands

The unions threatened to picket companies that employed scab labour and would not rule out the possibility of blockading freeways and byways if their demands were not met

CT (PR) 17/3/98 (152)

Bus men may join striking truckers

(152) Nov 17/3/98

New march in city today: 'no blockades',
but industry could lose R160-m a week

BY MELANIE-ANN FERIS
AND XOLISA VAPI

Bus drivers are expected to join truckers this week in the national strike which, it is feared, could cost the transport industry R160-million a week until resolved.

The striking truckers assembled in the Johannesburg city centre today for a march to employer offices, raising fears of renewed violence between striking truckers and scab drivers. Striking drivers yesterday attacked at least two trucks in the city centre.

Transport and General Workers' Union national organiser Thulani Dlamini vowed that today's march in the city centre would be peaceful, but warned that employers using scab labour would be targeted for picketing.

The striking truckers are expected to be joined by bus drivers in two days' time.

The truckers were expected to assemble at the Library Gardens in the city before marching to the National Bargaining Council offices in Braamfontein to hand over a memo-

randum to the Road Freight Employers' Union. Police will monitor the march closely.

The organisers of the strike today dismissed reports that truckers were planning blockades of major roads. Striking truckers had handed their vehicles to their employers, and it would therefore be impossible.

Yesterday, only a small percentage of the more than 26 000 truckers and their assistants registered in Johannesburg attended the rally. The strike got off to a slow start in other parts of the country too.

Sapa reports that strikers met in Vereeniging, Pretoria and Cape Town, while there were unconfirmed mass gatherings in the Eastern Cape and northern KwaZulu Natal.

The industrial action is poised to peak on Thursday when more than 20 000 bus company employees embark on a strike in major centres around the country. The bus drivers are demanding a 10,5% increase and the employers are offering them 7,5%.

► More reports

From the Business Unit

Truckers take to Jo'burg streets

Sowetan 17/3/98

(152) (scribble)

By Sello Seripe

TRAFFIC came to a standstill in central Johannesburg when hundreds of truck drivers from various freight companies took to the streets on the first day of a national strike over pay demands yesterday.

There was slow traffic movement in the streets around Library Gardens where the workers had gathered and some of the strikers toyi-toyed in the streets.

Light delivery trucks were stopped by some of the strikers and their crews forced to join the strike.

Sowetan witnessed a crew from Vaughan Johnson's Wine and Spirits being dragged from their light delivery truck and forced to take part.

Strike meetings were also held in Vereeniging, Pretoria and Cape Town. There were reports of meetings in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

The striking workers are members of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), Transport and Allied Workers' Union, Professional Transport Workers' Union, Turning Wheel Workers' Union of South Africa, Transport and Workers' Union and the Motor Transport Workers' Union.

The strike follows deadlock reached in November wage negotiations between the unions and the Road Freight

Employers' Association (RFEA)

The workers are demanding varied increases for different categories of workers. TGWU national organiser for road freight and maritime sector Mr Thulani Dlamini said the unions were demanding:

- R40 a week across the board increase for grade 1 employees (general workers), against R35 offered by employers;

- R60 across the board increase for grade 4 and 5 employees (long distance drivers). The union said employers were offering R50 to grade 4 employees and R55 to grade 5 employees. The workers view this as an attempt to divide workers;

- Workers are also demanding a subsistence allowance of R50, while employers are offering R35,60.

Dlamini said no agreement was reached at a meeting between the unions and the RFEA held last Friday.

RFEA director for labour relations Mr Nico Badenhorst said yesterday that he was unsure when the next meeting between the parties would be held.

Badenhorst said employers were offering R54 a week for grade 4 and 5 employees, and not R50 and R55 for the two grades as reported by the unions.

He said 30 percent of the industry was affected by the action even though other companies had made contingency plans.

City truckers hurt in attack by strikers

Marches and violence around country as mood turns ugly

APR 18/9/98

(1527)



THE STAR

Thin blue line: police monitor striking truckers outside Nespriut in Mpumalanga

Golden Arrow lockout plan

SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

Golden Arrow, Cape Town's main commuter bus service, will lock out staff if last-ditch efforts fail to avert a strike starting at 3am tomorrow.

General manager Hannes Grebe said this was "in the interests of the safety of the company's own staff"

"This means only people who are not part of the bargaining unit will be allowed on company property for the duration of the strike."

The company had a responsibility to protect staff, property and vehicles

He also announced several contingency plans for about 75 000 bus commuters tomorrow if the strike goes ahead

These include an arrangement with Metrorail to honour bus clip-cards on trains for the duration of the strike. A similar deal has been made with taxi associations in Atlantis, where there is no train service.

A spokesman for the Western Cape Omnibus and Salary Staff Union said "We deplore the staff lockout step announced by Golden Arrow. The strike will not be a one-day event. It will continue until a solution is reached."

SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

Violence in the freight and transport industry continued in Cape Town today when striking drivers attacked four "strike-breakers" with iron-rods and pieces of wood after dragging them from the cabs of two delivery vehicles in Salt River's main road.

Police said the strikers dragged Mogamat Toyer Barker, Stanley Volkwyn, Deon Manches and an unidentified man from the trucks' cabs after surrounding and stoning the vehicles. Both trucks were severely damaged.

The injured men were taken to Groote Schuur Hospital. The attack happened about 9.30am outside a building housing trade unions at the intersection of Victoria Road and Durham Avenue.

Yesterday a freight company deliveryman was injured and his lorry damaged when a crowd of striking truck drivers surrounded his vehicle in central Cape Town and attacked him.

Rudy Duncan of Hellman International Forwards was hit on the head by a brick in front of a fabric shop in Sir Lowry Road where he had stopped to deliver goods.

Mr Duncan and two colleagues fled into the shop and assistants closed the doors.

The crowd, shouting to their victims that they should have joined the strike, banged and pulled on the shop door but could not get in. They left before police arrived.

Mr Duncan was taken to hospital, where his condition was described as stable.

Police hunting the attackers questioned people in the area soon after the incident to establish whether the group had been waiting for potential strike-breakers. No one seemed to have noticed the attackers until they pounced.

Truck drivers went on strike this week after a breakdown in wage talks between seven unions and the Road Freight Employers' Association.

The strike is expected to cripple the road freight industry for the week if talks between the driver unions and Road Freight Employers' Union are unsuccessful.

The attack on Mr Duncan yesterday was among a series reported nationwide as the strike by transport workers turned militant, resulting in a blockade near Nelspruit, marches and attacks on non-striking workers.

From Johannesburg, the Cape Argus Correspondent reports that thousands of strikers staged marches in big towns to press home their demands for wage increases.

Union leaders estimate that about 40 000 truckers are on strike around the country.

The strike is expected to spread further today when supervisors, clerks and data-capturers at transport companies join the action.

In the most serious strike-related disruption so far, about 400 drivers blocked the N4 highway near Nelspruit yesterday, forcing motorists to take alternative routes.

The industrial action is expected to reach its peak tomorrow when more than 20 000 bus company employees join the truck drivers.

A conciliation session headed by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration was to start later today.



Hard knock: policeman Mannus Kruger examines one of two trucks attacked in Salt River

OBEDI ZILWA

Bus strike may halt services

ERIC NTABAZALILA

CITY bus commuters should brace themselves for a strike by Golden Arrow employees. The action is likely to continue for days if a solution is not found soon.

Labour representatives in the company yesterday gave notice of the workers' intention to embark on a strike with effect from 3am tomorrow.

Ms Jeanne Welsh, Golden Arrow public relations officer, said the company regretted that labour representatives had decided to take such action despite efforts by company representatives at national level to find a mutually acceptable solution to the workers' demands.

Welsh said the company wished to apologise to commuters who

CT 18/3/98 (162) (163) (170)
would be inconvenienced by the strike.

Golden Arrow had put contingency arrangements in place to counter the inconvenience. These included arrangements with Metro-rail to honour bus clipcards on trains for the duration of the action. Other arrangements had been made with taxi organisations to carry passengers from outlying areas such as Atlantis, where buses are the only public transport.

Welsh said the company advised commuters to board taxis from those areas where taxi owners had agreed to honour clipcards.

She said despite these arrangements employer representatives would continue their efforts to avert the strike and talks between the parties would continue today.

However, should the talks fail, the company would not run any bus service because of the large numbers of employees involved in the strike.

"In the interest of staff safety, Golden Arrow has decided to impose a lockout for the duration of the strike," she added.

"It is regrettable that some loyal staff members who would have liked to continue working will not be able to do so, but the company has a responsibility to protect its people, property and vehicles," she said.

● In Johannesburg yesterday, police fired birdshot to disperse striking transport workers who stoned a non-striking truck driver, Sapa reports.

The driver was slightly injured when all his truck windows were smashed.

Star 18/9/98

Talks put brakes on truckers' strike

(152) (92)

BY MBANGWA XABA
AND CHRISWELL NQWELO

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration said yesterday that striking transport workers and the transport companies had accepted an offer by the CCMA to conciliate in the nationwide dispute over pay.

The process is due to start this afternoon.

The strike by transport workers spiralled earlier yesterday, resulting in a blockade near Nelspruit and attacks on non-striking workers in other parts of the country.

Thousands of strikers staged marches in several towns to press home their demands for wage increases. Union leaders estimate that about 40 000 workers are on strike around the country.

In the most serious strike-related disruption so far, about 400 truck drivers blockaded the N4 highway near Nelspruit, forcing motorists to take alternative routes. The blockade ended at about 6pm when the truckers dispersed and several trucks were towed away by the police.

In central Johannesburg,

police fired birdshot to disperse striking transport workers who attacked a non-striking truck driver with bricks, stones and other objects.

The driver, who was slightly injured when his truck's windows were smashed at the corner of Jeppe and West streets, was rescued by police. They moved the man into an armoured vehicle as angry workers threw missiles at police.

The truckers are demanding a R40 increase in the grade 1 category, while employers are offering R35; R60 for grades 4 and 5, while employers are offering R55; and a subsistence increase of R50 a night for long-distance drivers while employers are offering R36,50.

The industrial action is expected to reach its peak tomorrow, when more than 20 000 employees of private bus company join the truck drivers. Metropolitan bus services in Johannesburg will not be affected.

Nico Badenhorst, the Road Freight Employers Association's industrial relations director, said strikes were expected all over SA and could bring the country to a halt and damage the economy.

Metro bus drivers not involved in strike

The Johannesburg Metropolitan Bus Service will not be affected by the threatened bus drivers' strike.

Spokesman Jenny Solomons said some drivers would attend a memorial service for a former trade union organiser tomorrow but metro drivers would not join the strike as they belong to a different union.

Private bus companies will be severely affected, but union officials today expressed optimism that the strike could be averted. About 3,2 million passengers use private bus services every day.

Bus drivers are demanding a 10,5% increase, employers are

offering 7,5%. Other demands include changes in night shift allowances, tool allowances and provident fund contributions by the employers.

Thys Heyns, vice-chairman of the South African Bus Employers Association, said employers hoped they could reach a settlement.

Transport and General Workers Union spokesman Mbengeni Mphatha said: "We are very keen to have settlement on this matter and are hopeful an agreement can be reached today." -- Staff Reporter

Reports and picture

Page 3

d
t
g
s
e
l-
is
o-
o
t

Truckers become violent

Sowetan 18/3/98
(152)

By Sello Seripe

THE strike by truck drivers is gradually turning ugly, with incidents of assault and the intimidation of non-striking drivers occurring

This is despite assurances and calls for discipline by the Gauteng leadership of the seven unions whose members are involved in the strike

The workers, mostly long-distance drivers, are demanding better wages. Commuters could find themselves stranded after bus drivers affiliated to the unions threatened to join the strike.

After yesterday's presentation of a memorandum by the unions' leadership to the Bargaining Council for the Road Freight Industry in Braamfontein, the city-bound marchers hauled the driver of an unmarked white light delivery van from his vehicle and assaulted him with sticks.

The incident occurred at the corner of De Korte and Bertha streets in Braamfontein when about 10 000 strikers made their way to the city. The man managed to escape.

Marshals were greatly outnumbered, resulting in unguarded marchers intimidating and even assaulting non-striking truck drivers.

Windows shattered

Johannesburg police spokesman Captain Lungelo Dlamini confirmed the incident, which had occurred in Braamfontein.

He said stones were thrown at a truck at the corner West and Jeppe streets. Captain Dlamini said the windscreen and the side windows were shattered and the driver's eyes were injured.

"At the corner of Jeppe and Sauer streets a truck driver was pulled out of his vehicle but police intervened and escorted him out of town," captain Dlamini said.

Several light delivery van drivers were either intimidated or forced to join the protesters when the strike began on Monday.

Addressing the strikers at the Bargaining Council's offices yesterday, Transport and General Allied Workers' national organiser Mr Thulam Dlamini said truckers in Gauteng were exposed to more dangers, hence their demand for increased salaries.



Frustrated transport workers, left, who are on a national strike, confront a policeman in Johannesburg yesterday after the police fired rubber bullets to disperse them. Workers, right, help an injured colleague shot by the police.

Pictures: TYRONE ARTHUR

Five policemen hurt in transport strike violence

SEVEN people, including five policemen, were injured and one person was arrested when violence erupted at a gathering of striking transport workers near the Workers' Library in Johannesburg yesterday.

Police spokesman Captain Andy Pieke said the incident happened when the strikers, awaiting the result of negotiations in their wage dispute with employers, attacked a passing truck.

"Police warned the strikers to stop, but they ignored this warning and started stoning the police, slightly injuring five of our members," Pieke said.

"Police fired rounds of rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. Two strikers were injured," he said.

Union negotiators and the Road Freight Employers' Association were still in a meeting organised by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration late yesterday in a bid to diffuse the strike, which started on Monday.

The strikers are demanding an increase of R40 for grade one workers instead of the R35 offered by employers, R60 for grade four and five workers instead of the R54 offered by management, and a R50 sub-

tence allowance per trip for long distance drivers instead of R36.50.

Meanwhile, private bus company union members, who threatened to join the strike today if their wage demands were not met, suspended plans to strike following a last minute agreement, Golden Arrow MID Hannes Grebe announced late yesterday.

South African Bus Employers' Association president Colin Gie said details of the agreement were being kept confidential until ratification. Workers were set to strike today after wage negotiations reached deadlock — Sapa

BD 19/3/98

(152)

HURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1998

Truckers shot as violence dogs strike

ARG 19/3/98
ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - Two striking truckers were shot and injured by police here as violence continued to mar the nationwide transport workers strike, which enters its fourth day today.

Seven people, including five policemen, were injured and one person was arrested yesterday when violence erupted at a gathering of the strikers near the Workers' Library in Johannesburg.

Police said rowdy strikers attacked passing trucks while awaiting the outcome of negotiations between union representatives and the employers association.

Police said two strikers were injured when police fired rounds of rubber bullets to disperse the crowd. The injured were rushed to hospital and a man was arrested for assault.

As reported in late editions of yesterday's Cape Argus, four non-striking workers were attacked with iron rods and pieces of wood after they were dragged by their colleagues from the cabs of two delivery vehicles in Salt River

Police said the strikers dragged Mogamat Barker, Stanley Volkwyn, Deon Manches and an unidentified man from the trucks' cabs after surrounding and stoning the vehicles. Both trucks were badly damaged.

Stones were also hurled at trucks in Vanguard Drive, Epping. A worker was hurt in Sir Lowry Road on Tuesday.

Union negotiators and the employers' association were still in talks overseen by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration late yesterday in a bid to end the strike.

Cape Town truckers were waiting today to hear the outcome of the talks.

The strikers are demanding an increase of R40 for grade one workers instead of the R35 offered by employers; R60 for grade four and five workers instead of the R54 offered by management, and a R50 subsistence allowance per trip for long distance drivers instead of R36,50.

Buses hit the road after 11th-hour wages deal averts national strike

ARG 19/3/98

(152)

SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

Buses in Cape Town operated normally today after trade unions suspended plans to strike after last-minute wage negotiations.

Golden Arrow general manager Hannes Grebe announced last night that an agreement had been reached between employers and unions, but it had yet to be ratified by union members. "In anticipation of the ratification of this agreement, worker unions have suspended their strike action planned for today," he said.

Golden Arrow was delighted at the breakthrough and would continue to provide normal services, he added.

Members of the Western Cape Omnibus Salaried Staff Union, the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Transport and Allied Workers' Union were set to join a national strike today.

Union sources said employers agreed to a two-phase 10,5% package, with the first phase coming into effect immediately and the remainder in six months. The first increase is understood to be about 8,5%.

AIR IN ROW

... ..



WESTERN CAPE *focus*

Golden Arrow bus strike called off

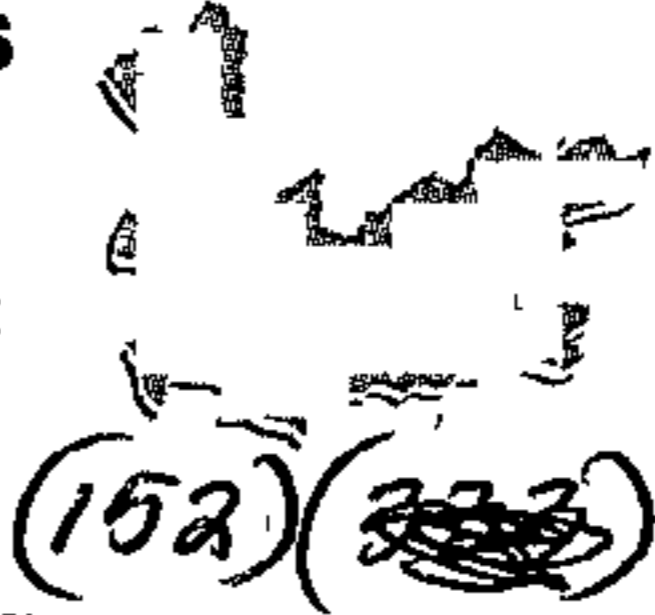
A STRIKE by hundreds of Golden Arrow employees was called off yesterday after a last-minute agreement between representatives of the company and labour.

The workers' representatives called off the strike pending the ratification of the agreement by the workforce. Details of the agreement were being withheld by both parties last night pending the workers' approval.

Jeanne Welsh, Golden Arrow public relations officer, said the company was "delighted" at the breakthrough and that it would continue to operate normally.

Labour representatives had given Golden Arrow a notice on Tuesday of the workers' intention to embark on a strike with effect from today.

ET 19/3/98



THE WORKERS



Speaking for many ... Emily Fourie is at the forefront of wage talks between employer organisations and striking truck drivers.

Truck driver's daughter a tough negotiator on transport union's behalf

By MELANIE-ANN FERIS

A petite, 51-year-old blonde grandmother - who would expect to find her with raised fists, leading thousands of angry, striking truck drivers through the streets of Johannesburg?

This is Emily Fourie, acting general-secretary for the Professional Transport Workers' Union (PTWU), who is at the forefront of wage negotiations between transport workers and employer organisations

A tough negotiator, she describes how she is driven by the desire to see justice and fairness prevail. To the thousands

of workers for whom she fights, she is simply known as "Ma Emily".

As the daughter of a truck

“
It is not easy
to see your
father cry
”

driver who spent many days away from his home, Fourie is in a good position to empathise with the plight of the drivers.

(152) (222)
“I often saw my father fatigued I remember him being involved in an accident ... some of the workers in the truck were injured. I saw him distressed and devastated. It is not easy for a child to see a father cry,” she said.

Fourie's father was instrumental in the establishment of the African Transport Workers' Union, the first union to be registered under the former government

The union's work was not easy and Fourie remembers a time when they were constantly subjected to police raids and threats, and when their members died in police custody

Star 19/3/98
“I remember when my father was desperately ill in hospital and the police even threatened him there,” she says

“
I know
about paying
the price
”

When her father retired from the union as general secretary, Fourie automatically took up the reins.

Five years ago she suffered a personal tragedy when her eldest son committed suicide.

“It was a busy time, we were involved in strikes and engaged with lawyers until late at night I had to deal with that, and maybe if I had not been so busy I would have handled my son's problems differently I know about paying the price,” she says.

Despite the tough times, she has remained a trade-union activist for 24 years. She works for the PTWU full-time, speaks on behalf on her members in the security industry, and chaired the Bargaining Council last year

No settlement in truckers' dispute after late-night talks

(152) Star 19/3/98

Revised offer still not enough to ask workers to end industrial action – union boss

STAFF REPORTER AND
OWN CORRESPONDENTS

Striking truck drivers and their employers have again failed to reach agreement despite negotiations which lasted into the early hours, Transport Workers' Union spokesman Emily Fourie said this morning.

"We negotiated but could not settle. The employers won't budge on their offer, but at least they have offered to give clerks and receptionists 6% as well. But this is not enough, we can't tell the workers to go back to work with little results after striking the whole

week," Fourie said.

She said the workers would gather at Library Gardens today for the fourth day in a row after confrontations yesterday in which two striking truckers were shot by police in central Johannesburg.

Seven people, including five policemen, were injured when violence erupted at a gathering of strikers near the Workers' Library in Johannesburg.

Police said strikers attacked trucks while awaiting the outcome of negotiations between union representatives and the employers' association.

"Police warned the strikers to stop, but they ignored this

warning and started stoning the police, slightly injuring five of our members," Captain Andy Pieke said.

He said two strikers were injured when police fired rubber bullets to disperse the crowd.

In Cape Town, four non-striking workers were attacked after they were dragged by their colleagues from the cabs of two delivery vehicles in Salt River's main road.

In Durban, more than 1 000 workers and their assistants marched to the bargaining council's offices to hand over a memorandum.

The strikers are demanding an increase of R40 for grade-

one workers instead of the R35 offered by employers; R60 for grade-four and five workers, instead of the R54 offered by management; and an R50 subsistence allowance per trip for long-distance drivers, instead of R36,50.

Late yesterday, union negotiators and the employers' association were still locked in a meeting overseen by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Meanwhile, the Transport and General Workers' Union announced that its members at private bus companies would no longer be joining in the strike today.

C

AfterHours with Business Day

TODAY's edition of Business Day sees the launch of AfterHours, a new lifestyle supplement that will accompany the newspaper every Friday.

Business Day editor Jim Jones said AfterHours was a natural extension of the newspaper's development.

"We are sensitive to the fact that Business Day readers are not simply involved in their professions. They are intelligent, thinking people who lead full and interesting lives and AfterHours will address their interests," Jones said.

"In the past people might have thought Business Day was solely a reliable and credible source of business and financial news. But it is far more

than that and we have proved it by providing the finest political and serious news in the country. The next step was to extend our coverage into arts and leisure."

Jones said AfterHours was fortunate to be able to draw on SA's best writers and artists, whose contributions will appear alongside material culled from Business Day's sister newspaper, the Financial Times of London.

A cornerstone of the new publication is YourMoney, an expanded saving and investment guide. It will introduce Standard & Poor's Micropal, SA's first independent rating of unit trusts.



LINKS

SA companies invest R418m in SADC

John Dlodlu

BD 20/3/98

SA COMPANIES invested R418m in other Southern African Development Community countries in fiscal 1997/98 since the relaxation of foreign exchange controls on investments to the SADC, a senior official from the trade and industry department said

Mfundo Nkuhlu, the trade department's chief director for Africa trade relations, said yesterday 325 companies had contributed to the R418m.

Speaking at a conference on southern Africa organised by the SA Institute of International Affairs and United World Colleges, he said although the amount was insufficient, it showed the policy was producing results

A total of R1,6bn left SA after the easing of restrictions. Finance Minister Trevor Manuel announced further relaxation of exchange controls last week for investments in the SADC.

Nkuhlu said it would help if SA capital was ploughed into productive sectors, reversing the present concentration in the retail sector. Retail investments could result in the displacement of smaller operators.

He reiterated government's intention to use the SADC free trade protocol as a framework for granting better market access to exports from other

Continued on Page 1

Transport workers reject employers' new pay offer

Pearl Sebolao

TRANSPORT workers yesterday rejected a new pay offer by the Road Freight Employers' Association aimed at resolving the five-day national strike, amid calls by the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) to its affiliates to avoid handling materials due to be freighted

Cosatu restated the workers' demands and called on employers to meet the union as a matter of urgency.

Cosatu also called on company owners to consider reducing out-of-town allowances they gave to managers to put them on a par with those of truck drivers.

A spokesman for the Professional Transport Workers' Union, Emily Figue, said yesterday that the employers' new pay offer — which included an increase from 6% to 7% for office

workers — was unacceptable.

The employers raised the subsistence allowance for long-distance drivers from R36,50 to R38. However, the unions were demanding R40 after coming down from R50.

Management stood by its initial offer for general workers and drivers.

An employers' appeal for the inclusion of additional categories in the road freight national bargaining council was postponed by the labour court to give both parties a chance to settle the matter out of court. The court ruled last Friday that workers could strike over the issue.

Association chairman Johan van der Walt said employers were committed to finding a solution and were exploring various options. The parties met again last night under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

winners club Voyager member

PHILASABO 712 123

Truckers say they will march

(152) Soulehan 20/3/98

FREIGHT transport strikers yesterday rejected a new offer by employers and threatened to converge on the offices of the Road Freight Employers' Association (RFEA) in Johannesburg today in support of their wage demands.

The latest offer, which involved only certain categories of workers and subsistence allowances for long-distance drivers, came several hours after mediation by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration ended in deadlock.

Workers have demanded a R40 increase for grade one workers instead of R35 offered by employers, and R60 for grades four and five instead of R54 offered by employers.

On the issue of the R50 subsistence allowance per trip for long-distance drivers, the employers, who

earlier offered R36,50, said their final offer was R38. This was rejected.

Union spokesman Mr Thulani Dlamini told the strikers that the workers' demand for a 13 percent increase for additional categories of workers was rejected by employers, who offered 6,5 percent.

"We eventually came down to 10 percent and still the employers did not want to move from their position. We came down to eight percent, hoping the employers would also come up to the same level. However, the employers said their final offer was seven percent, and our lawyers warned us that if we lose an appeal we could lose even that."

The RFEA said the industry had already lost more than R40 million since the strike started on Monday. — Sapa.

Costly truckers' strike could have been avoided, says union

BY ZOLIE NGAYI

LAST week's road freight industry's strike, reported to have cost the economy around R100 million, could have been avoided - as all parties had reached consensus on most of the issues before the strike started.

This is according to Emily Fourie, spokesperson of the Professional Transport Workers' Union (PTWU).

The PTWU is one of seven unions representing about 40 000 road freight industry workers who embarked on a five-day national strike which ended on Friday with a settlement of an average 13 percent increase in wages.

"It is a pity that the strike happened, because the only fundamental difference between the unions and the employers was the issue of the inclusion of support staff in our collective bargaining," Fourie told City Press.

The employers, the Road Freight Employers' Association (RFEA), questioned the unions' mandate to represent support staff and therefore felt they could not legitimately claim to represent those workers' interests. Support staff refers to general office workers who include,

receptionists, clerks, controllers, data capturers, and supervisors.

"The question of the additional categories was peculiar to the Transport and Allied Workers' Union (Tawu) as we have many members in those positions and they were completely out of the bargaining council," said Zack Mankge, Tawu's spokesman.

Although other unions had already settled most of their demands with the employers, they carried on with the strike to secure an agreement about the inclusion of support staff, he said.

The issue of contention between the parties, was taken to the Labour Court earlier this month and the court ruled in favour of the unions. But the employers



BIDDING THEIR TIME... A group of truckers striking for an increase in wages in Johannesburg this week.

(158) ~~2222~~

2222/3198

■ Pic: MIKE MZILENI

other unions had already settled most of their demands with the employers, they carried on with the strike to secure an agreement about the inclusion of support staff, he said. The issue of contention between the parties, was taken to the Labour Court earlier this month and the court ruled in favour of the unions. But the employers

great principle issue for us to ensure that these workers are represented in the Bargaining Council," Fourie said. According to him, the issue of the inclusion of support staff in the Bargaining Council was also raised last year and employers ignored it hoping that the problem would go away. A settlement on the contentious issue was reached on Friday after protracted negotiations and mediation by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration. In the end the RFEA and the seven unions agreed on an 8-percent wage increase for the support staff.

"All in all, workers are satisfied and we believe that the strike action was successful in realising a settlement favourable to them," said Fourie.

"We agreed on a 21.4-percent increase in the subsistence allowance which brings it to R38 a day. An additional month was added to bring maternity leave to four months and the working hours will from September be reduced from 46 to 45 a week."

According to Fourie, the agreement also provides for eight days' study leave a year and two days of compassionate leave which can be used for paternity leave purposes.

The cost of the strike to the economy is estimated to be running at hundreds of millions and the workers forfeited a week's wages.

"Black workers understand they have to sacrifice in order to gain. Our white members still have to learn this. The economy has certainly suffered but both parties have walked away pleased," Fourie said.

During the week the strike action saw sporadic violent conflicts between workers, the police and non-striking drivers. "We really hope this is the last strike we will embark on," said Fourie.

Attempts to get the employers' comment on the strike and settlement drew a blank



Transport unions reach compromise

(152) ~~152~~
THE week-long strike by transport workers over wages ended last Friday after the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration brokered a compromise between employers and unions.

The parties agreed to an 11.8% increase for grade 5 workers, 13.7% for grade 4 and 14.3% for general drivers. Subsistence for long-distance drivers was increased 21.4%. Other workers such as supervisors and clerks would get 8%.

BD 23/3/98

Golden Arrow bus strike goes ahead

TRANSPORT REPORTER

Golden Arrow bus service workers are set to join a national strike from 3.30pm tomorrow after labour union members declined to ratify a new wage deal between unions and bus employers.

The company's general manager, Hannes Grebe, said today that Golden Arrow intended to lock out strikers from Thursday morning.

"This means that only people who are not part of the strike will be allowed on company property for the duration of the strike."

Last week the strike was averted in anticipation of the ratification of an agreement reached with unions.

It was reliably learnt from union sources that bus service chiefs had offered a two-phase, 10,5 % package settlement with the first phase effective immediately and the remainder in six months.

The first increase was understood to be around 8,5%.

ARC 24/3/98

(152)
~~(222)~~

Nationwide bus drivers' strike planned

(152) (1998)
Bus drivers are set to embark on a nationwide strike at 3.30pm tomorrow following workers' rejection of a wage-increase offer by employers.

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesman Mbengeni Mphatha said yesterday the strike threat followed a breakdown of wage negotiations with employers three weeks ago.

He said the 48-hour notice to strike was given yesterday after a mandate was received from workers to reject the employers' offer of an 8,5% increase for the first six months of the year and a further 2% for the rest of the year.

Workers are sticking by their demand for a 10,5% increase.

South African Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) president Barry Gie said that except for municipal bus services in Durban and Johannesburg, all major commuter bus services in the country would join the strike.

Greyhound and Megabus long-distance coach drivers would also go out on strike.

Gie said, however, that Sabea would do everything in its power to avoid industrial action, which he said would be unnecessary and disruptive. "We will enter discussions with an open mind with regard to a wage increase." - Sapa

Star 24/3/98

Last attempt to prevent bus drivers' strike

MD 25/3/98

(ISA)

Pearl Seholae

THE SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) and trade unions are to meet for talks this morning in a last-ditch attempt to avert a strike by 20 000 bus drivers this afternoon, which is expected to disrupt public transportation countrywide.

Both parties said yesterday they were close to an agreement in the wage negotiations and did not rule out the possibility that a settlement could be reached today.

Sabea president Barry Gae said they were looking at other options and would do

everything in their power to avoid industrial action.

If, however, the unions and employers failed to reach an agreement, all the major commuter bus services in the country except municipal bus services in Durban and Johannesburg would be affected, Gae said. Long-distance bus companies would also be affected by the strike.

He would not comment on how much the strike would cost the industry, except that it would be "very damaging".

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesman Mbengeni Mphatha said the

unions decided not to call on all their members to go on strike immediately.

Only those on the shop floor would stop working this afternoon. The rest would go on strike tomorrow morning to avoid leaving commuters stranded, Mphatha said. "This is solely for the good of the commuters and not the employers."

The unions on Monday put in a notice of their intention to strike, following workers' rejection of a wage increase offer by employers. Employers offered an 8,5% increase for the first six months of the year and a further 2% increase for the rest of the year.

Golden Arrow bus strike expected to start today

ERIC NIABAZALLA

THE bus strike by hundreds of Golden Arrow employees, which was shelved last week after a last-minute agreement between Golden Arrow Bus Services and labour representatives, is expected to start again today.

Thousands of commuters are expected to be stranded as the bus company said it would be impossible for the company to operate any bus services, because of the

large number of workers involved in the strike

The South African Bus Employers Association's (SABEA) representatives called off the strike last week, pending the ratification of the agreement by the workforce.

Details of the agreement were withheld by both parties.

But yesterday the employees gave the company another notice of their intention to embark on strike action with effect from today at 3 30pm

Golden Arrow public relations manager Ms Jeanne Welsh said, however, that SABEA had indicated that the union was still "vigorously pursuing ways of finding a negotiated settlement".

SABEA could not be reached for comment last night.

Welsh said "Should these efforts be unsuccessful, it is expected that the strike action will ensue in accordance with notification given to the company." Golden Arrow wishes to apologise to its passengers for the inconvenience the strike will cause them, especially those passengers who will not have transport.

"We have certain contingency measures in place if the strike goes ahead. These include an arrangement with Metrorail to honour bus clipcards on trains for the duration of the strike."

She said arrangements made last week with taxi organisations in Atlanta, where there is no alternative mode of transport, crashed after

taxi organisations in the area said they had been intimidated into reneging on the initial agreement.

She said that in the interests of the safety of their staff, the company had decided to impose a lock-out, starting today. This meant that only those people who were not part of the bargaining unit would be allowed on company premises during the strike.

The strike comes a day before the arrival of President Bill Clinton tomorrow.

(52)

SA 25/3/98

Bus strike averted as drivers accept 10,5%

(273) (152)
SHARKEY ISAACS
TRANSPORT REPORTER

The bus strike, which would have added to the traffic chaos expected to be caused by the Clinton visit today, was averted by the last-minute settlement of a wage dispute.

The strike, which was to have begun at midnight, would have compounded congestion in Cape Town because many bus commuters would have had to go to work by car.

Golden Arrow general manager Hannes Grebe said the strike was called off when unions and the South African Bus Employers' Association reached agreement yesterday.

Secretary of the Western Cape Omnibus Staff Union Edgar Doman said their members were delighted that their "no compromise" stand on a 10,5% increase had been vindicated and that set-

ARG 26/3/98
tlement had been reached.

Employers' association president Colin Gie said that while negotiations had been tense, there had been compromise by both parties

"In the interests of everybody, we decided to conclude the negotiations"

Workers gave unions a mandate to reject the employers' offer of an 8,5% increase for the first six months of the year and a further 2% increase for the rest of the year.

Yesterday, representatives of bus services and several labour unions met in 11th-hour discussions in Johannesburg to find a solution and avert the strike.

The strike threat followed the deadlock of wage negotiations with employers three weeks ago

Drivers and other staff will now receive a 10,5% increase across the board from April which means drivers will earn a minimum of R1 500 a month.

Bus strike called off as bosses agree to 10,5% increases

ERIC NTABAZALILA

THE bus strike that was scheduled to start a minute after midnight this morning has been called off for the second time since the decision to strike was taken last week

The threatened strike had been expected to cripple the city's public transport system and force thousands of commuters to use other forms of transport

Golden Arrow Bus Services general manager Mr Hannes Grebe said yesterday that the negotiations between the employers and union representatives had been conducted in Johannesburg and that the company did not yet have details of the settlement

But the company was pleased that a settlement had been reached

Had the bus strike taken place in Cape Town, 870 drivers and support staff and 625 buses would have been

idle.

"We apologise to commuters for the inconveniences caused by the strike calls. We hope our customers will have the normal service they are used to today," Grebe said

Transport and General Workers' Union regional secretary Mr Nkosi-nathi Mfundisi said their office in Cape Town been told that a settlement of 10,5% had been reached.

The employees had originally asked for an increase of 16%, but had taken into consideration the fact that other companies could not afford to pay 16%

"We think we have achieved what we were mandated to do by the workforce," Mfundisi said

"We know this was not our original demand, but after deliberations, we compromised by asking for 10,5%. But the employers refused to give us that and offered only 8,5%

CT 26/3/98

~~(722)~~ ~~(722)~~ (152)
"That was when the workers called for strike action. We want to inform all our members that the strike has been called off as our demands have been met.

"We would also like to apologise to the public for the inconvenience the strike calls caused them. But the inconveniences were something we could not stop. It's a lesson to the workers and the employers that we need to settle matters on time without causing our people any grief."

The bus strike was first called off last week pending ratification of the employers' offer by the workforce. The workers refused the offer and told their representatives to go back to the negotiating table

After negotiations became deadlocked, the workers called for national strike action, which would have started today had a last-minute agreement not been reached

General (152) bus strike *Journal 26/3/98* called off

A NATIONWIDE bus strike, due to have come into effect at 3 30pm yesterday, was averted through the last-minute acceptance by the SA Bus Employers Association of workers' demand for a 10,5 percent increase

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesman Mr Mbenge Mphatha said there would be no public transport disruptions after successful negotiations at Johannesburg's Protea Gardens Hotel yesterday afternoon

Auxiliary workers - administrative staff, mechanics and workshop staff - were due to stop work at 3 30pm yesterday, if the wage deadlock had not been broken

Drivers from all major bus companies, except municipal services in Johannesburg and Durban, were due to have joined the strike after transporting commuters home yesterday evening

Wage negotiations

Long distance coach services Greyhound, Megabus and Matstrans also faced strike action if the negotiations had failed

Mphatha said worker representatives were pleased with the outcome of the negotiations, which he described as tense

The strike threat followed a breakdown of wage negotiations with employers three weeks ago

Mphatha said the 48-hour notice to strike was given on Monday after a mandate was received from workers to reject the employers' offer of an 8,5 percent increase for the first six months of the year and a further two percent increase for the rest of the year -

Sapa

INSIDE LABOUR

The truck stops here for unethical employers

CT (1998) 27/9/98 (152)



TERRY BELL

Those employers who still pay usually non-unionised drivers by the kilometre driven or by the number of loads carried are in for a hard time in coming months. The truckers' strike, which ended last week, has brought a renewed commitment among unions and their members to seek out and prosecute companies guilty of such practices.

The strike also apparently increased the strength of the unions by drawing in many drivers who were not union members or who had allowed their memberships to lapse.

"A lot of them are now joining," said Thulani Dlamini, national trucking organiser of the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&G).

The various unions in the sector had also come closer together, providing a promising start to Cosatu's "Autumn offensive" recruitment campaign.

"The general public often thinks we strike just for money but better safety and fair treatment are two of the main things we have been gunning for," said Dlamini.

He and other union officials claim this orientation on safety has already shown quite dramatic results.

Since 1996, largely through union pressure, the practice of paying drivers by the kilometre travelled or load carried has been outlawed, although it still persists.

This, say the unionists, has resulted in a dramatic decline in trucking accidents. There are no detailed statistics available about truck accidents, but Dlamini has kept a rough tally over the years.

"We used to have reports of two or three a week," he said. "Now it's maybe two or three a month."

One driver said: "You had to get your kilometres in or carry more loads to make halfway decent pay." This led to drivers speeding and

staying behind the wheel for sometimes 12 and more hours at a stretch.

It still happens, but is now the exception rather than the rule. The wage differentials between different regions of the country have also gone, although there is still a distinction between payments to truckers employed by companies in urban areas and those from rural towns. But there is a commitment to end this practice as well.

However, the life of truckers, especially long-distance drivers, is by no means easy. Nor is it very well paid. Even after the average 13 percent pay increase, the average wage is still little more than R400 a week. And the drivers often spend days or even weeks on the road. Compensation for overnight stays is R98 a night.

"We are still a low-paid sector, just a bit better off than we were before," said Abner Ramakgolo, a T&G official.

None of this has happened without considerable controversy and some of the most dramatic confrontations in modern trade union history. Now union-

ists such as Dlamini feel the era of aggressive confrontation may be over.

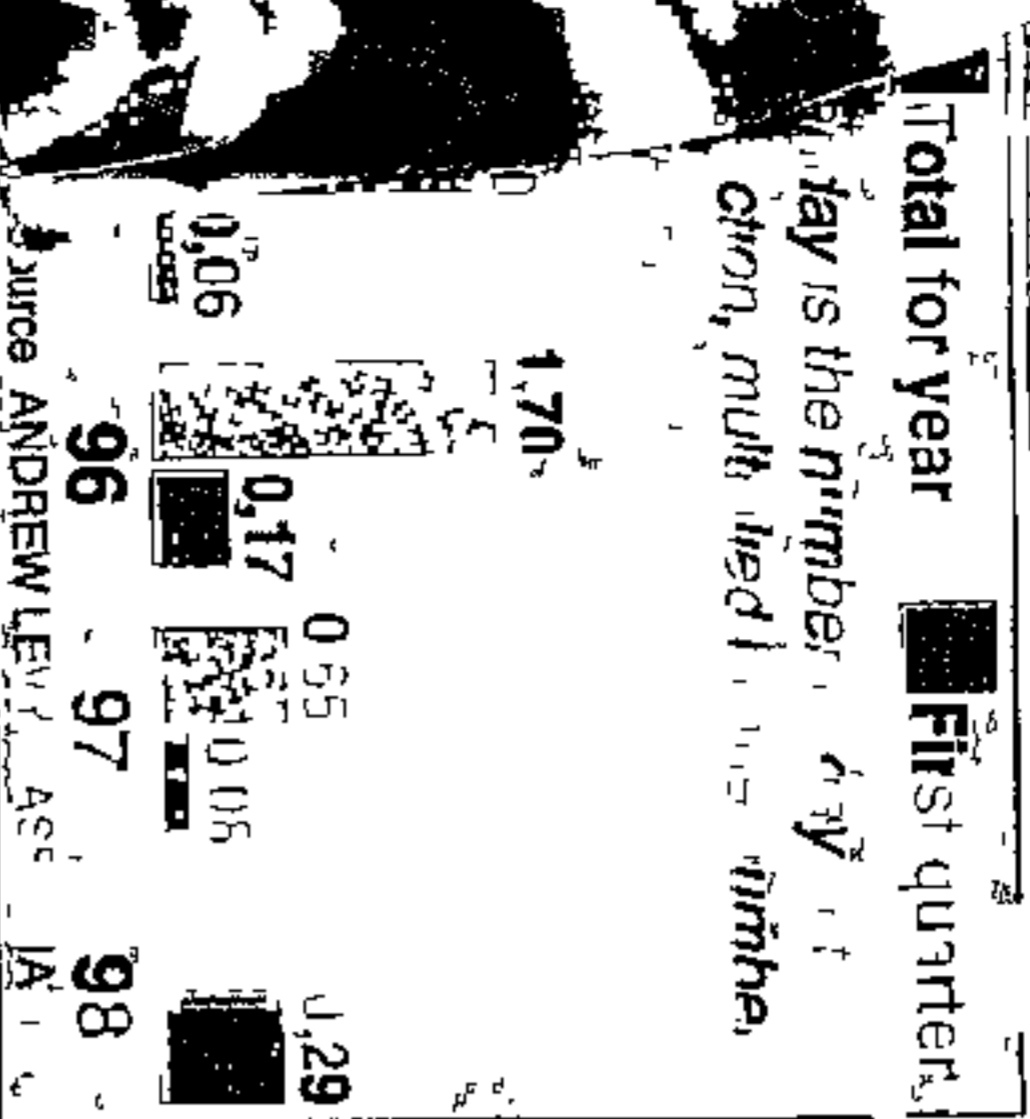
With national bargaining in place and a broad agreement to establish a network of "Diesel Cities" as rest bases for truckers, they maintain that a new era is dawning. Six sites around the country have been pinpointed for establishment of the new trucker stops.

But this move will bring fresh controversy. The fact that the T&G and several other transport unions are considering owning shares in — or even controlling — such ventures may cause a stir in both union and business circles. By far the biggest controversy, however, will be the proposal to open brotherhoods at the truck stops.

In health terms, the proposal makes perfect sense. Research such as that done by Alan Whiteside at the University of Natal, has clearly plotted the spread of HIV and Aids along the trucking trade routes of the subcontinent.

"So it will happen," said Dlamini, who also hopes to see the establishment of medical facilities at the truck stops.

St in strike action (millions)



Strikes set scene for tough talks

Reneé Grawitzky (152) PD 2/4/98

MAN days lost because of strike action during the first three months of the year rose to their highest level in four years, setting the scene for a tough bargaining year ahead, Andrew Levy & Associates said yesterday.

The high profile security and transport strikes accounted for a major portion of the 288 000 man days lost during the first quarter, compared with

78 000 man days lost during the corresponding period last year.

This brings the figure for man days lost to its highest level since 1994, when 295 000 man days were lost.

Andrew Levy & Associates research consultant Jackie Kelly said the two strikes accounted for 261 000 of the total man days lost.

However apart from these strikes, the quarter was relatively quiet, which was in line with the patterns of

previous years.

Strike action was, however, set to rise as wage talks in the major sectors began later this month.

Kelly said anticipated strike action depended on the progress of talks in the larger centralised bargaining forums, as the bulk of organised workers were covered by these processes.

Other consultants have also warned of a tough wage round with the security and transport strikes

having set the scene for the year ahead.

Kelly agreed, saying the projected decline in inflation coupled with high worker expectation was set to produce some tough bargaining.

The strikes were in previously disorganised but growing sectors, with traditionally low paid workers allied to "tough and sometimes dangerous working conditions." Kelly said the strikes were designed to highlight these aspects

Strikes take their toll early in 1998

(152)
Sowetan 2/4/98
THE two large wage strikes in the security and transport sectors and several smaller strikes resulted in 288 000 mandays being lost in the first quarter of 1998

This brings the figure for January 1 to March 31 to the highest level since 1994, when 295 000 days were lost to strikes in the first quarter

Andrew Levy and Associates said in their quarterly strike report, the large security and transport sector strikes dominated the first quarter, accounting for 261 000 lost mandays

A number of other smaller strikes accounted for the remaining 17 000 lost mandays

The two-week strike over a dispute between the South African National Employers' Association, the Security Service Employers' Organisation and 11 unions in the contract security industry resulted in a 10 percent wage increase

It was coupled to a three percent employer contribution towards a provident fund and a bonus of one percent of monthly wages.

The five-day strike over a dispute between the Road Freight Employers' Association and seven unions led to a 10,5 percent increase in actual wages with minimum wages increasing between 11,5 percent and 18 percent

At the same time agreement was reached on a reduction of the working

hours and increased paternity and compassionate leave

"Both these industries operate in previously unorganised sectors, which have traditionally paid lower wages allied to tough and sometimes dangerous working conditions

"New to national bargaining, the strikes were designed to highlight these aspects and in some cases were marred by incidents of intimidation and violence," Ms Jackie Kelly of the industrial relations and labour law consultancy said

The fact that both disputes were mediated by the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) at early stages of the strike, was a positive sign that the statutory dispute resolution processes were working, Kelly said

Increased strike activity can be expected during the middle of the year when the major wage negotiations get underway

● The construction industry has established a forum to monitor and regulate safety and health practices in the workplace, the Building Industries Federation of South Africa said yesterday

The Construction Occupational Health Safety Environment Forum represents 15 of South Africa's major construction companies and was formed in response to the escalation of disease, injury, loss of life and damage to limbs in the workplace - *Sapa*

Cosatu strike plan on hold

(152) (145A)
THABO MABASO

BUSINESS REPORTER

ARC 15/4/98
The Congress of South African Trade Unions has put on hold plans for a 24-hour strike pending the outcome of a summit next week.

Cosatu was to have called members of affiliate unions out on strike on April 21 to protest against the provincial government's management of the education and health crises. But at a meeting yesterday the federation decided to postpone the strike and convene a summit on that day in a final bid to find solutions.

Cosatu provincial secretary Tony Ehrenreich said teacher organisations, school governing bodies and representatives of provincial government and business would be invited.

Cosatu had not entirely abandoned the strike plan and would revert to it if the provincial government did not heed proposals coming from the summit, he said.

Cosatu and the provincial government are due to meet today.

Cosatu has criticised the government's decision not to take up Finance Minister Trevor Manuel's offer of grants to cash-strapped provinces. Cosatu says the money could have been used to correct imbalances in education and health.

Crippling municipal strike looms for SA

Next round of talks crucial

~~150~~ (152)
ARG 15/4/98

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - South Africa's municipal unions will decide at the end of this month whether the country's 250 000 workers will embark on industrial action this year in support of better wage increases.

South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) deputy secretary-general Mncedisi Nontsele said last week the unions were waiting for the third round of wage talks before deciding whether to submit the negotiations to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). The talks are scheduled for April 22 and 23.

Parties to wage negotiations have to resort to conciliation, mediation and arbitration before

they can embark on a legal strike.

Samwu and the Independent Municipal and Allied and Trade Unions (Imatu) have been engaged in wage negotiations with the State since March 19, but have not come close to reaching an agreement.

The unions are demanding a 12,5% or R400 increase, whichever is the greater.

This is down from the 15% or R450 increase they demanded at the start of wage talks.

The State is offering 2,25% or R60 whichever is greater. This was increased from the initial offer of 2%.

Last year, municipal workers received a 7% increase which was phased in over several months.

While Mr Nontsele would not be drawn on whether the municipal workers would strike this year,

he indicated the parties were very far apart and that it would take a "lot of bargaining from both sides to bridge the wide gap".

"Our view is that the employer's offer as it stands is far below what we would accept as a fair adjustment, both in terms of the inflation rate and the numbers of our members who are being paid below the headline," he said.

Mr Nontsele said the unions were waiting to see what the State offered on April 22 before deciding whether to take the matter to the CCMA.

"According to the arrangements for negotiations, the 22nd and 23rd of April should produce an agreement failing which we will know by April 28 if we will take it to mediation, conciliation or whatever," he said.

Cape Town harbour go-slow hits shipping

CT (M) 17/4/98
AUDREY D'ANGELO

(152) (225)

Cape Town — Millions of rands have been lost by shipping lines, shippers and customers waiting for cargo because of a two-day go-slow triggered by a pay dispute at the port of Cape Town.

Charles Kingon, the Cape Town chairman of the Association of Shipping Lines (ASL) said yesterday although the go-slow was over, it had a snowball effect and delivery of cargo was still delayed.

The ASL criticised Transnet yesterday for not allowing local port management sufficient autonomy in taking decisions.

"It is the opinion of ASL that local port management is not sufficiently empowered to make effective decisions as to the running of their own ports," ASL said.

"Decisions, particularly those relating to labour, have to be referred to head office where the implications of their effect on the

broader group will be considered. Given this restraint it is perhaps understandable that working productivity is still at an unacceptably low level when compared to international norms."

A Transnet spokesman said national pay negotiations were unavoidable until the ports were transformed into separate entities in competition with each other.

Patrick Dada, the human resources executive manager at Portnet, said a dispute with the labour unions had been declared but the go-slow had been illegal.

Kingon said it cost R200 an hour for a "big white" container ship to remain alongside the quay. "The cost of extra fuel used in sailing faster to make up for lost time as a result of the go-slow is R200 000."

He said some ships had bypassed Cape Town to avoid delay, so there would be additional costs for transshipping cargo at other ports and transporting it



Weighty words: Sampie Nobole of the Food and Allied Workers' Union hands a memo to Minister of Environmental Affairs Pallo Jordan LEON MULLER

Fawu marchers want job security

ALIDE DASNOIS
BUSINESS EDITOR

ARG 17/4/98

Chanting Food and Allied Workers' Union members marched on Parliament yesterday demanding the Government take urgent steps to protect jobs in the wine, canning and fishing industries.

A memorandum handed to Environmental Affairs Minister Pallo Jordan urged that in any fishing agreement with the European Union, all boats fishing in South African waters be obliged to fly the South African

(152) ~~2 fishing~~

flag and employ South African crews. The marchers also handed in a memorandum at the offices of the European Union, urging European countries to open their markets to South African agricultural exports and stop unfair competition from cheap European imports here.

Fawu has criticised the EU for imposing tariffs of up to 21% on imports of South African canned fruit and vegetables, at the same time subsidising European farmers.

The flood of cheap European canned goods on South African markets is threatening jobs, says Fawu.

~~186~~

Langeberg Foods has already laid off 2 000 seasonal workers and 400 permanent workers and up to 4 800 other jobs are under threat, Fawu says.

Fawu has asked the government to keep some tariffs in place to protect the domestic canning industry and to slow the restructuring of the wine industry until measures to protect jobs have been discussed.

Fawu fears that jobs in the wine industry will be lost if the EU succeeds in its attempt to exclude 40% of South African agricultural products from the free trade deal that is under negotiation.

Dockers' strike brings terminal to standstill

FACT (MR) 22/4/98

(152) (277)

JONATHAN ROSENTHAL

INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

Johannesburg — South Africa's ports are facing a labour onslaught on two fronts. Dock workers yesterday downed tools at the Durban container terminal over longer working hours, and transport workers vowed to boycott Australian ships and goods in solidarity with sacked Australian dockworkers.

The Durban container terminal, Africa's largest, which handles 80 percent of South Africa's seaborne container traffic, has been at a standstill for two days as the port management and seven unions battle over a productivity drive.

Bax Nomvete, the port manager, said workers had gone out on strike yesterday morning when management tried to reorganise shift work at the container terminal to save R8 million to R10 million in labour costs. He said container-carrier drivers worked four hours and rested four in an eight-hour shift. The new shift rosters would make drivers work an extra hour in each shift.

He said the strike had already cost the shipping lines about R5 million in delays and created a

backlog of 15 ships waiting to be unloaded. If the issue was not resolved by this morning ships and containers would have to be redirected to other ports

Portnet has applied for an interdict against the strike. A judgment is expected this morning.

Meanwhile, the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) yesterday said it would boycott all ships owned by Australian companies or carrying goods from Australian ports

The action was in solidarity with 2 000 Australian dockworkers sacked this month by Patrick Stevedores with the support of the Australian government.

Randall Howard, the general secretary of the TGWU, said the sacking was an attempt to replace a unionised workforce with non-unionised workers

The union has also called on the department of transport to bar Australian-owned vessels from South African ports

Yesterday the South African Railway and Harbours Workers' Union said it too would take action to "isolate" Australian ships

On Sunday the US-based International Longshore and Warehouse Union announced a boycott of Australian products.



TIGHT SPOT Durban Port's workers have returned to work, but it will take several days to clear container log jams

Strikers at Durban port return to work

(197) CT(MR)23/4/98

JONATHAN ROSENTHAL

INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

Johannesburg — A two-day strike at Durban port's container terminal, Africa's largest, was resolved early yesterday morning when unions agreed to an increase in working hours, Portnet said yesterday.

The two-day strike by about 300 workers cost shipping companies more than R5 million due to delays, and had created a backlog of 15 ships waiting to be unloaded.

Bax Nomvete, Durban Port's manager, said staff had returned to work after agreeing to add an extra hour in their eight-hour shift.

Previously, straddle-carrier drivers had worked for four hours and rested for four hours in a normal eight-hour shift. Nomvete said it would take several days for operations in the terminal to return to normal.

He said the new work system would save the terminal

R8 million to R10 million a year and would reduce future staff requirements, but would not result in retrenchments.

He said the terminal was expanding its workforce through the installation of additional cranes.

Under the new shift system the port would only have to hire 15 more staff to operate the new cranes, rather than the more than 90 that would have been required under the old system.

The new deal gives workers seven days before they move onto the new shift system.

Meanwhile, Tuesday's decision by South Africa's dockworker unions to boycott Australian ships in solidarity with sacked Australian dockworkers has strained relations between the two countries.

AP reports that Alexander Downer, the Australian foreign minister, yesterday called in South Africa's ambassador to Canberra to voice his displeasure about the boycott.

Cosatu calls Cape strike over schools

Unions hold crisis summit

(2A) (152) ARG 30/4/98

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

The Congress of South African Trade Unions has called on its 300 000 members in the Western Cape to strike on May 11 to draw attention to education problems in the province.

Nearly 20 000 teachers of the SA Democratic Teachers Union and other unions are expected to join them.

The education crisis was discussed yesterday at a summit between Cosatu, Sadtu, other teacher unions, the Western Cape Chamber of Commerce, teachers and school governing bodies.

The provincial administration withdrew at the last minute Sadtu spokesman Zwandile Hewu said all

the parties agreed to some form of protest and differed only on the form it should take.

"All of the parties agreed on the principle of protest. It was just a matter of deciding whether it should be a march, mass rally or a strike."

He said most participants felt that as nothing much was taking place in schools anyway, the loss of one day to a strike could be regarded as an investment rather than a loss to education.

Mr Hewu criticised the department for not attending the meeting and said they did not have any solutions to the problems

"They don't even want to listen to other views. This shows their political agenda," he said.

The absence of the provincial gov-

ernment and governing bodies of former Model C schools showed they were not really committed to changing education and wanted to retain the privileges of the past, he said.

But Melvin Joshua, provincial chief director of labour relations, said Cosatu had already indicated on Friday that its 300 000 members would be on a 24-hour strike on May 11

"The Western Cape government is committed to quality education in the province and to redressing the inequities, but we find it strange that Cosatu would give notice of their protest action way before the summit was scheduled to look at the options."

Mr Joshua said the administration had written to Cosatu to reaffirm its commitment to finding a solution.

Prisoners escape in court strike

(152) ~~(152)~~

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

ARL 1/5/98

Durban - A walkout by orderlies sparked a breakout by prisoners from the holding cells as the Durban Magistrate's Court ground to a halt.

About 270 awaiting-trial prisoners were left virtually unattended.

When the prisoners were unable to have their day in court, they made a dash for freedom while only a few orderlies were on duty in the holding cells yesterday.

About 250 prisoners stormed a gate and police were called in.

Some prisoners escaped into the main building and underground tunnels, but teargas was used to flush them out of their hiding

places. One escaper is still missing.

Area commissioner Mulder van Eck said the situation was caused by a lack of manpower after 35 orderlies failed to perform their duties.

The orderlies, all members of the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru), reported for duty early in the day but decided to leave the courts.

Earlier, 29 striking Popcru members were sacked, sparking a demonstration outside police HQ.

Witnesses said the breakout was preceded by pandemonium as court staff processed adjournments.

Prisoners overpowered court orderlies and forced their way through the gates.

Self initiative the way to make ends meet

With big business bent on downsizing and demanding experience that school leavers don't have, more people are turning to self employment to escape the trap of joblessness. YAZEED FAKIER reports.

"DO you know how depressing it is for someone to sit at home without a job?" Julian Jacobs stares right at me.

I know he knows the answer. Growing up in a struggling family in poverty-stricken Manenberg, with the highest unemployment rate in the Western Cape, Jacobs himself has experienced what it is like to make R20 last a month.

"Do you know what it's like for a father to be healthy but unable to find a job?" he continues.

"The worst thing about unemployment," he says, "is that it robs you of your dignity."

And the most destructive aspect is that the son or daughter sees dad just sitting there and dad turns to drink, he's driven to staying out late with friends, falls victim to drugs — that's the kind of downward spiral you can easily get trapped in if you don't have a job.

And on top of that you are forced to go to the labour centre, go and basically beg for money. It's a humiliation, standing in a queue, like a commodity."

That scenario is less likely to be experienced under the new Department of Labour, where Jacobs now serves as communications officer. He is dedicated to ensuring that every person who arrives at its Barrack Street offices is treated with

the respect often denied them under the former department of manpower. Jacobs feels that there's a particular responsibility on big business, one of the social partners of the department, along with the labour movement, to address unemployment in the region — with its jobless rate of between 22 and 25%.

But more importantly, he says, jobless Capetonians should start thinking more in terms of self employment because companies will be less able to provide employment in the future, given the large-scale downsizing and retrenchments currently under way around the country and employers' preference for qualified personnel.

Jacobs says Non-Government Organizations have taken cognisance of the fact that people need business skills and need to become self-employed. "So what they have done is to invite people to classes where they can do skills courses"

Operations like the Careers Research Information Centre (Cric) and the Centre for Cognitive Development in Athlone have taken the lead, teaching participants how to make school shirts, uniforms and track suits which can be more easily sold.

Addressing school-leavers and students battling to find work, Jacobs says "Students must realise that it's fine to have these aspirations of being a doctor or a lawyer and so on, but realistically it's tough out there in the job market, so why not go into business?"

The worst thing about unemployment is that it robs you of your dignity...

"The Small Business Development Corporation, for example, does offer help. These are the things we need to look at and more and more the trend is towards self-employment."

"The mushrooming of spaza and corner shops and stalls is an indication of this." He points to the booming flea-markets in places like Manenberg and says



WHERE IT'S HAPPENING: Julian Jacobs, Department of Labour communications officer, with Manenberg in the background. The area is a hive of trading activity for ordinary residents creating their own livelihood.

it's a flourishing business.

"Part of my survival growing up there, for example, was to sell old clothes."

Still, if business is unable to provide jobs for the unemployed, business internships would at least provide people with skills they could use.

"But it's not just big business, it's small business too that we are appealing to because while big business is cutting down, it's the smaller businesses that are growing, those with 50 people and more." "We want them to come on board on

the basis that it's a part of the national building initiative, part of alleviating unemployment."

The department, for its part, is able to offer a host of services ranging from computer training courses — "not necessarily with the latest technology" — to counselling and other services and is also able to draw from its extensive database in order to provide assistance.

"People should feel free to call the department," says Jacobs, but adds that "we can't guarantee them a job — it's not a question of someone coming here,

at 5/5/98

(1538)

we punch in your name and suddenly a job pops up.

"It takes time and is dependent on what spaces open up. Eventually we come up with something, but people must know that we are not just a centre for UIF payouts."

"We can help you to become marketable, supply you with information on how to prepare a CV, prepare for a job interview, etc — but you will have to take the initial step."

Again, Cric has worked in tandem with the department in this regard. The department is also endeavouring to train personnel manning the traditional advice offices in townships in order to transform them into an agency or "mini Department of Labour."

"We want to be in partnership with them, to empower them with the necessary information on how to go about things so that when people come to them with queries they don't send them all the way to Cape Town for information they could just as well have obtained there," says Jacobs.

This, again, is the process that would be applied to areas like Manenberg and other sub-economic housing developments where poverty and unemployment are particularly chronic.

● The Western Cape Department of Labour can be contacted at (021) 460-6911

TOMORROW: The three-way partnership needed to reverse the destructive unemployment trend — a technikon perspective.

PERSONAL VIEW

Beware the spectre of informal sector apartheid

ET (P) 5/5/98

(153A)

The intractability of formal sector unemployment and poverty in South Africa have generated an enthusiasm for the informal and small, medium and micro-enterprise (SMME) sectors as the wellspring of future jobs and economic growth.

This belief is reflected in various policy initiatives at government, private-sector and non-governmental organisation (NGO) level to support these sectors. The department of trade and industry's National Empowerment Fund, the Land Bank's micro-lending scheme and the work of the Women's Self-Employed Union (Sewu) are good examples of this kind of support.

Such faith in informal sector employment is reinforced by the positive international experiences of alleviating poverty and achieving economic growth through support for the SMME sector.

One such experience is that of Accion International, an NGO

network of credit programmes supporting low-income entrepreneurs in Latin America and the US. Last year Accion oversaw loans of \$485 million to 310 000 low-income entrepreneurs in 14 countries. Its average loan size in 1996 was \$575.

Its impact in Latin America has been profound. The organisation is influencing government development policy throughout the region.

In Argentina it is a key player in the government's \$40 million micro-enterprise initiative, which combines government investment with private sector management. In Peru, it is the largest shareholder in the government's privately managed and capitalised micro-finance initiative. In Brazil, it works with a development bank to introduce micro-lending in 174 branches. In Bolivia, it has made loans through its affiliate, BancoSol, to 80 000 low-income clients in the city of La Paz alone.



ZARINA MAHARAJ

It is not only possible to help low-income people through micro-credit lending but also, under certain circumstances, to turn a respectable profit.

The striking success of micro-credit, particularly in Latin America and Asia, is in stark contrast to the failure of labour markets globally to cope with chronic unemployment.

The focus on creating wage employment — the conventional strategy for attacking unemployment — is understandably shifting, for poorer countries anyway, to self-employment in the informal sector.

Accion estimates that this sector accounts for more than 50 percent of the economy in Lagos, Bombay and La Paz. The data required to make such an estimate about South Africa does not exist, but moves by the Central Statistical Service are about to fill this data gap left by apartheid.

While this strategy may solve the unemployment problem, it also creates a dilemma. The growth of two distinct economic sectors, formal and informal, made up of two distinct sets of people, would perpetuate gender and racial discrimination and inequality.

In developing societies, women generally make up the majority of workers in the informal sector; while the formal sector tends to be male-dominated. Moreover, women tend to dominate in the lower income-earning, lower-valued "survivalist" jobs in both sectors.

Black women in South Africa make up over 80 percent of those

in elementary survivalist jobs such as street vending, shoe polishing and cooking and cleaning. They represent over 60 percent of people engaged in SMMEs.

Pat Horn of Sewu argues that black women are "being ghettoised in the informal sector. This compounds the difficulty they have in participating in the higher levels (not to mention the decision-making levels) of the mainstream (ie formal) economy."

In this sense the "dual (formal and informal) economy" reinforces gender discrimination and inequality. Horn adds "The heritage of apartheid, with its economic policies which excluded black people from the industrialised metropolises except as cheap labour, has resulted in the informal economy being a black sector and the formal economy being a white-dominated sector."

"In this way, racial discrimination is perpetuated in the post-apartheid, dual-economy labour market."

Internationally, the women of a poor society are recognised as its engine up out of poverty. They can accelerate its development and growth if given the chance to do so. Therefore a way must be found out of the dilemma raised by Horn.

Sewu proposes that the government should formulate a labour market policy designed to regulate the dual sectors treated as a whole. The union suggests creating the conditions for a sustained, two-way mobility between the formal and informal sectors through skills development in both sectors.

The aim is to radically transform the current sexual and racial occupational categories of labour through equity requirements in both sectors.

The struggle to eliminate the effects of apartheid is not over yet. This is the challenge we have to grapple with in encouraging SMMEs and establishing effective institutions for micro-lending.

You can write, phone fax or e-mail a letter to The Editor, Business Report, PO Box 1014, Johannesburg 2000
Phone: (011) 633-2484 Fax: (011) 838-2693 e-mail: busrep.editor@star.independent.co.za

Street trading 'no lasting solution'

YAZEED FAKIER

TOWNSHIP traders who sell sweets, clothing, fresh produce and other goods on the streets are merely subsisting, so they cannot be considered to be gainfully employed

They have little or no prospect of improving the quality of their lives, says Mr Tony Ehrenreich, Cosatu's regional secretary for the Western Cape

"The government to some extent and many other players seem to see such people as being gainfully employed — but it's nothing more than a survival economy they are involved in," Ehrenreich said

Street vendors did not have a sustainable job, nor did they have any prospect of improving their lives

Ehrenreich was responding to the viewpoint that "employment" at such a level was becoming an increasingly popular and viable alternative to unemployment

The Western Cape has a population of 2,6 million and an unemployment rate of between 22% and 25% compared with the national rate of 33%

"I think we're starting off with a problem if we're saying that this is the kind of employment we want to create when we talk about job creation," Ehrenreich said

This was especially problematic con-

CT 5/5/98
sidering the great disparities in salaries paid to white and black people — the "apartheid wage gap"

The stigma of not having a job made the situation of the unemployed even more difficult

"People don't always see that there are no jobs out there, so there's this attitude that those who don't work are lazy or are not making an effort

"This undermines individuals' perceptions of themselves, contributes to breaking down the moral fabric of society and translates into the other social problems we see around us"

Although this did not justify child abuse and similar crimes, these social ills were more likely to take hold in an environment where people were unemployed, hard labour jobs were disappearing rapidly and women were being drawn more easily into jobs that were lower-paid and did not demand much physical effort, such as



NO MIDAS FORMULA: Cosatu regional chief Tony Ehrenreich

robotics and minding computer-operated lathes

"All these things contribute to throwing the traditional family structure out of kilter," says Ehrenreich

"They bring about changes that our society is not ready to cope with — and we need to take cognisance of this"

After Brazil, South Africa probably had one of the most unequal societies in the world. Sustainable development could not be based on such a foundation, Ehrenreich said. The disparities between rich and poor were bound to tear society apart

The answer to how the unemployed have avoided starvation, Ehrenreich says, can be found in the restructuring that this scenario has precipitated in Cape Flats townships

"People who are employed are looking after the unemployed or extended families in the townships"

The unemployed also engaged in a survival economy by selling products on the streets. This tapped into the lives of the formally employed who did not buy commodities like fruit and vegetables in the centres where they worked but from township street vendors

"If this shift did not happen, then those survival jobs in the townships would not have been sustained," Ehrenreich said

"This restructuring takes the form of people looking out for each other — but it's the poor taking care of the poor. It's not the government and it's not the rich — that's a fallacy"

If South Africans desired a society that brought about opportunities for sustainable development, they could ill afford to continue entertaining the disparities to the degree that they had

It made sense to create conditions in which more people were gainfully employed as there would be greater stability in communities and the consumption of products would increase

Even if one accepted a conservative estimate of 25% for the unemployment rate in the Western Cape, this would mean a quarter of the labour market was unemployed. This had a severe impact on the role people could play in society, Ehrenreich said

"Poverty jobs are not necessarily a solution

"For people to play an active role in the economy, they have to be provided with jobs that promote sustainable economic growth in the country"

Cont.



GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT? While township residents grappling with the reality of increasing joblessness opt for self-employment in the form of sidewalk trading to survive, a Cosatu spokesperson warns against the perception that such work can be regarded as gainful employment

PICTURE GARTH STEAD

Legal battle looms over strike

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — A legal battle is looming between the Western Cape government and Cosatu over the latter's resolve to hold a 24-hour general strike this Monday over the education crisis in the province.

The federation claims a direct membership of about 300 000 workers across all economic sectors in the province, but believes many sympathisers will go on strike as well.

Labour and transport MEC Piet Meyer served Cosatu's Western Cape region with a notice threatening an interdict in the Labour Court to prevent the planned protest action.

The interdict, which Cosatu said it would oppose, was expected to be lodged today and heard tomorrow, a government official said.

Cosatu regional educator Anthony Dietrich said the strike was a last resort after months of negotiations with the National Party-controlled regional government had failed to reach agreement on the need to redress the continued racial imbalances in the

provision of education.

The federation believed there had been no material improvement in the education of African and coloured children in the three years of NP rule, while white schools continued to receive higher funding.

The protest action was called in terms of section 77 of the Labour Relations Act, which gave workers the right to highlight their socioeconomic concerns.

"Our members demand quality public education and the redressing of disparities to narrow the gap between the state of public education in working class communities and that in white areas," Cosatu regional secretary Tony Erhenreich said.

"Since the beginning of this year, we have in good faith negotiated with the provincial government around our concerns. It has become abundantly clear that they do not have the political will to address the demands of working people. They even decided to boycott our education summit held on 29 April, which we called in an attempt to explore solutions to the problem."

BD 7/5/98

(152)

S
rs,
d",
he
n-
ict
nt
us.
an
ld
es
ce
ict

Kruger's curio sellers unite and boost income

(153A) 00 11/5/98

BERG-EN-DAL — The familiar bands of curio sellers that line the roads to the Kruger National Park have organised themselves into a high-powered alliance earning R40 000 a month from curio sales.

Elizabeth Mhlongo, manager of the Kruger Park's social ecology department, said at the weekend that the 69 curio sellers initially eked a living on combined earnings of R2 000 a month. Mhlongo helped form the Skukuza Alliance.

"After a six-month training course in business management and after learning skills other than wood carving, the alliance's earnings jumped to R40 000 last month," she said.

The training course was sponsored through a R200 000 donation from national liquor wholesalers, Seagrams South Africa. It was attended by 12 members of the alliance.

"The artists were taught to not only concentrate on making their famous giraffes and wooden masks, but to use other mediums, such as making high-quality leather shoes, and starting bronze casting and weaving," she said. They were are now training their fellow members and the alliance's success had encouraged membership to increase to 500 people.

Asked whether the increase in membership would mean an increase in competition, Mhlongo said the alliance was made up of three smaller associations who sold products at

fixed, competitive prices at specific gates to the park.

The former Mhala woodcarver's association and Nyongane arts and crafts group, for example, worked the Kruger Gate near Hazyview. The former Lubambiswano arts and crafts group worked the Numbi Gate, near White River.

Mhlongo said the Kruger Park was also establishing curio shops at its gates where tourists had easier access to the alliance's work.

The craftsmen have been encouraged to interact closely with tourists, by explaining the meaning of the arts and crafts on sale.

"For example, the alliance comprises largely Swazi and Tsonga groups, both of which have different weaving techniques and different use of colours, which can be explained to tourists," Mhlongo said.

"The artists can now present and sell their products with a sense of pride in their own culture," she said.

The alliance's products are now more diverse, the supply and demand is being professionally monitored and proper accounting and stock control systems have been introduced.

Ten percent of the alliance's earnings are used to keep it self-sustainable, while the rest is divided among the members.

"The artists are able to participate in this project without fear of exploitation," Mhlongo said. — Sapa.

Conference to focus on cleaner production

Josey Ballenger

CLEANER production, the subject of a regional conference this week in Midrand, would be a goal of 21st century policymakers and managers, but the idea had not yet caught on in Africa, the Industrial Environmental Forum said.

"Pollution and waste have very real financial and social costs, so we must focus on preventative strategies and new products, services and technologies," forum manager Karin Ireton said.

"Despite the growing recognition of the importance and benefits of cleaner production, there remains great scope to improve the level of awareness, understanding and implementation of the concept throughout southern Africa."

Environmental Affairs Minister Pallo Jordan will open the two-day conference at Eskom's conference centre in Midrand tomorrow with "a government perspective". Jonathan Hobbs of the United Nations environment programme in Paris and Bjorn Stigson, president of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, will lend global and business perspectives. Danish aid agency Daned will discuss pilot projects in southern Africa.

The Industrial Development Corporation and the Development Bank of Southern Africa will discuss funding and the role of financing bodies. Specialists from Europe and Australia will address information exchange in "overcoming barriers".

Memorandum on training

Primarashni Pillay

THE education department has signed a memorandum of understanding with International Partnerships Worldwide, a joint venture consisting of British Aerospace and Loughborough University.

The memorandum details collaboration on the creation of SA skills academies.

Education department spokesman Ehekhi Khumalo said the academies would seek to establish centres to provide technical and entrepreneurial skills, vocational training and supervisory and middle-management training.

The academies would also create township and provincial technology centres, establish teacher-training programmes and develop apprenticeship programmes for the aerospace industry

SA NEWS DIGEST

SHIPPING

Higher wages and solidarity inspire dockworkers' industrial action

The Port of Durban's container terminal was struck by yet another bout of industrial action yesterday when crane drivers switched off their cranes for half the day.

Bax Nomvele, the port manager, said the short strike was related to restructuring aimed at improving productivity at the port. A union source said the strike was related to demands by crane drivers for a R400 wage increase. Nomvele said the terminal resumed operations yesterday afternoon. The short strike comes weeks after a two-day strike at the terminal, when crane drivers protested an increase in the number of hours they were to work in each shift.

Meanwhile, the Transport and General Workers Union said yesterday it was boycotting a ship bearing South African goods in line with last month's statement that its members would refuse to handle goods from Australian ships in solidarity with the Fed Australian dockworkers. The union said it would maintain its action in light of certain conditions attached to the re-employment of the Australian dockers.

CR (BA) 14/5/98
Jonathan Rosenthal, Johannesburg

LIQUIDATIONS



Strike by warders at Leeuwkop Prison is over

By GILL GIFFORD
Crime Reporter

A wildcat strike by union members calling for the removal of Leeuwkop Medium C Prison head Sam Gomba ended yesterday afternoon after warders had blocked food deliveries to the prison for two days.

The strike, which started at about 7am on Tuesday, intensified yesterday when warders took to stoning prison officials' cars and blocked bread and milk deliveries.

Between 25 and 30 members of the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) on Tuesday demanded that Gomba be removed from his post, and spontaneously embarked on a work stoppage.

Department of Correctional Services spokesman Rudi Potgieter said Popcru members employed at

Leeuwkop, in Midrand, managed to get hold of duplicate keys and locked warders, who refused to join the strike, in a prison yard.

"Later in the day, other warders with keys, who were not part of the strike, managed to release the trapped warders, who were set free in time to serve prisoners their breakfast," Potgieter said.

The striking Popcru members were met by area manager Rams Ramaboa on Tuesday afternoon but no resolution was reached.

The strikers continued their actions yesterday by blocking the prison entrance. More warders joined the protest and locked the entrance to Leeuwkop.

"Prisoners called us from inside and said the gates are locked, no food is going in, all visits have been stopped, and people needing medical treatment have not been

seen to. It is unacceptable to have prisoners suffering because they are caught in the middle of an internal warders' grievance," said South African Prisons Organisation for Human Rights spokesman Golden Miles Bhudu.

Popcru Gauteng secretary James Makapane said the strike ended late yesterday afternoon after members met with Gauteng correctional services commissioner Patrick Gillingham.

"It was decided that the strike would end, pending the outcome of an investigation into Gomba's appointment. We are happy with this assurance," Makapane said.

Popcru members were not satisfied with Gomba's appointment last year because, they claim, the post was not advertised and Leeuwkop staff were not given a fair chance to apply for the position.

SPAR 14/5/98

Real power is economic

The State's RBS said that, last year, the share reached this year. Low: Lowest level the price reached this year

Expert slams IMF, World Bank

By Sharon Chetty

WINDHOEK - An expert attending the high-level Southern African Economic Summit, which began here on Sunday, launched a scathing attack on the International Monetary Fund and World Bank statutory adjustment policies for Africa

Director of the Harvard Institute for International Development Professor Jeffrey Sachs, one of the authors of the first report on African competitiveness, said the IMF and World Bank policies were outdated and had "reached dead end"

The IMF and World Bank have set 117 conditions and debt statutory adjustments policies which they expect governments to meet to qualify for a loan

Sachs, describing Africa as "decades behind" in material development, said the IMF and World Bank policies were "too slow" in bringing about change and would not result in the breakthrough needed by this continent to enter the global market

He also repeated a call for the debt owed by developing countries to Western governments and institutions to be cancelled

This follows strong calls during the

opening session of the summit on Sunday by southern African leaders for debt to be cancelled

Presidents Sam Nujoma of Namibia, Frederick Chiluba of Zambia and Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique all emphasised the need for developing countries to be given a chance to use the money spent on servicing the debt to be channelled into social spending

The three heads of state also stressed the need for investment in the region and indicated their commitment to market-oriented reforms

They calls come after a meeting of the Group of Eight (G8) countries in Birmingham, Britain, at which the issue of debt forgiveness was discussed.

Failed to take measures

Agence France Presse, however, reported that the G8 leaders failed to

take concrete measures on the issue

As the largest number of least developed countries are on the continent, Africa would always be hampered by such rules, Sachs told the World Economic Forum-Southern African Development Community gathering attended by more than 800 government and business leaders in the Namibian capital yesterday

Economists however, cautioned



American popstar Michael Jackson meets Namibian president Sam Nujoma at State House on Sunday shortly after his arrival in Windhoek to attend the southern African economic summit of the World Economic Forum. Nujoma and other leaders of the region called for debt to Third World countries to be scrapped. PIC AP

that debts simply could not be written off as there was a risk of governments "doing it again".

They called for guidelines to any debt restructuring and reiterated the need for recovery plans for the economies of the indebted nations

Sachs noted a big drawback to the underdeveloped manufacturing industries in some of the African states Africans, he said, were severely

disadvantaged as raw materials were sold abroad and finished products bought back at extra cost

Developing a significant manufacturing and service industry was the key to growth, he said

Democracy and political stability, good infrastructure, a partnership between the public and private sectors and the empowerment of women, among others, are some of the urgent

tasks facing regional governments

Although Sachs listed some of the "unique" problems faced by this continent - diseases on a large scale and the majority of the countries being landlocked and having difficulty with infrastructure and communications - he urged African leaders to work out a clear strategy to change the ways the continent related to the rest of the world

Strikers offer cameras deal

ART 21/5/98

(152) ~~(197)~~

THABO MABASO
BUSINESS REPORTER

Workers at Epping manufacturing firm Migra Textiles have offered management a compromise as the strike against the installation of security cameras enters its ninth day today.

About 30 workers at the plant downed tools on Monday last week to protest against the installation of surveillance cameras. They claim the cameras invade their privacy. The company employs 85 people.

The management has refused to remove the cameras, saying the company has lost large amounts of stock through theft in recent months.

The strike is legal and the employees may therefore not be fired.

Shop steward Clive Campbell said workers had held several meetings with management and had now revised their demand.

"We now want the cameras installed only in the entrance and exit points of each department," Mr Campbell said.

Management would respond today, he added.

Municipal strike over outsourcing looms

(152)
(2/3)

Council says it has to look elsewhere in order to deliver good service, while union says it was not consulted

By LEE-ANN ALFREDS
City Desk

Johannesburg could come to a virtual standstill next month when the bulk of the city's municipal workers embark on a three-day strike to protest against outsourcing of council functions.

The strike, which is expected to be heeded by more than 20 000 of the city's 29 000-strong workforce, has been called by the South African Municipal Workers Union for June 9, 10 and 11.

The looming protest is the culmination of mounting tensions between the city and trade unions over Johannesburg's planned staff restructuring and the implementation of public/private partnerships (PPPs).

PPPs can refer to either the delegation of functions to private companies or the selling of assets

Star 21/5/98
Functions up for partnerships include electricity, gas, water and sewerage, airports, buses, the fresh produce market, the zoo, theatres, sports facilities and emergency services.

The council has decided to embark on PPPs because Johannesburg does not have money to fund all the functions on its books.

The council also had to embark on an "organisational review" and is planning to reduce the number of managers and streamline functions.

Union spokesman Caleb Mokoena told The Star yesterday that Samwu wanted the organisational review to be abandoned as the council had not consulted with unions. Samwu also opposed PPPs because "services could be better delivered by the council".

Mokoena also said the PPPs violated an agreement with the

Government that municipalities were the preferred option to deliver services.

The union was taking legal advice to see whether a recent provincial government proclamation by Local Government MEC Sicele Shiceka was valid.

The proclamation ordered Johannesburg to finalise PPPs for various functions. Mokoena said Samwu could also refer the matter for arbitration.

But Shiceka said his proclamation was legal. The organisational review and PPPs were vital for restoring the city's financial viability, he added.

Greater Johannesburg Metro Council spokesman Collin Matjila said the city had an obligation to deliver services that were cost effective and efficient.

Samwu had not raised its concerns with the council, and the council had not been notified about the strike, he said.

Alberton traffic police protest ticketing system with go-slow

Star 22/5/98

(152)

By MATTHEW BURBIDGE

Bitter Alberton traffic officers, who say their productivity is measured by how many summonses they issue daily, have embarked on a ticketing go-slow in protest, The Star was told yesterday

The 39 officers are expected to fine at least 10 people every day, and are threatened with punitive action if they do not.

Morale at the station has hit "rock bottom" and the officers said they had decided to stop

writing out tickets in protest

An officer said the number of summonses issued over a weekend had dropped from about 300 to five or six

The officers spoke on condition of anonymity.

While all the officers who spoke to The Star said they would not hesitate to fine motorists for dangerous driving, they resented being forced into a quota system.

The officers have on occasion been told to leave an accident scene and "get back to

writing summonses".

"They threaten to take our overtime away and they know if they do that we won't be able to support our families," said one officer, who earns just over R3 000 a month.

"The only training we're given is how to fill out a summons," another said.

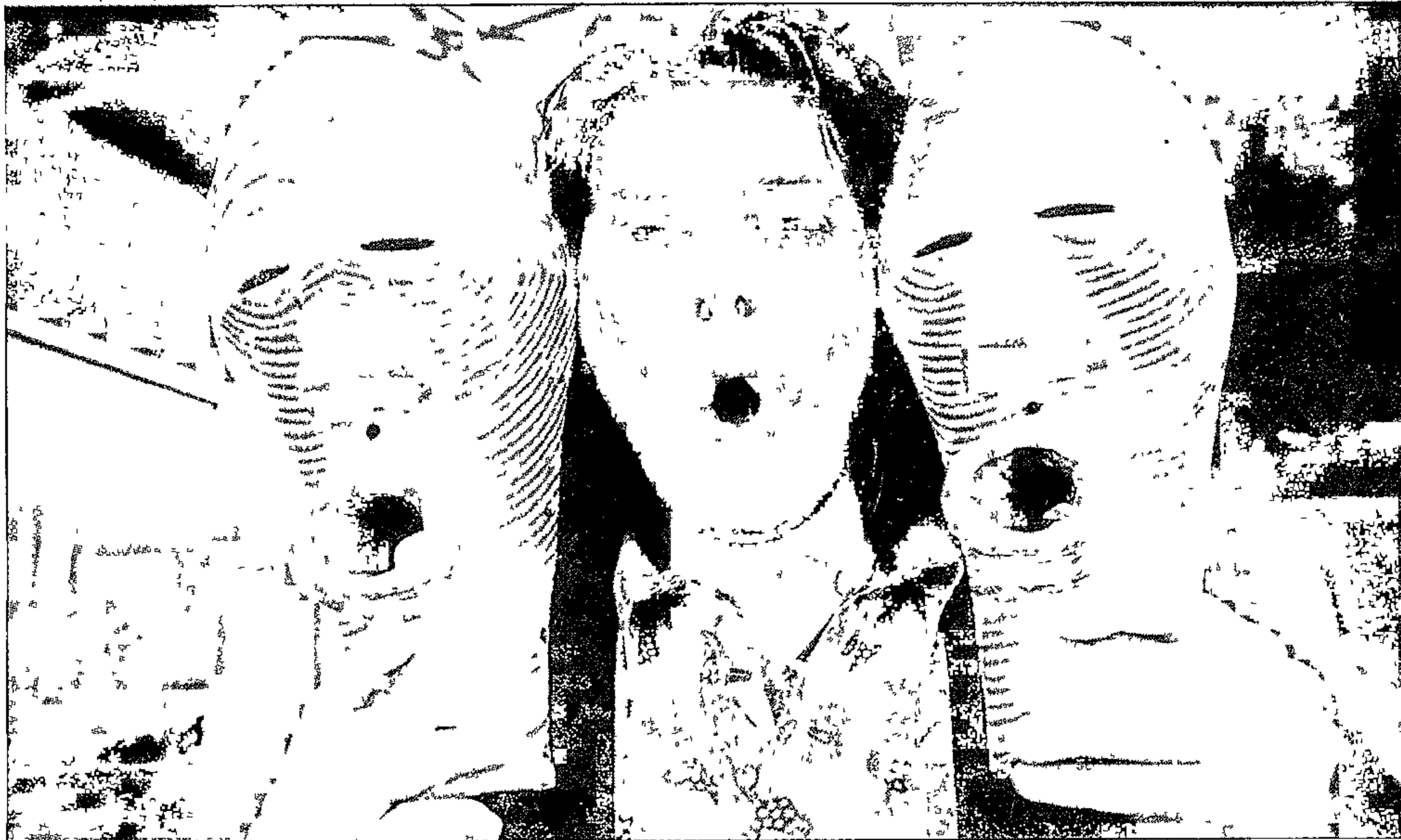
The men say they have never received training in how to use their firearms and were expected to respond to burglaries in progress and make arrests.

The officers have to make do

with old vehicles, some of which have to be push-started, and a control room with outdated equipment which, they are told, are because of the need to cut costs.

Alberton traffic chief Blackie Swart said yesterday that the officers' claims were nonsense and that he was not willing to talk about it

"If they (the officers) say that, they can carry on. You can come here and speak to them in front of me," he said before slamming down the telephone.



NEW FACES . . . Marc Israelsohn's (centre) flea markets give entrepreneurs an entry into the business world

Flea markets jump onto JSE boards

(153A) ST(OT) 24/5/98

LISTINGS

By MARCIA KLEIN

GLOBAL Village Holdings, the first flea market group to list on a stock exchange, plans to make its debut on the beverages, hotels and leisure sector in July

Deputy chairman and CE Marc Israelsohn started the company in 1990 when he and brother Gary set up a market in a parking lot in Bruma, Johannesburg

Flea Market World at Bruma is now the most visited destination in Gauteng as well as Gauteng's biggest tourist destination, Israelsohn claims

He says Global Village is now the largest player in the industry, with four flea markets including Bruma, the Hatfield Plaza Festival Market in Pretor-

ia, and two markets in Durban — at the South Plaza and Point

The four markets cater for 2 300 traders and account for about 42% of SA's estimated yearly flea market sales of R1 2-billion. The company's revenues are around R15-million, but it has high margins. Revenues are forecast to grow substantially in the coming year

Apart from its flea markets, the company also has a festival and exhibition division which operates the Norwood Mardi Gras in Johannesburg and the Christmas Time Discount Toy

Fair at the Bruma market

The food division has the food and beverage rights for all of the group's markets. Apart from 18 soft-drink outlets, the division has a video game arcade, two take-away outlets, a coffee shop and a bar and grill restaurant

Global Village Holdings is negotiating several acquisitions "in areas like markets, festivals, exhibitions and specialist leisure retail niches"

In June the company opens its first Urban Adventure Lifestyle store — an upmarket theme venue for entrepreneurs to sell unusual wares — in Cape Town's Cavendish Square

It is also looking at an Internet-

based virtual market, a quarterly food festival and a mega-market in Cape Town

The company has been approached to run markets in Cairo, Tel Aviv, Jakarta, Miami and Disney World in Paris

Israelsohn says he cannot disclose any financial details until release of the prospectus in the middle of next month. The listing will include a public offer. The private placement has been well received by institutions

"We are the kind of business that is by its very nature economically empowering and enables entrepreneurs to have an entry for doing business and we make money doing it"

RETAIL *Global Village Holdings seeks listing to spread capital base and credibility*

Flea marketeer JSE-bound

CT (MR) 25/5/98 (153A)

MATT GETZ

MARKETS EDITOR

Johannesburg — Old-time JSE hands complain about all the rats and mice that have been listing lately. What will they think of the fleas, coming to the exchange in the guise of Global Village Holdings in July?

The company operates flea markets in Johannesburg (the highly successful Flea Market World in Bruma), Pretoria and Durban, along with a diverse collection of interests including festivals and exhibitions, draught beer distribution and video games arcades. It hopes that a listing will spread and enlarge its capital base, and raise the credibility of flea markets.

Marc Israelsohn, the chief executive and a dedicated flea marketeer, said his business did well in the good times and was also a fine hedge against recession. "We have a lot of traders who also work in traditional shopping centres," he said last week. "In December, they all said trade was down, but less at the market than at the formal centres. The troubles were dampened by the style of trade."

The flea market business

nationwide is estimated to be worth R1,2 billion, of which 42 percent is turned over at Global's flea markets. Global charges flat rates for its stallholders so it is not directly dependent on how well they do. Spending is high, according to the company: the average visitor to the Bruma market spends R236.

Still, Israelsohn said the company was lessening its reliance on the market business from 75 percent now to about 50 percent in a few years. "We want to be very synergistic and focused on our core of leisure retail," he said.

That means more festival and exhibition business — "we're looking at the acquisition of a very well-known company in that area" — Urban Adventure Lifestyle stores in Cape Town and elsewhere and huge new developments at Bruma.

Israelsohn said the company was negotiating to buy 132 000m² in Bruma, to "create a public parks precinct" that would include a permanent exhibition area, a Kids' World and, intriguingly, a Museum of Freedom and Liberation, one of the drawcards in getting zoning permission from the council.



FAR-FLUNG INTERESTS *Mark Israelsohn, the chief executive of Global Village in an expansive mood at Bruma* PHOTO: SELWYN TAIT

Thousands strike in Portnet row over bonuses

BUSINESS REPORTER

Thousands of Portnet workers throughout the country went on strike today to protest against moves by the state-owned parastatal

to withdraw employees' incentive bonuses. Hardest hit are Richards Bay and Durban, but it's business as usual in Cape Town, Saldanha Bay and Port Elizabeth, according to Portnet spokesman Thami Didiza.

Union leader Linley Sharp told the Cape Argus the three striking unions represented 3 000 workers at Portnet. Portnet could lose

(152) ARG 26/5/98

To page 3

CAPE ARGUS, TUESDAY, MAY 26, 1998

Thousands on strike in bonus row

(152) (270)

From page 1
ARG 26/5/98
as much as R200-million a day in profits, he said

The three unions are Salstaff, the Technical Workers' Union and the Employees' Union of South Africa

Mr Didiza has, however, denied union claims the strike was hurting the company

Only 20% of Portnet's 11 000 workers heeded the call to down tools, he said.

The workers were protesting against proposals to cancel a scheme that paid them an incentive bonus of R500.

Mr Sharp said the bonus, which was paid annually, motivated workers to become more productive

"The bosses are offering a new bonus that gives workers R350," Mr Sharp said.

However, Mr Didiza said the bonus was given monthly. He claimed Portnet wanted to devise a new scheme because the bonuses had been too costly for the company

"If we carry on with the present bonus we will lose R70-million a year. What we have proposed is a scheme that is tied to the profitability of the company," he said.

Workers have vowed to strike "for as long as it takes".

Street trading 'has cost SA economy billions'

Nicola Jenvey

(157A)

DD 27/5/98

DURBAN — The uncontrolled growth of informal street trading has cost the SA economy billions of rands in lost infrastructure, coupled with the need to redevelop business and shopping centres away from downtown areas, Standard Bank chief economist Nico Cyzpionka said at the annual SA Property Owners' Association (Sapoa) convention this week.

Cyzpionka said during a panel discussion that had SA had "the political will" to find a workable solution to the street-traders before the situation drove retailers and businesses from the inner cities, the country would not now have billions of rands worth of empty buildings and under-utilised infrastructure.

JHI Real Estate MD Colin Wright said retailers, who had to pay significant amounts in rates and taxes to operate from their premises, were forced to compete with vendors outside their doors. This situation was considered



CZYPIONKA

"untenable" by the majority.

The anomaly that developers continued building in the northern suburbs while downtown Johannesburg experienced vacancy rates touching 22% could not con-

tinue unabated.

Liberty Life executive chairman Wolf Cesman said the indiscriminate establishment of hawkers' stands brought about a lack of hygiene and the destruction of "the very fabric of the infrastructure." However, SA could not wish away this sector and informal traders had to be accommodated in markets on the fringe of the established retail nodes.

US-based Cushman and Wakefield director Janice Standton said the US had resolved the issue by accommodating the traders and making the downtown areas more attractive. Although the US had also had problems with people who were unemployable, the welfare department had linked welfare payments to attempts by people to undergo training.

This meant "the unemployable" tried to create their own jobs — often menial, such as cleaning the streets and ensuring the downtown was habitable and attractive — or had accepted training courses to improve their skills.

Portnet workers go on strike to keep R500 bonus

(152)

(27/5)

20 27/5/98

DURBAN — More than 2 500 workers at Portnet in Durban embarked on a strike yesterday to persuade the company to keep a R500 monthly bonus payment

A memorandum issued by the three unions involved in the strike — Salstaff, the Technical Workers' Union and the Employees' Union of SA — said the strike was a result of Portnet rejecting their demand for a negotiated incentive harbour payment. The company offered a profit-share scheme instead.

The memorandum said

the proposed profit-share scheme was unacceptable.

"The unions demand from Portnet retention of the R500 a month payment. This payment shall remain in place until such time as an acceptable harbour incentive scheme is successfully negotiated and agreed upon by the parties to this industrial action."

Portnet spokesman Tami Didiza said the company and the unions agreed last June that the bonus scheme would cease at the end of March this year.

Didiza said Portnet was trying to introduce an interim scheme to be based on the company's profit "Portnet is prepared to negotiate the scheme with the unions and I am certain proper negotiations will solve the crisis"

Didiza said the striking unions represented only 20% of Portnet workers "The company has not been affected by the strike and operations are normal," he said

Portnet workers in Richard's Bay also embarked on the strike yesterday — Sapa.

Public servants in protest over salaries

CAPE TOWN — Hundreds of public servants chanting "We want more" marched in pouring rain to Parliament yesterday to insist that government pay promised salary increases.

The protesters, from three public sector unions under the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa), wanted to hand over a memorandum to Finance Minister Trevor Manuel personally, but settled for his adviser, Murray Michell.

The memorandum calls on government to honour a three-year wage agreement signed in 1996.

Michell said a copy of their demands would be given to Public Service Minister Zola Skweyiya.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration has been approached by the unions to arbitrate in the wage dispute with government.

Skweyiya said yesterday that from July 1, the government would deduct 1% of the salaries of its employees who are not members of public service trade unions.

An agreement was reached earlier this week between govt and the trade unions to set up an agency shop to ensure that employees who received the benefits of collective bargaining also contributed towards its costs. — Sapa

DD 28/6/98

(15)

Gauteng municipal strike plans

Pearl Sebolao

28/5/98

THE proposed industrial action by the SA Municipal Workers' Union in Gauteng, which coincides with wage negotiations in the national bargaining council today, was expected to cause disruption in service delivery.

Union members from five branches in the province are expected to embark on a protest as part of the campaign against what the union has called "the government's unreasonable approach" to the wage talks.

It could not be confirmed how widespread the disruptions would be, however, Johannesburg residents have been warned by the council that refuse will not be collected today.

Union spokesman Victor Mhlongo said workers would march to the greater Johannesburg council's offices where they would hand over a memorandum to the Gauteng Association of Local Authorities.

Municipal workers in Durban yesterday also went on a one-day strike ahead of wage negotiations between

the union and the SA Local Government Association.

The council, however, denied that the strike was a success, preferring to describe it as "sporadic work stoppages in certain departments which were not widespread or well supported".

Durban metropolitan council spokesman Dave Cloete said the council would adopt a "no work, no pay" approach to strike as it was illegal and unprocedural. Workers who joined the strike would also have to face disciplinary action.

He said the council felt the strike was "totally unnecessary" as negotiations in the bargaining council were going well and there were no deadlocks or disputes between the parties.

Meanwhile, union officials met in Johannesburg yesterday to consolidate their position in preparation for the talks, union secretary-general Roger Ronnie said.

Ronnie would not comment on the union's position, but said a new mandate had been received from the union's branches.

Bill to boost environmental reform

Dock strike woes take a new turn

(152)
Johannesburg - Industrial action by about 3 700 dock workers and Portnet technical staff at six ports is set to continue into next week as workers embarked on a go-slow after a two-day strike.

The protected strike on Tuesday and Wednesday this week centred on Portnet's refusal to continue paying a R500 monthly bonus from April 1, the Federation of Unions of South Africa said in a statement.

"We are demanding that the bonus be restored and will continue with a go-slow until a proper incentive scheme is on the table," said Adrian van Rensburg, spokesman for the Technical Workers' Union.

Dock workers in Durban, Richards Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London, Saldanha and Cape Town embarked on a strike on Tuesday.

Yesterday, the workers returned, but began a go-slow at all six ports.

"This means control tower staff will not guide ships into port and workers will refuse to operate the cranes to unload them," said Mr Van Rensburg. - Sapa

ARG 29/5/98

Millions of pupils may be left stranded by teachers' strike

By MOSES SHIBA

MORE than 300 000 teachers are threatening to go on strike - which would mean that every school in the country will close down, leaving millions of pupils stranded.

Teachers are unhappy with present conditions - especially the threat to retrench thousands more teachers in addition to the 25 000 already retrenched.

For the first time, all three teachers' unions - black and white - are in agreement that no teachers should be retrenched.

They accuse the education ministry of acting in bad faith by retrenching teachers without proper negotiations with the unions. The South African Democratic Teachers'

Union (Sadtu), which has 200 000 members, will go on strike tomorrow. The two other unions - the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa with 66 000 members and the Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie with 34 000 members - are expected to join the strike by June 15.

All three unions have been negotiating with the education ministry for more than a year without success. On Friday Sadtu lost its patience, suspended talks and decided to strike.

The education ministry is making frantic efforts to stop the strike. It hopes Sadtu will agree to a meeting this week in an effort to avert it.

It has already made arrangements to meet the other two unions this week. If these talks fail, the two smaller unions may join Sadtu in the strike before June 15. According to Willy Madisha, president of the Sadtu, the strike could last until the end of the year.

A spokesperson for Education said the ministry was not prepared to comment as it was still a labour matter. He referred City Press to Duncan Hindle, chief director of Human Resources, who said it was hoped a meeting could be arranged with Sadtu this week.

Hindle said. "The unions are aware of the process of industrial action - no work no pay. We have to find a solution instead of

calling strikes."

Sadtu has made six demands to Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu:

- Classes must be smaller, with fewer learners for each teacher;
 - The re-employment of retrenched teachers;
 - The withdrawal of the regulation to retrench teachers;
 - A moratorium on the retrenchment of permanent and temporary teachers;
 - The immediate review of the education budget, at national as well as provincial level; and
- An open and transparent process of determining the education budget, at national as well as provincial level.

Bengu takes hard line on strike

TROYE LUND
EDUCATION WRITER

THE government will meet the threatened teachers' strike next week with steely resolve and apply the principle of no work, no pay, Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu told the National Assembly yesterday

"This is no time to use pupils as pawns in a grand political game," said the minister, who was granted the unscheduled address in Parliament to explain why bargaining in the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) had failed to avert a national strike

The unions demand that Bengu revoke his decision to allow the provinces to determine teacher numbers

But Bengu argued that constitutional clauses giving discretionary power to provinces prevented him from withdrawing the policy. He said another obstacle was that

(152) ET 3/6/98 (152)
he controlled just R5,5 billion of the R36bn budget.

He said he had to hand provinces the responsibility to determine teacher numbers according to their budgets.

All major teachers' unions are demanding that Bengu withdraw this policy, which he declared without their agreement.

The South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) has given notice that it will begin striking next week.

Negotiations in the ELRC had reached deadlock and mediators had been called in to resolve the impasse, but Bengu declared the policy before mediation was complete

After accusing Sadtu of "filibustering" during the negotiations on redeployment, he rejected the union's claim that there had been no consultation

"There was consultation. But we could not consult until the cows came home. With the

new financial year approaching I, as the minister, had no choice but to proclaim the regulation," Bengu said

The previous system whereby provinces had to adhere to nationally determined teacher pupil ratios had landed them with staff bills which consumed 100% of their education budgets.

Even if the Constitution was changed and teacher pupil ratios were determined at a national level, schools would still have to be staffed according to available finances, and teachers would still have to be deployed according to school needs, Bengu said

But the unions said although Bengu was restrained by the Constitution, this did not stop him from setting national norms

Provinces would not be bound by these but there would be political pressure to adhere to them

● See Page 15

Axed teachers to get pay this month

Process for temps 'takes longer'

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Permanent teachers who asked for severance packages will know by the end of the month whether their applications have been successful. All temporary teachers entitled to payouts will get them by the end of the month.

This is the goal of the Western Cape Education Department whose staff are working round-the-clock to process thousands of payments to permanent and temporary teachers who have left the profession since the end of last year.

By the end of last month only 139 of the 3 303 temporary teachers who were axed without notice in December had received the payments

promised to them.

Financial manager of the department Andries van Niekerk said the department had also received about 2 500 new applications for packages from permanent teachers who would leave in July. Of these 1 725 had been evaluated and 236 turned down.

There has been widespread criticism of the department's handling of the severance payments. Some unions have slated the process as a fiasco.

South African Democratic Teachers' Union spokesman Don Pasquallie said six weeks was "a reasonable time" to wait for payment but six months was "ridiculous".

Mr van Niekerk said "It is not a simple issue. We did everything we could - we threw all the money and

resources we could into this project. There is a lot of dedication in this department. It is just that we are understaffed."

In spite of half the department's administrative posts being vacant, 10 people had been assigned to work on voluntary severance packages and another 10 to deal with inquiries.

Temporary teachers were promised they would be paid for leave they were due and a week's salary for every year of service.

Mr van Niekerk said it took three times longer to process payments for temporary teachers than for permanent staff as it was much more difficult to trace their employment history. But the most difficult work had been done and the process would now be "very quick".

Strike looms as last-ditch talks fail

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

An emergency meeting last night between education authorities and union negotiators failed to avert the nationwide teacher strike planned for next week.

South African Democratic Teachers' Union chief negotiator Thulas Nxesi said after the eight-hour meeting in Pretoria last night that mobili-

sation for the strike was going ahead as planned.

"We have clarified our demands and heard new proposals from the department but these are still far from meeting our demands," he said.

Further meetings between education officials and unions would take place over the weekend and on Monday, he said.

Meanwhile momentum for the strike is building with the decision by

two more teacher unions to join Sadtu's protest against the Department of Education's rationalisation policies.

The SA Onderwysersunie, representing 34 000 teachers from mainly Afrikaans schools, and the National Professional Teachers' Organisation, representing 66 000 teachers, have said they will take protest action next week but have not indicated what form this will take.

I
te
O
a
Cap
bic
Sar
era
hr
Tr
mi
ar
Me
pr

Gr
for
rel
be
tic
lal
th

th
ch
m
ca
in
pr
st

th
T
tr

n
fi
e
t



Stationary ... sitting among a sea of teachers, this little boy was unable to keep his eyes open during a meeting of the Soweto branch of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union yesterday, at which members discussed an impending strike.

Last-ditch bid on Monday to keep teachers from striking

Star 5/6/98 (152)

Failure expected to mean 250 000 will walk out of classrooms across the country

By JACQUI REEVES AND SAPA

SA Democratic Teachers' Union and Education Department officials will on Monday make a last-ditch effort to avert a strike which could bring education in the country to a standstill.

If this final attempt to break the deadlock over planned teacher retrenchments fails, more than 250 000 teachers are expected to go on strike on Tuesday, Sadtu's general secretary Thulas Nxesi said today.

And yesterday two other unions, the 34 000-strong Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (SAOU) and the National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa, have threatened strike action as negotiations broke down.

Nxesi said although yesterday's lengthy meeting with the department had not yielded results, it had been agreed that the two meet again before Tuesday - the day Sadtu has given notice to start the strike - to resolve differences.

"We are going into that meeting with open minds. But it must be made clear that if the meeting fails to resolve the problems, then we have no choice but to go ahead with our strike," he said.

All three unions are demanding the withdrawal of regulations published in April by Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu on the provision of teacher posts. They contend that the regulations could result in at least 43 000 teachers losing their jobs.

The SAOU is to embark on protest action after a two-week "grace period" allowing for the legally required notice time as well as last-ditch efforts to avert the strike action.

A meeting between the union and Bengu is scheduled for Thursday.

Sadtu plans to begin countrywide protest action on Tuesday when its 170 000 members will abandon classes at 10am to attend branch meetings.

Though the SAOU has abandoned hope of reaching an agreement with the Government's negotiators, it will monitor the status of other discussions. The executive committee will meet after the grace period to decide what form the protest action will take.

The third teacher union, the

National Association of Professional Teachers of South Africa, has given notice of its intention to strike.

Gauteng Education MEC Mary Metcalfe said last night she would be working in close contact with the national department to resolve the crisis. "We are very keen to find some middle ground and will work very hard in the next few days to try and find this," she added.

At a mass meeting of the Soweto branch of Sadtu yesterday, branch chairman Nkosana Kubeka warned teachers to be disciplined during the planned protest and strike action.

"Let us be disciplined, let us honour our actions, let us follow the directions of our leaders," he said.

Municipal workers set to strike tomorrow

(152) (X10) Star 8/6/98

Refuse collection, bus transport and other services may be affected if proposed work stoppage goes ahead

By LEE-ANN ALFREDS,
BUNTY WEST
AND MELANIE-ANN FERIS

A three-day SA Municipal Workers Union strike that could leave Johannesburg cluttered with litter and hampered by service chaos seems likely to go ahead tomorrow.

"The workers will be on strike on Tuesday and we will meet them to discuss the plan of action for Wednesday and Thursday," Samwu chairman Christopher Mabaso said yesterday.

But the council has warned that the strike is illegal and it will seek an urgent interdict if workers carry out their threats.

The two parties were to meet today in a last-ditch effort to avert industrial action.

The three-day strike has been called to protest against a planned restructuring of Johannesburg's staff structure and plans to engage in partner-

ships with the public and private sectors with respect to the administration of certain functions.

If the strike goes ahead, services around the metropole will be severely disrupted.

Richard Spalding, human resources administration spokesman for the metro council, said that as far as his department was concerned, the strike was illegal and an interdict would be sought on behalf of the five councils to prevent the strike from going ahead.

"They must submit a letter to us clearly undertaking not to go ahead (with the strike), in which case we will not have any grounds to seek an interdict."

If negotiations fail, Johannesburg's bus service will be severely affected, while refuse is not likely to be collected over the three days. Technical services, which include electricity, gas and sewerage, and traffic departments will also be affected.

A skeleton staff and con-

tract workers will be on hand for emergency services, clinics, electricity and water in Greater Johannesburg.

Samwu spokesman Themba Nxumalo told The Star that more than 20 000 workers were expected to join the three-day strike. He said workers would march to Sandton tomorrow and Wednesday to hand over petitions to Collin Matjila, executive committee chairman of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council. Workers will march on the Metro Centre in Braamfontein on Thursday.

Metropolitan bus service spokesman Toni van Niekerk said the metro bus service would hold meetings today to set up contingency plans for the days of the strike. "Some buses will be running but it is advisable for passengers to make alternative plans to get to work. They can phone to find out which routes will be running by calling our switchboard on (011) 403-4300," she said.

Strikes 'cost shipping sector R600m'

**Samantha Sharpe
and Pule Molebeledi**

CAPE TOWN — Crippling labour unrest at SA's ports, especially Durban, has cost the shipping industry more than R600m in productivity delays since the start of April, industry sources say

Portnet technical support staff and dock workers have been on protected strike action since Monday last week, although a general go-slow has been in effect since the Easter holidays

About 3 700 port workers at Saldanha, Durban, Richards Bay, Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town are protesting against Portnet's decision to revoke a R500 bonus with effect from April 1

Transnet spokesman Thami Didiiza said the group was open to negotiations with the Salaried Staff Associa-

tion Employees' Union of SA and the Technical Workers' Union

He said the company tabled a proposal at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in which the bonus system would be given out only after quarterly profits made by the company were declared. A percentage agreed to by both the company and unions would be distributed to the employees

While industry sources reported excessive and continual delays, especially at Durban and Cape Town harbours, since the start of April, a Portnet spokesman said "all ports are operating normally" He said the labour action had no effect on productivity levels and there had been no complaints from any of the shipping lines or agents.

However, Unicorn liner executive Liam McKenzie said the deep sea container port at Durban harbour was

backed up, resulting in delays of up to 150 hours before vessels could berth

Productivity levels at Durban harbour, which could usually handle between 17 and 18 containers per hour, had been turning about half that amount. Ships were waiting between three and four days to berth, he said.

Other sources said there was a daily backlog of about 10 vessels outside Durban. Early last week there were between 23 and 33 ships waiting outside Cape Town harbour.

SCL southern region CEO Brett Gray said the group had experienced "significant delays and incurred significant losses" as a result of labour-related delays.

While difficult to estimate the actual economic cost of the delays, industry sources said a single day's delay cost the average ship owner between \$15 000 and \$20 000.

Union calls off strike by municipal workers

Star 9/6/98

(152)

Samwu backs down after court bid to stop illegal action

BY LEE-ANN ALFREDS
City Desk

An illegal three-day municipal strike which threatened to halt all services across Greater Johannesburg was called off at the last minute yesterday.

But bus and other services were still expected to be disrupted this morning while SA Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) members gather in Sandton to hear why the industrial action had been called off.

Services would return to normal after 1pm, the time staff had been ordered to return to work, Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council spokesman Richard Spalding said.

The strike was called by Samwu a few weeks ago to protest against plans by Greater Johannesburg's municipalities to privatise certain services and to restructure staff.

More than 20 000 municipal workers were expected to heed the call to strike, leaving almost no staff to collect refuse, drive buses and do routine maintenance work over the three days.

A skeleton staff was expected to be on hand for clinics, emergency electrical repairs, traffic and emergency services.

But Samwu backed down yesterday after Greater Johannesburg's five municipalities applied to the Labour Court for an interdict to stop the illegal strike.

In terms of an agreement, the union has promised to call off its industrial action if the councils withdrew their application for an interdict.

An urgent meeting is to be held within the next couple of days between the councils and the unions to discuss the city's planned staff restructuring (which is currently under way) and its privatisation plans.

In terms of the restructuring, the number of senior managers is to be cut by more than half, while scores of employees will be moved from support functions to service delivery.

In the move towards privatisation, the city has developed a framework for public/private partnerships and tabled several functions - including Johannesburg's fresh-produce market, emergency services, gas and Rand Airport - for partnerships or outsourcing.

While Samwu would not be drawn on why they had backed down, a source told The Star they were concerned for their members, who had been threatened with disciplinary action if they participated in the illegal strike.

Workers who last week participated in an illegal strike for better wages are being summoned to disciplinary hearings, the source indicated.

Sadtu, govt strike a deal (152)

ET 10/6/98 (20)

TROYE LUND

SOUTH AFRICA's most powerful teachers' union and the National Education Department have struck a deal to end the national teachers strike that began yesterday.

After 36 hours of negotiating, representatives of the 200 000-strong SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) emerged from the talks victorious, shortly before midnight last night.

However, the Educa-

tion Department is not yet out of the woods. It also faces industrial action by the National Professional Teachers' Organisation (Naptosa), which it will meet today, and the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysers-unie, which will meet Education Minister Sibusiso Bengu tomorrow.

Sadtu secretary-general Willie Madisha said: "They have met our demands. We see the proposals now on the table as the basis of an agreement that we will recommend



SIBUSISU BENGU

our members accept so that we can sign the agreement on Friday."

Pivotal to the new agreement, said Madisha, was that norms and standards for schools, which include the number of teachers employed, will be determined at a national level.

However, the depart-

ment's director of human resources, Duncan Hindle, said the current agreement was far more nuanced than a simple withdrawal of the regulations the unions objected to.

These regulations handed complete power to provinces to determine, according to the funds available, how many teachers they would employ.

Sadtu said that last night's breakthrough did not mean that the strike action that began yesterday would stop immediately.

Madisha said: "It is not possible just to call it off. We have 504 branches and over 200 000 members to contact, inform and get a mandate to sign."

● See Page 5

Plastics workers on strike

MOSES MTHETHELELI MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

SA Chemical Workers Union members at the CIC Packaging plastic-making plant in Epping are on strike over a pay dispute.

Peter Roman, a regional union organiser, said nightshift workers downed tools yesterday and had been joined by dayshift workers today.

Workers were singing and toyi-toying outside the premises under the watchful eye of the police.

Mr Roman said the workers wanted the minimum wage upped from R1 100 to R2 000 a month

(157)
"We reject this (R1 100) because it's too little for our families. We also demand a 15% across-the-board increase. We demand six months' maternity leave, four months on full pay."

The union proposed that should the company retrench an employee with a mortgage, the company would pay 15% of the worker's bond repayment for two years. It demanded a minimum service allowance of R10 a month for each year of service and a minimum housing allowance of 20% of basic wages.

John Watters, acting general manager at the company, said: "We hope to meet the union representatives today and try to address the problem."

APR 18/1988

Communication union strike looms

Reneé Grawitzky (152) ~~217~~ and a minimum wage of R2 100.

TELKOM and the SA Post Office have been threatened with industrial action as a result of wage demands tabled by the Communication Workers' Union, ahead of a conciliation process of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

The union declared a dispute against Telkom and the post office on May 18 over demands for an across-the-board increase of R150 a month

Other demands related to a commitment to reduce the apartheid wage gap between the lowest- and the highest-paid workers and increases ranging between 10% for supervisors to 16% for auxiliary workers.

The post office had offered increases close to 7% while Telkom's final offer was an 8,5% package.

Telkom said yesterday it had subsequently submitted a revised proposal to the commission and the union.

15D19/6/98

Little hope for jobless in shrinking labour market

A new study notes that industrial action contributes to unemployment, writes THABO KOBOKOANE

ST (BT) 21/6/98

OF ALL the problems the government has to deal with its biggest headache is rampant unemployment.

Many studies in recent months have pronounced that the government will enter the election period with unemployment at its highest in years as employment in the formal economy continues to dive.

A recent study by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, "Impediments on the absorption capacity of the South African economy", details the historical factors that have led to the current situation, and says interference and rigidities in the market have to be eliminated.

The study shows that the average absorption capacity — the percentage of the labour force employed in the formal economy — has decreased rapidly in the period between 1980 and 1994. In this period the absorption rate decreased from 82.7% to 53.9%.

In the same period the percentage of new labour market entrants able to find employment in the formal economy also took a dive. From 1975 to 1980 it reached 45%, and it declined to 15.9% in the following decade.

In fact, in the five-year period to 1995, the formal economy was unable to accommodate any new labour market entrants.

Translated into numbers the picture is bleaker. According to the study, the net increase in formal employment opportunities from 1980 to 1994 was a dismal 142 000 while the labour force increased by about 5.1 million, an annual rate of 365 000.

The situation is probably worse given the number of jobs lost in recent times. From 1990 to 1995, 365 000 people entered the labour market each year while 82 000 job opportunities were lost annually.

And it could get worse unless a meaningful plan is implemented soon.

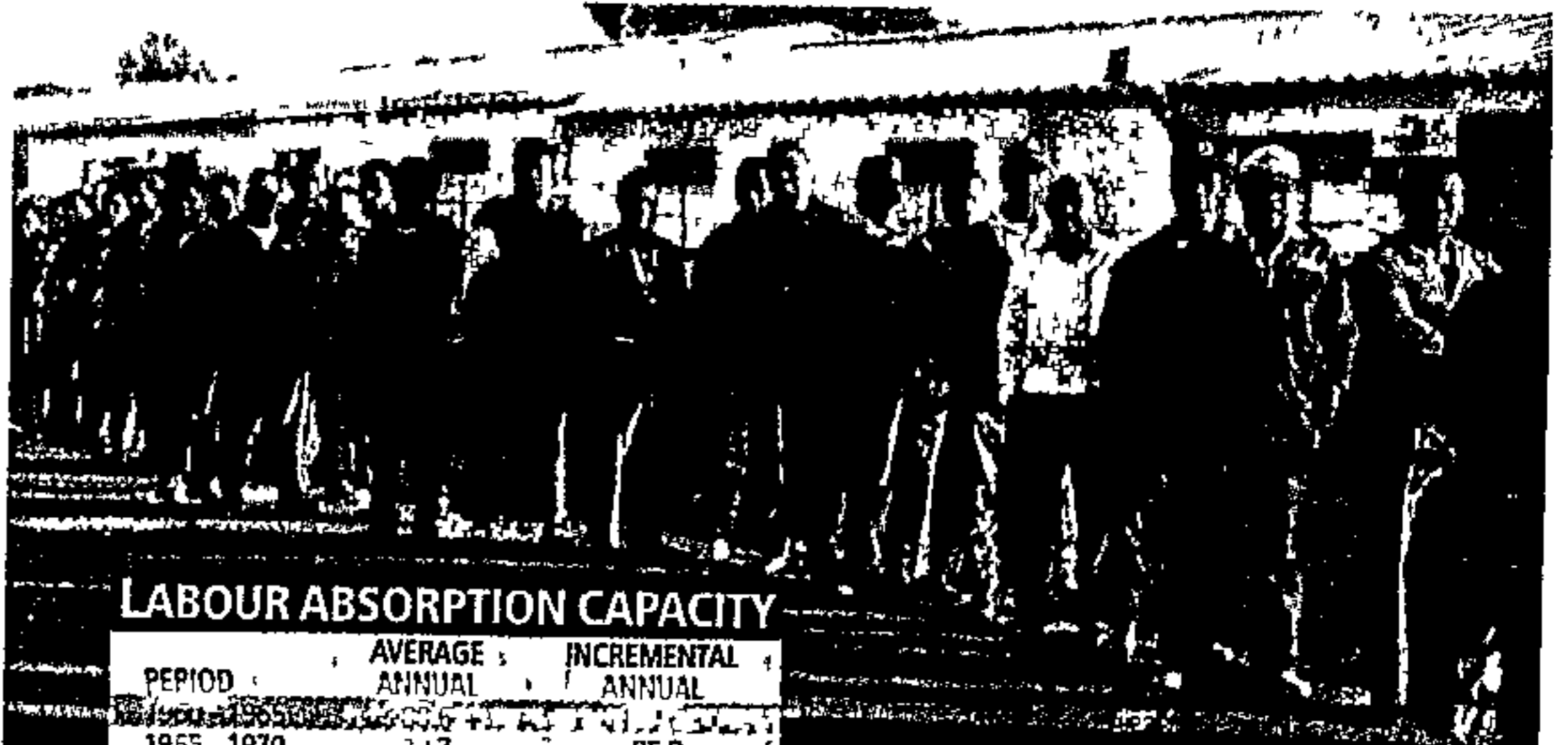
The much-delayed presidential jobs summit could provide a starting point but, judging by the amount of political bickering ahead of it, the initiative is in danger of achieving little.

The DBSA identifies the historical shift from labour-intensive production to capital-intensive processes as a major reason for unemployment.

For instance, it shows that labour intensity — the number of workers required to produce goods and services worth R1-million — declined to 31 in 1994 from 36 in 1980 across all sectors of the economy.

Save for manufacturing, all other sectors recorded negative changes, with the hardest hit being agriculture, where the ratio declined from 90 in 1980 to 69 in 1990.

"The continuing drift to-

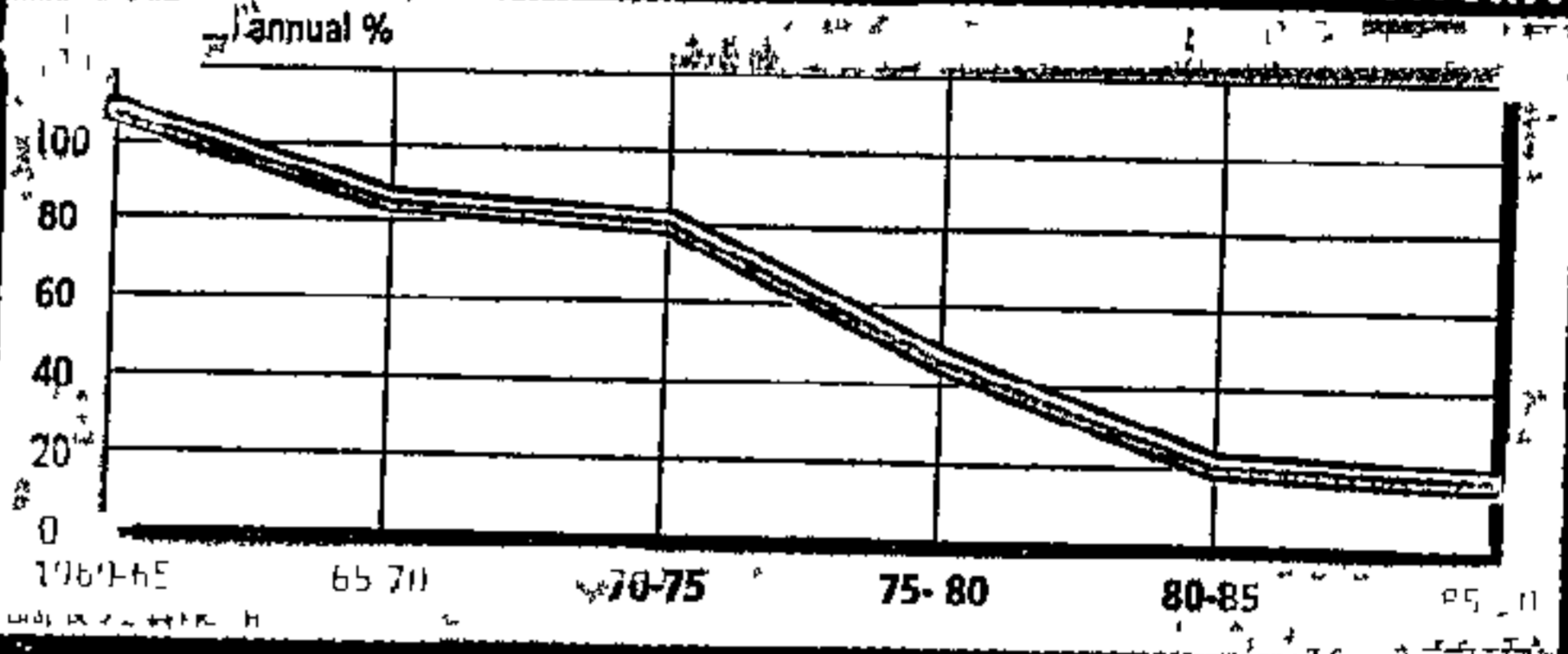


LABOUR ABSORPTION CAPACITY

PERIOD	AVERAGE ANNUAL	INCREMENTAL ANNUAL
1965-1970	71.7	85.3
1975-1980	84.4	49.2
1985-1990	68.6	19.0

* During this period a nett number of 365 000 people entered the labour market p.a., while 82 000 job opportunities have been lost annually.

LABOUR ABSORPTION CAPACITY OF THE SA FORMAL ECONOMY



WE WANT WORK ... Job seekers queue for a diminishing number of positions

wards capital-intensive production processes is clearly the result of an attempt by firms to counter the twin problems of rising labour costs and lagging labour productivity," the report says.

So what has led to the substitution of labour with capital-intensive processes?

A number of reasons are suggested and these include an increase in wage pressures since the 1970s which led to employers retrenching workers so they could pay higher salaries to other employees, changes in technology (in particular in

agriculture), deepening import substitution to progressively extend protection upstream, relatively capital-intensive subsectors of manufacturing, and the rationalisation of the SA economy.

While labour costs — mainly upward movement in black wages — have had an effect on employment growth, much of the decline is attributed to other factors, in particular "labour problems".

"A possible interpretation of this is that industrial conflict widened the margin between perceived cost of employing

labour and the wage rate."

In the period between 1960 and 1969, a total of 73 strikes took place involving 4 235 workers, translating into 13 300 man-days lost. Contrast this with the period between 1986 and 1993, where 863 strikes involving 271 383 workers caused the loss of more than 2-million man days, according to statistics by the Labour Department.

The impact of these factors led to the wage increases of the early 1980s, which have since slowed as a result of sharp decreases in employment.

Pick 'n Pay management union to strike today

Pearl Sebolad

(152)

MORE than 2 500 upper management and supervisory staff at Pick 'n Pay would strike today to protest against the company's refusal to recognise or enter into negotiations with their union, the Joint Affirmative Management Forum, the union said yesterday.

Union spokesman Jacky Masuku blamed the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration for the strike, saying it had failed to set up a meeting between the union and Pick 'n Pay in order to establish whether the union had enough representation to ne-

gotiate on behalf of workers

Masuku accused the commission of "shirking its legislative responsibility", saying that the strike could have been averted by its intervention

Both Pick 'n Pay and the management union had agreed that the commission would be responsible for verifying the union's membership, as recommended by one of its commissioners at a meeting, Masuku said.

Numerous attempts to contact the commission were unsuccessful "It's as if they are no longer there," Masuku said

The union had already notified

Pick 'n Pay about the strike action.

The union said the strike was sparked by the company's refusal to engage in negotiations. Masuku said the refusal was a ploy by the company to avoid "the trauma of having its racist policies exposed and challenged"

Pick 'n Pay MD Sean Summers strenuously denied the accusations levelled by the union and said the company was committed to its employees

Summers said that only a "very small group was involved" in the dispute.

The commission could not be reached for comment

30 24/6/98



Job summit not 'magic formula'

Mboweni warns it will take time to create work

ARG 2/7/98

SIPHO KUMALO
POLITICAL STAFF

Labour Minister Tiko Mboweni last night warned against over-expectations about jobs in the aftermath of the planned job summit.

He said that there would be no "job rain" the day after the summit finished.

Opening the 11th annual Labour Law Conference at the Durban International Convention Centre, Mr Mboweni said the Government quite

clearly agreed job creation was a national task.

But we must warn against over-expectations.

"The job problem in South Africa is a structural one," he said.

Regarding what had become an on-and-off job summit, Mr Mboweni said his ministry had tabled suggestions and processing of these had already started at Nedlac.

He said the ministry had a few suggestions to make about the issue of job creation.

He suggested that specific indus-

trial sectors, like mining, should have their own forums.

These could look at the specific problems within their sectors and propose solutions.

Mr Mboweni said his ministry also would introduce short-term campaigns aimed at stimulating job creation.

He said these would include a "cleaning the cities" campaign which would aim to clean dirty courts' cities and townships.

Mr Mboweni said that during this process, small projects - employing

two or three people - would emerge from this campaign.

He said a second project would involve "land care" and would focus on protecting land and fighting soil erosion.

Generally, he said, significant progress had been made in overhauling and transforming the country's labour market.

However, he said, there still was a lot more to be done.

The three-day conference, which opened last night, would see more than 30 labour experts and 800 dele-

gates grappling with issues that affected the labour market.

These would include the job summit, skills development, pension funds, employment equity and affirmative action.

This afternoon, chief director of Human Resources and Employment Services Adrienne Bird will address the first plenary on "The challenges facing skills development in South Africa."

Some international speakers will give their own experiences of affirmative action.

Thousands in textile industry set to strike tomorrow for higher pay

BUSINESS EDITOR

Thousands of textile workers are to strike from tomorrow for higher wages.

Textile Workers Union Cape regional secretary Wayne van der Rheede said yesterday that 90% of the 5 500 workers in the fabric knitting sector had voted in favour of a strike in a ballot held across the country on

Monday
About 2 500 Western Cape workers are involved, at BMD Knitting Mills, Nertex, Fintex, Puma, LTI, Migra Textiles and Lebergro, Rotex in Atlantis and Darling Textiles.

The union's demands include a national minimum wage of R347 a week, a 9,75% across-the-board increase and a skills-based grading system. Employers are offering a 7,25% increase and a minimum wage

of R6,91 an hour, or about R294 for a 42,5-hour week.
Mr Van der Rheede said the employers had been given the statutory 48 hours' notice and the strike would begin tomorrow.


ARG 2/7/98

(152)

Strike notice served on Post Office, Telkom

CT (Be) 3/7/98

FRANK NXUMALO

 (150) LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The Communication Workers' Union would today serve a 48-hour notice to strike on Telkom and the Post Office (Sapo) in terms of section 77 of the new Labour Relations Act.

The move follows a meeting by the national working committee, which came out with a "unanimous mandate to embark on industrial action to support our demands that are currently not met by both Telkom and Sapo".

Seleboho Kiti, the general secretary of the union, said more than 39 000 workers would take to the streets nationally from Monday to Wednesday to push for a 16 percent wage increase for auxiliary workers, a 12 percent increase for operational staff and a 10 percent increase for supervisory-level workers.

Kiti said the national marches would be followed by provincial marches, go-slows, work-to-rules, sit-ins and stayaways if there was no settlement by the end of this month.

He said the union was prepared to "meet Telkom halfway" by moderating its minimum wage demand from R2 300 a month to R2 150 a month.

Telkom said it has been in substantive negotiations with labour since February and that it declared a dispute on May 18.

The dispute was then referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

The company said it had reviewed its negotiating mandate and submitted an "improved offer in a serious attempt to resolve the dispute" after a month-long dispute-resolution process at the commission.

But the union rejected this offer and applied to the commission for a dispute certificate, which was issued on June 22.

The certificate entitles union members to embark on a protected strike after giving the company a notice of 48 hours of their intention.

Wave of industrial action hits public and private sectors as talks intensify

Reneé Grawitzky

A WAVE of pay disputes and strikes has hit SA as the wage bargaining round intensifies in the private and public sectors.

Strikes involving thousands of workers have hit the footwear and fabric knitting sectors, while strike and protest actions start tomorrow at Telkom, Iscor and the metal industry.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) has declared a dispute against the major vehicle manu-

facturers in support of a range of demands, including a wage increase of 9.5%. Employers offered 6.5%.

Numsa also announced plans to start demonstrations at Iscor tomorrow to protest against the impending retrenchment of 6 000 workers.

Nicola Jenvey reports from Durban that about 30 000 Numsa members in KwaZulu-Natal plan a legal strike starting today following a deadlock with the Steel Engineering Industries' Federation of SA (Seifsa). Gauteng and other regions will begin indus-

trial action from tomorrow. Seifsa has offered increases equal to inflation, while Numsa is demanding inflation plus 7%-9%.

Government and public service unions remain embroiled in negotiations as a revised offer is taken back to the respective constituencies.

The state made a further R300m available — not for wage increases but for "transformation issues" such as upgrading in line with job evaluations and development of human resources. A revised wage offer was tabled that

some unions claimed amounted to a mere reshuffling of the existing budget allocation. Government, however, said the revised offer represented a substantial improvement on the previous offer with 90% of public servants receiving increases of between 5.8% and 10%. The previous offer meant only 80% of public servants would get increases of between 5% and 10%.

Andrew Levy & Associates research consultant Jackie Kelly said it was not unexpected at this time of the year to have a large number of disputes and

strikes as parties were in the middle of the annual wage round.

The Communication Workers' Union plans strikes and overtime bans starting tomorrow. Telkom said it would apply for an interdict as it believed the action was unprotected.

The union is demanding a R150 across-the-board increase, a minimum wage of R2 100 a month and increases ranging from 10% for supervisors to 16% for auxiliary workers. Telkom said the union's overall demands would cost an additional R700m a year.

(152) ~~152~~
B0 7/7/98

Strike might harm 'jolly postmen' image

Jacqueline Zaina

POSTMEN who recently starred in the post office's public image campaign launch advertisement might well take part in tomorrow's proposed communications workers' strike over wages, possibly undermining the service's effort to create a more likeable public persona.

The scheduled three-day strike, by post office and Telkom workers, is scheduled for three days.

Ironically, the above-the-line advertising campaign, which communicates the post office's willingness to smile at itself, is barely into its second week.

Post office MD Frank Touwen says "The campaign is designed to improve the post office's public image and move away from perceptions of the ailing old post office that never gets anything right."

The television launch commercial, shot in a beautiful rural environment, was created by Ogilvy & Mather RS-TM. It shows thousands of postal workers, most of them real-life employees, looking proudly at the camera. Their attention is broken by a dog running over a hill towards them. Next thing, they are chased out of the frame by hundreds of dogs, one of which marks its ter-

riory against the only thing remaining—a huge red post box.

"The campaign, which includes television, print and radio advertisements scheduled to appear over the year, is designed to show that although we take our work very seriously, we do not take ourselves too seriously," says Touwen.

Ogilvy & Mather RS-TM creative director Greg Burke says the agency was challenged to change people's attitudes towards the post office.

"The advertisements basically had to be likeable, for people to respond emotionally."

He says this was achieved by giving the post office a level of humanity and an ability to smile at itself that the public probably would not have expected.

Touwen says the campaign, while tackling the commonly held, negative perceptions of the post office, is designed also to communicate the progress that has been made on an operational level.

"The reality is changing, but the country still has to buy into our vision of a new post office. Many people believe we are carrying baggage from the old SA, but the days of the *postkantoor* are long gone," he says. Three 20-second follow-up com-

(152) PD 7/7/98



Postmen on the run in the humorous television campaign

mercials will address perceptions of inherent weaknesses in the post office's services, from slow delivery to lack of security.

Burke says the issues are treated in similar, humorous vein as the launch commercial, but communicate the audited facts on a range of

issues like delivery speed, as measured independently.

Touwen says many of the goals set in terms of the post office's three-year action plan—the time allowed by government for the organisation to be turned around—have been met.

"We have worked very hard to improve our service levels. Mail is now delivered on time and we are rapidly approaching a financial break-even situation.

"We are ready to communicate our successes."

Among these, he says, is the establishment of a security division, the outcome of which has been the dismissal for theft of 400 employees since the beginning of April last year—almost one a day over the period.

Burke says the campaign demonstrates new products and services, and highlights the provision of facilities to people who previously lacked access to postal services.

The next phase of the campaign—a below-the-line initiative based on direct marketing—is intended to position the post office as a reliable, fast and flexible business partner in the context of private sector competition and the alternative of electronic mail.

Communication workers on strike today

Pearl Sebolao

AN ESTIMATED 30 000 Telkom and post office workers would embark on a three-day protected national strike today in support of their demand for better wages, the Communication Workers' Union said yesterday.

However, union and management negotiating teams were still in talks late last night "to try to avert the strike", Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said.

Union spokesman Nathan Bowers said there could be a full-blown strike by next week involving non-unionised workers if there was no progress on wage negotiations. "We are organising other workers in the communication industry and they might go on a

Mo 8/7/98 (258) (152)
sympathy strike with us next week," he said.

The union would be able to draw more than 60 000 into the strike. He also warned that "we could be faced with a cut-off of communications in this country" by next week.

Bowers said the union was, however, still committed to resolving the dispute through negotiations. The decision to go on strike had been taken as a last resort after management's "negative stance and union-bashing tactics".

Bowers said workers had shown their commitment to negotiations and had reduced their demands 32% in real terms.

The union is demanding an across-the-board increase of R150, a minimum wage of R2 200 a

month and increases ranging from 10% for supervisors to 16% for auxiliary workers.

Telkom is offering an average salary increase of 11% for auxiliary workers, a minimum wage of R2 150 for the lowest-paid and an 8% increase for operational and supervisory staff.

The union said. "We will continue our action next week with a work-to-rule campaign, a ban on overtime, and sit-ins."

Sapa reports that Telkom and the post office confirmed they had received notice of the strike after conciliation efforts failed.

Three unions are involved in the dispute: the Communication Workers' Union, SA Postal Association; and the Post and Telecommunications Association.

Spate of industrial action seen as normal for this time of the year

(192) Mar 8/7/98

By EDDIE JAYIYA

A wave of labour conflict has hit South Africa as thousands of workers embark on industrial action to pressure managements to pay better wages

Andrew Levy & Associates research consultant Jackie Kelly has warned that more companies will be affected by strikes and said wages always triggered massive work stoppages at this time of the year

"This is a busy period for most companies and wages always trigger conflicts," she said "It is likely that more companies will be hit by labour conflicts"

Yesterday, more than 30 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) in KwaZulu Natal embarked on a legal strike following deadlock with the Steel and Engi-

neering Industries Federation of South Africa. Numsa is demanding a guaranteed inflation rate increase, 9% for bottom grades and 7% for artisans, while Seifsa is offering between 5 and 6%

"Gauteng and other regions will join the strike on Wednesday with the

More conflicts over pay expected

hope to pressure Seifsa into improving its offer," said Numsa information officer Dumisa Ntuli.

In an unrelated matter, Numsa will today begin protest action against the proposed retrenchment of 6 000 Iscor workers.

The volatile motor manufacturing industry faces a major strike after Numsa

declared a dispute with the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo), the umbrella body of all SA motor manufacturers.

Ameo is offering a wage increase of 6,5% while the union is demanding 9,5%.

Tony Kgobe, Numsa's automobile sector national co-ordinator, said: "We have referred the matter to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration"

Ameo deputy chairman Doc Seiler said his organisation had asked Numsa for the copy of the dispute. "We will look at it before deciding on the next action"

More than 20 000 workers at Telkom and the South African Post Office (Sapo) will embark on a three-day stayaway, starting with a march to Telkom and Sapo headquarters in Pretoria today

PO strike may stifle deliveries

(152). (EVB)
cr 8/7/98

RHODA DAVIDS

DON'T be angry if you don't get your mail for the next couple of days.

Thousands of Telkom and Post Office workers are going on a three-day national strike for an increase in wages.

The Communications Workers Unions (CWU) and the South African Postal Association said in a statement that they planned an initial three-day strike.

But, they warned, it would become full blown "if there is no positive response from the South African Post Office".

A Cape Town Post Office worker said: "The only thing we will be doing is answering phones to tell callers that we're on strike."

The CWU represents approximately 26 000 Telkom workers who are prepared to go all out, even thinking of possible sit-ins.

Telkom said yesterday the CWU's intended sit-ins would be illegal and said that they would approach the Labour Court if such plans were not withdrawn.

The cash-strapped Post Office appealed to its workers not to go on strike, saying it was not generating profits and is currently subsidised by the government. It acknowledged that its employees deserved a pay rise, but said that, unfortunately, it was out of its hands.

The CWU countered, saying that the Post Office had "refused to bargain in good faith" and workers were not earning a living wage.

"The strike is protected and will go forward as planned," said Ben Roodman, senior manager for corporate communication of Cape Mail.

"We are expecting a 50% stay-away today and 80% tomorrow and Friday."

Telkom and the South African Post Office said that efforts to resolve the pay dispute are continuing.

Major bid to stave off wave of countrywide strikes

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

(152)

AACT 9/7/98

Durban - Intense negotiations are under way between unions and management in various industries throughout the country in an effort to stop the wave of protest action which has threatened nationwide work stoppages.

Representatives of Telkom, the South African Post Office and the Communications Workers' Union struck a deal on Tuesday night, in time to call off a planned strike by more than 20 000 workers scheduled to start yesterday.

In spite of the agreement, at least 160 post offices, more than 60 of them in Gauteng, were closed yesterday after workers demonstrated over an earlier wage dispute, said a Post office spokesman. The protests were organised before the Post Office and three unions reached agreement.

Meanwhile, employees at 10 Iron

and Steel Corporation (Iscor) plants yesterday staged demonstrations in protest against the company's pending retrenchment of 6 000 workers.

The Government, a major stakeholder in Iscor, might be asked to intervene in the conflict between National Union of Metalworkers Association of South Africa (Numsa) and Iscor, according to Numsa information officer Dumisa Ntuli.

Elsewhere, negotiations were also being concluded to call off a strike by more than 30 000 Numsa members in KwaZulu Natal.

The Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (Seifsa) and Numsa both confirmed yesterday that a provisional agreement had been reached.

"We have reached an agreement with Numsa, which is the largest union in the sector," said Seifsa executive director Brian Angus.

Shop steward dies in police cell

(152)

ARL 10/7/98

BEAUREGARD TROMP
STAFF REPORTER

Talks end in deadlock page 4

A striking leather worker died in custody after allegedly being pointed out in a picket line by a factory manager.

Nathaniel Gelderbloem, a shop steward, was arrested at 1 15pm on Tuesday after leaving a picket line at Watson Shoes in the Southern Cape town of Great Brak

An hour later, he was found dead in his cell. Police claim he hanged himself from the roof with his shirt

The firm's human resources officer, Ray Oosthuizen, said Mr Gelderbloem's death was a "terrible tragedy" that had shocked the

town "We all knew him because, besides being an employee of Watson Shoes for 13 years, he was a community worker

Mr Oosthuizen said it appeared Mr Gelderbloem had been under the influence of liquor, which was possibly why he was pointed out to police

The death has shocked and enraged members and leaders of the SA Clothing and Textile Workers Union, who met last night to discuss the incident in the light of the national leather workers' strike which is in its fifth day. The 400 workers at the shoe firm are taking part in the strike

Mr Gelderbloem, a father of three, was stopped in front of a church in Great Brak by police who allegedly handcuffed him, shackled his feet, took him to the police station and charged him with drunken driving

The union claims Mr Gelderbloem was pointed out in the picket line by a manager of the shoe firm and singled out for intimidation

"It seems that employers still have the old apartheid attitude," said union regional secretary Wayne Van der Rheede "This death leaves serious questions regarding the police's role in trying to disrupt legitimate trade union activities"

The case has been referred to the Independent Complaints Directorate

Footwear workers back today

CT (BR) 13/7/98

(152)

SHIRLEY JONES

Durban — Footwear workers are expected to return to work today after winning an 8 percent across-the-board wage increase.

But the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) warned this did not mean the strike was off.

The union, which was not included in the meeting between the South African Leather Industries Association (Safia) and the National Union of Leather and Allied Workers (Nulaw) that produced the agreement in Cape Town on Friday, said it would suspend the strike, but had not accepted the revised settlement.

A jubilant Nulaw said its members would return to work after having achieved a package equivalent to a 9 percent increase despite short time and lock-outs by manufacturers.

"At the start of this year's negotiations on April 16 and 17, the bosses started with a measly 1.75 percent increase and told the union that we wouldn't get an increase anywhere close to the inflation rate. Comrades, we forced them beyond the inflation rate," the union told its members.

The package includes an 8 percent salary increase and a 1 percent increase, which will cover inclusion of a spouse or child on the Leather Sick Fund.

Martin Paulsen, Sactwu's national leather co-ordinator, said that given the confusion surrounding the latest wage offer, he could not promise that all plants where Sactwu was represented would return to work today.

The revised offer would be put to members next week. Once the union had been properly mandated by its members, he suggested that all parties meet again in a "properly constituted" bargaining council.

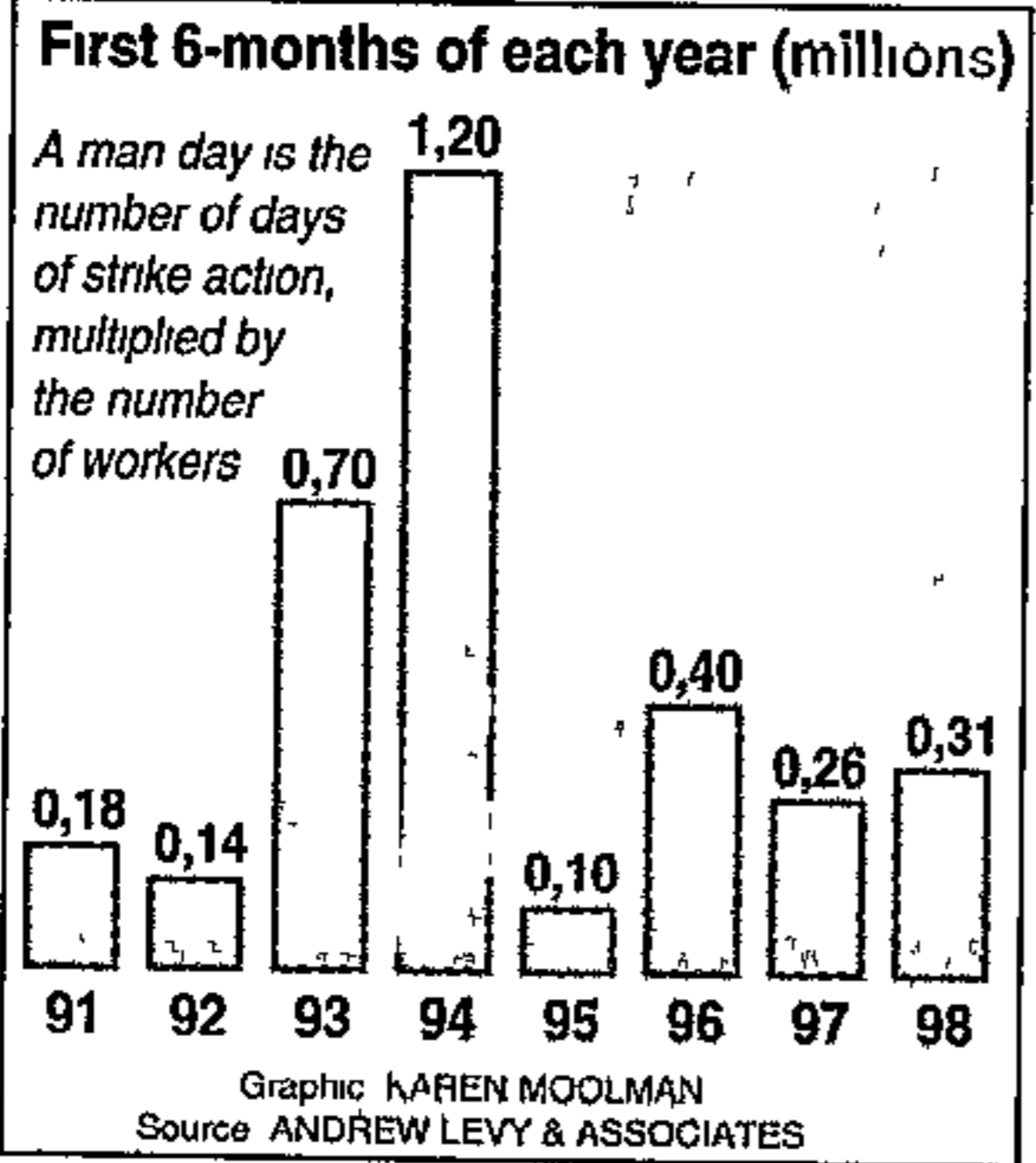
In a letter to Safia, Paulsen voiced more concerns and said Sactwu might have been "purposefully excluded" in the hope that an agreement with Nulaw would divide striking workers.

50 000 more man days lost to strikes

RD 1417198 (152)

Pearl Sebolao

MFO 1998 101 101 101 101 101 101 101 101



MAN days lost to strikes increased by 50 000 during the first six months of this year over the 260 000 days lost in the same period last year, a strike report by industrial relations consultants Andrew Levy & Associates said yesterday

Figures were expected to worsen in the second quarter of this year, the report said

Two large strikes in the previously unorganised security and transport sectors, which took place in the first quarter of this year, accounted for the bulk — 261 000 — of the lost days

The report said the two strikes were atypical for the time of year, given that the majority of wage negotiations did not take place until the middle of the year

The remainder of the strikes in the

second quarter were sporadic and not specific to any industry

Wages were identified as the main trigger and accounted for 85% of the lost days, with retrenchments accounting for 9% and grievances 2,4%

Although the 1998 figures were considerably higher than last year's, they did not reach the heights of the 1,2-million days lost in 1994 and the 700 000 lost in 1993

The report said the 1998 half-year total was in line with the trend of a relatively quiet first half of the year

Current negotiations in the labour sector were expected to increase strike activity during the third quarter of 1998 as both unions and employers tried to reach optimum settlements

"However, given the current economic constraints, we do not envisage that these strikes will be unnecessarily prolonged," the report said

Eskom workers

CT 16/7/98

power their protest

TEFO MOTHIBELI

JOHANNESBURG: Workers at Eskom's headquarters in Megawatt Park went on the rampage last night, burning a section of the main building and destroying several cars.

The 3 000 members of the National Union of Mineworkers, who had been protesting in support of wage demands most of the day, also shattered building windows.

The employees — bused in from Mpumalanga, North West and some parts of Gauteng — arrived at the offices to voice their dissatisfaction with the salary increase offered by management.

They protested on the company's lawns while their leaders were negotiating with management.

About 5pm the protest got violent as the workers tried to storm the building and clashed with police and company security.

Police spokesperson Glenton Swift confirmed the damage, but said no injuries had been reported.

Unconfirmed reports said one

worker was rushed to hospital after he was hit by a police vehicle, but police denied this.

Union representatives tried to disperse their members about 7pm, but were booed. The toyi-toying and singing workers said they were going to sleep outside the offices until their demands were met.

A union representative said the violence started when workers became impatient with the lengthy negotiations between the unions and management.

Eskom human resources executive director Bongi Khumalo said they were "greatly disappointed" with the workers' violent action because they were not told of the rejection of the offer by the union.

"We hope that union leaders will get their members to act responsibly so that it may not be necessary for us to get the police to help us to disperse them," he said.

Khumalo added that negotiations will continue today.

Heavily armed police kept a close watch on the situation.

Calm returns to Eskom HQ after pay talks riot

Johannesburg - Calm returned to Eskom's Megawatt Park early today as hundreds of National Union of Mineworkers members dispersed after a protest erupted in violence.

The disturbances have halted NUM wage negotiations at Eskom's conference centre, which was badly damaged when workers went on the rampage yesterday.

Eskom spokesman Bongani Khumalo said the situation had been largely defused after NUM leaders arrived at the company's northern Johannesburg headquarters to talk to their members.

"We have now obtained an interdict to prevent people from coming inside (Megawatt Park), and we are consulting our legal representatives on what further action to take," Mr Khumalo said.

Hundreds of NUM-affiliated members went on the rampage during the talks, smashing windows, burning cars and destroying conference rooms - Sapa



Pay talks mayhem police examine a burnt-out car, one of several set alight as protesting mineworkers went on the rampage at Eskom's HQ yesterday

THE STAR

NUM must take responsibility for Eskom rampage, say ministers

Renee Grawitzky

THREE cabinet ministers demanded yesterday that the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) — whose members were involved in burning down a building at Eskom's head office on Wednesday — should take responsibility for their actions.

Public Enterprises Minister Stella Sigcau and Minerals and Energy Minister Penuell Maduna launched a scathing attack against those involved, saying government would not tolerate

anarchy and criminal acts. They warned that government would not allow anyone to abuse hard-won rights.

More than 3 000 NUM members went on the rampage at Eskom's head office in Johannesburg to put pressure on management to improve a wage offer of between 8% and 12%, as negotiations were continuing. The action was also seen to be linked to the Eskom Amendment Bill which labour opposed as it believed it was a first step to the privatisation of the parastatal.

Sigcau said, "Gone are the days

when people can trash property and get away with it." Maduna said government would use this incident to send a clear message to criminals that such action would not be tolerated. They said those involved should be criminally charged.

The NUM said it did not condone acts of violence by its members. NUM general secretary Gwede Mantashe said workers went on a rampage and such action could not be condoned.

Despite such sentiments, a thud between the union and management

appear to be hardening as the union walked out of a meeting yesterday afternoon. The union said Eskom had suspended negotiations and wanted to use the opportunity to give "us a clear message". Mantashe said "we refused to be subjected to this".

Eskom said it had no option but to seek "justice and compensation" while disciplinary action would be taken against those responsible.

Mantashe said the "issue now is not the payment of compensation but to find a solution to the crisis". He said

this was an incident in an 11-year-old relationship and "we need to find innovative ways of finding a solution".

Labour Minister Tito Mboveni appealed to the union to take serious disciplinary measures against those involved while the NUM leadership should take responsibility for its members' actions. Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi would also be approached to determine whether police responded too late.

AD 13/12/198 Picture: Page 4

Eskom to claim for damages

(260)
(152)
(152)

Sowetan 17/7/98

ESKOM said yesterday it would seek compensation for damage at the company's Megawatt Park headquarters in Midrand on Wednesday by workers affiliated to the National Union of Mineworkers

Hundreds of NUM members involved in a wage dispute with Eskom went on the rampage on Wednesday afternoon, smashing the conference centre's windows and setting cars alight

In a statement following a meeting between Eskom and the NUM yesterday, Eskom spokesman Mr Peter Adams said the company as a public utility had no option but to seek justice and compensation through legal channels

"A preliminary investigation will be conducted to decide whether to seek compensation from individuals responsible for the destruction of property or the union," said Adams

He said disciplinary action would be taken against workers, and video footage from security cameras, and eye-witness accounts would be used to identify workers who were involved

Adams said the incident had damaged the good working relationship between Eskom and the NUM "The strike was unprocedural and therefore unprotected"

It was particularly disturbing that union shopstewards and officials were

unable to intervene when strikers went on the rampage, he said

Public Enterprises Minister Stella Sigcau and Minerals and Energy Minister Penuell Maduna yesterday condemned the action of NUM members

Speaking after both had viewed the damage at the Eskom conference centre, Sigcau said a strong message was needed to let the public know that such behaviour would not go unpunished

"Clearly wanton destruction of national assets cannot be tolerated," she said

Eskom chairman Mr Reuel Khoza said the union's action had sent a bad message to the international community

"This intolerable and irresponsible behaviour is not in keeping with the democratic ideals for which South Africans have fought for so long," he said

The NUM yesterday also condemned the destruction of Eskom's property, blaming it on a small group of agitators

Eskom was negotiating wage increases and a service gratuity with five trade unions, including NUM, at the time of the protest

The NUM is seeking a 13 percent across-the-board wage increase for the lowest-paid employee grades and 10 percent for middle grades Eskom is offering a raise of at least eight percent on both scales - Sapa

Criminal destruction of property follows wage deadlock

State slams NUM for Eskom rampage

CT (OK) 17/17/98 (152)

THABO LESHLILO

BUSINESS EDITOR

Johannesburg — Two government ministers called yesterday for the prosecution of members of the National Union of Mineworkers for their violent protest at Eskom's Megawatt Park headquarters in Midrand, outside Johannesburg, on Wednesday. The incident had resulted in the destruction of property worth millions of rands

Jac Messerschmidt, the acting chief executive of Eskom, said that as a public utility Eskom had no option but to seek justice and compensation from those responsible

Penuell Maduna, the mineral and energy affairs minister, Stella Sigcau, the public enterprises minister, and Tito Mboweni, the outgoing minister of labour, slammed the behaviour of the NUM members Maduna and Sigcau called for criminal cases to be filed against them

The workers rampaged on Wednesday burning three cars and a building because of the deadlock over this year's wage increase NUM demands a 13 percent increase, while Eskom is offering 8 percent

"Clearly, wanton destruction of national assets cannot be tolerat-

ed," Sigcau was reported as saying. She said destruction of property was a crime and should be dealt with as such "What happened here yesterday (Wednesday) was vandalism, and we take strong exception to such behaviour."

"This is the new South Africa. Gone are the days when people can trash property and get away with it," she said

Mboweni, holding his last press conference as minister of labour before handing over to Shepherd Mdladlana tomorrow, told reporters that the workers' conduct was unacceptable, given the mechanisms available in the Labour Relations Act to deal with industrial relations issues

His department had worked hard to have labour issues decriminalised, and unions should also do their bit to ensure criminal activities were kept out of labour matters, he said.

The union condemned the violence committed by members Gwede Mantashe, the general secretary, said NUM took responsibility for their actions but denied they were criminal

Mantashe called it "a demonstration which went out of control"

He said the union felt badly about the incident and ensured that its shop stewards stayed behind at Eskom until the last of its members had left the premises

He would not be drawn on whether the union would pay for the damage, and warned Eskom not to use the incident as an excuse to try and destroy the union. "The worst scenario," he said, "would be for Eskom to try taking the position of the Chamber of Mines (in 1987) to try to wipe out the union."

"Parties must find an innovative way to solve the problem," he said. Workers had come to Eskom to demonstrate in the hope that management would accede to their negotiators' demands, he said.

"The demonstration was directed at putting pressure on Eskom to make a move," he said

Eskom spokesman Bongani Kumalo said contingency plans had been made should workers at any of the power stations decide to go on strike. He said a court interdict had been served on NUM for violating labour agreements

Allen Morgan, Eskom's chief executive officer, said "The fact that services have not been disrupted is proof of the strength of our contingency plans"



FINGER OF FATE Incoming labour minister Shepherd Mdladlana (left) listens as Tito Mboweni addresses his last media function as labour minister

PHOTO JOHN WOODROOF

34)

Unions and bosses lock horns in month of disputes

(192)

Labour researcher expects economic climate to reduce chances of prolonged strikes, writes DON ROBERTSON

ET (M) 19/7/98

THERE was good news and bad news on the labour front this week as employers and employees challenged each other for higher wages on the one hand and improved productivity on the other

At Eskom's Megawatt Park headquarters on Wednesday, about 3 000 rampaging members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) caused millions of rands worth of damage

Less dramatic were negotiations in the metal and engineering industry and in motor manufacturing

July is traditionally fraught with labour disputes as negotiations usually begin in June. But, says Jackie Kelly, research associate at industrial relations group Andrew Levy & Associates, the number of negotiations taking place is no larger than in other years. "Eskom was an exception. There will be more stand-offs in the weeks ahead, but this is normal for this time of the year."

Kelly says strike action increased almost 20% in the first six months of this year to 310 000 lost mandays compared with 260 000 in the same period last year, but this was substantially less than the 400 000 in the 1996 half-year. Strikes at security companies and in the transport sector accounted for the bulk of problems with 261 000 mandays lost. Because of the economic climate, Kelly does not expect prolonged strikes.

Violence at Eskom came after Eskom's offer of a wage increase of 8%, NUM demands 13%. Three cabinet ministers condemned the damage and said the NUM should bear responsibility for union members' actions. On Thursday, NUM walked out of a meeting with Eskom management.

In discussions last week, a proposed final settlement agreement, based on an average 7.2% increase, was reached between the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (Seifsa) and the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa), the Steel, Engineering and Allied Workers' Union of SA (Seawusa), and the Radio, Television, Electronics

and Allied Workers' Union (Rteawu), representing about 270 000 workers.

This brings the annual wage negotiations between employers and trade unions a lot closer. All that is awaited is for other trade unions involved in discussions to respond this week.

In terms of the agreement, artisans will receive a graduated wage increase of 6.5%, while labourers will get 8%. Also agreed to was an increase in subsistence allowances for site workers of between 6% and 10%. Those facing re-employment will receive the weekly employer contribution to the pension and provident funds, pro rata leave pay and bonus plus severance pay of a week's wages for every year worked.

Industry collective bargaining process and structure will be reviewed. A facilitator will assist in this process, due to be completed by November.

Negotiations between motor manufacturers, represented by the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo), and workers, represented by the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa), deadlocked on July 6. This was referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), but talks at the CCMA on Thursday and Friday failed to resolve the dispute.

Ameo obtained a Labour Court interdict on July 10 to restrain Numsa and its members at the seven manufacturing plants from illegal strike action.

Again, the major area of disagreement is across-the-board wage increases, with Numsa asking for 9.5% plus certain other benefits relating to leave and bonuses. Ameo offers a "fair" 6.5%.

Employers and workers are trying to renegotiate the three-year agreement signed in 1995 which linked wage increases to the consumer price index.

Also under discussion are wage increases for the more than 1-million public servants. On Thursday, government came up with a revised offer, ranging from 6% to 6.6%, which will be taken back to members.

NUM critics 'misdirected'

BY ZOLILE NGAYI

152

THE stalemate in wage negotiations at parastatal Eskom is no closer to a resolution than it was at the beginning of last week.

Last week's violent action by members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), which resulted in the gutting of property at Eskom's head offices at Megawatt Park, seems to have widened the gap between union and management attitudes.

NUM has accused Eskom of suspending negotiations and using the outbreak of violence as an excuse not to negotiate.

"I want to make it clear that we did not walk out of negotiations. On Thursday Eskom told us they have a message to convey and we walked out because we were not there for a lecture about our members but wage negotiations," George Molebatsi, NUM's spokesman said.

Molebatsi said the criticism of the union for not controlling its members was misguided as it did not attempt to solve the problem, but to apportion blame.

The union and its members came under fire from Tito Mboweni (former labour minister and South African Reserve Bank governor-designate), Ministers Stella Sigcau (Public Enterprises) and Penuell Maduna (Mineral and Energy).

Mboweni appealed to NUM to take corrective action against its members.

He expressed concern that NUM did not follow proper procedures for solving disputes as laid down in the Labour Relations Act.

Molebatsi said that union representatives did not control anyone.

"If workers decide to march they do so. It has always been like that in the ANC, PAC and other movements. Workers have always used the power of their numbers."

NUM had called for reason.

"Instead of looking for scapegoats to denounce we ought to be looking for a way to resolve the impasse," Molebatsi said.

The protest action which turned violent followed after eight regions of NUM embarked on a national strike and marched to Eskom offices where representatives were locked in

wage negotiations.

The decision to strike was taken after Eskom had made a final wage increase offer of 8%.

The union is demanding a 13% salary increase across-the-board for the lowest-paid workers and 10% for the range of higher-paid workers to management level.

Meanwhile, Eskom has indicated that it may take action against both the NUM and individuals who destroyed property.

According to Peter Adams of Eskom's communications department, "action will definitely be taken against individuals involved and possibly the union if there are grounds to take such action."

"We have good video recordings of perpetrators of last week's violence," said Adams.

However, he indicated that Eskom hoped that the wage increments negotiations would be resumed soon.

"We have a number of teams working on the cost of the damages to property, we also have another team looking at ensuring that the wage negotiations with NUM continues

CP/9/7/98

René Grawitzky

Chemical industry workers plan disruptions

THOUSANDS of members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) and SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu) plan to disrupt operations in the chemical industry today after conciliation in wage talks failed.

Today's strike will affect only those companies that have members from both unions, such as AECI.

Sacwu advised employers that it planned to strike from today while the CWIU said it would ballot for a strike this week as provided for in the union's constitution.

However, companies with members from both unions had been informed that they could be hit by strikes today. Employers' spokesman Fanie Ernest

said the CWIU had advised employers of the strike.

The purpose of the notice, the CWIU said, was to prevent any conflict between members of the two unions.

The uncoordinated strikes has been called after negotiations in the seven subsectors of the chemical industry, which include petroleum, rubber,

plastic, pharmaceutical and glass, ended in dispute during the initial stage of negotiations.

The unions rejected employers' offers of between 4,75% and 6,5%. The unions wanted between 13,5% and 16%.

Employers' offers now stand at between 6% and 8%, while the unions lowered their demand to 10,5%.

PD 20/14

(152)



Tough line with labour may just be expedient politics

GOVERNMENT has responded differently to two similar incidents in recent months in which workers went on rampages destroying company property.

When thousands of workers at Saldanha Steel on the west coast embarked on such action earlier this year, government (and management) appeared to be embarrassed by the incident and acted defensively without making any official statements.

During a similar incident last week at Eskom's head office in Johannesburg, government adopted a very different stance and came out with guns blazing.

The vigour with which three cabinet ministers attacked the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), one of the most loyal supporters of the African National Congress (ANC), was surprising.

Government, of course, has every right and responsibility to condemn violence that erupts during industrial disputes. It has not, however, been consistent in condemning violence and supporting management in the private sector when similar events have occurred. One could well ask

Government's harsh criticism of the Eskom riot last week shows a possible change in its stance towards labour, argues labour reporter **René Grawitzky**

BD 21/7/98

whether government would have reached in the same way if workers had trashed the offices of Anglo American Corporation.

The inconsistency can be attributed partly to the fact that Eskom is a state-owned enterprise although government does have a financial interest in Saldanha.

Hence, under the guise of ownership, government could afford labour and visibly side with management in condemnation of workers' actions.

Such moves, however, must be seen within the context of the political dynamics in the tripartite alliance and rising tensions around the Eskom Amendment Bill. The bill will transform Eskom into a tax-paying parastatal and will be incorporated under the Companies Act.

People have long believed that government's allegiance to labour, through the alliance, would protect it from attack. However as the country moves

closer to the next election and the economic crisis continues, government (and the future president) apparently feels compelled to show it has a firm hand on the political, economic and labour arena.

Recent events have shown that government and ANC leaders are trying to bring their alliance partners — the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the SA Communist Party — into line.

This was evident in the challenge thrown out to Cosatu delegates by Deputy President Thabo Mbeki at a recent central committee meeting. Mbeki challenged delegates to examine their "day to day" behaviour and see whether it represented the "true spirit of the congress movement".

Mbeki's challenge to Cosatu was for alliance partners to be responsible and "ready" to enter into open debate and to accept that each party in the alliance could influence the other.

He said members should not fall victim to the "easy temptation

to label one another as this or that school of thought" as this prevented dialogue and debate of new and complex situations facing SA.

This raises the question whether government's condemnation of last week's actions by the NUM was an attempt to discredit the labour movement or signal that open hostility to government would no longer be tolerated.

There could be a simpler explanation — that behaviour encouraged by the ANC during the apartheid years is increasingly being considered inappropriate as the country grapples with service delivery and transformation.

A union source said it was becoming evident that there was an emerging intolerance within government towards so-called "militant trade unionism" with attempts to turn Cosatu into a compliant labour movement.

This might be true but government was not the only party to use the incident to its advantage. The NUM made it clear prior to

the demonstration that industrial action — intended to put pressure on Eskom management to change its wage offer — would be used also in preparation for the planned national action against the bill. The action is due to begin this week.

Cosatu and specifically its affiliates, the NUM and National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), have strongly opposed the bill, arguing, among other things, that it amounts to a first step to privatisation.

A source close to the process said Cosatu, in its submissions on the bill, had highlighted some real concerns which government had not addressed. A further concern, the source said, was why government was trying to push the bill through Parliament so quickly when real concerns existed.

Labour's opposition has led to a series of meetings between alliance partners and the relevant ministers, but to no avail. The NUM leadership, ultimately,

will have to bear responsibility for the situation getting out of control at Eskom's headquarters. Was it not a recipe for disaster to bus in 3 000 workers, many of whom had just come off night shift, who sat in the sun for eight hours drinking alcohol? With even the best of intentions, the danger of a messy ending was present, especially after the union leadership addressed workers and presented conflicting messages.

At the same time, Eskom management must take some responsibility for what happened as well. Knowing workers were waiting outside, management requested a caucus, despite the fact that parties had had a two-week break in which to review their positions. This lasted six hours but produced no movement on the issue.

Recent events have shown that alliance members are not invulnerable to attack by government and in this case it seems there was more than a little self-interest at stake. Time will tell whether this was not just a once-off attempt to placate foreign investors who claim government is not doing enough to curb labour's actions.

Violence mars chemical workers' wage strike

René Grawitzky

A WAGE strike by hundreds of chemical workers at Adcock Ingram Critical Care in Aeroton near Johannesburg has been marred by numerous incidents of violence, including the killing of a nonstriker, the shooting of three others and 13 petrol bomb attacks.

The strike — not directly linked to the chemical industry strike called by the SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu) — began four weeks

ago after a dispute over interim wage increases covering a three-month period.

The unions involved — Sacwu and the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) — claimed management did not want to negotiate and had adopted a hardline approach during conciliation proceedings in the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

The company confirmed parties began to "dig their heels in" at conciliation hearings, with the unions

demanding a 5% increase for the three-month period and the firm offering only 2.25%. Company spokesman Andy Pickrell said both unions had agreed to meet in mediation later this week.

However, the company expressed concern that the unions had failed to formally condemn the violence which erupted last week.

Both unions said they did not condone the violence. A Sacwu shop steward said: "We cannot monitor what happens in the townships at

night." He said workers were getting frustrated with the lack of progress as the strike continued.

The company said attempts at negotiating picketing and strike rules prior to and during the strike failed. The unions claimed the firm's use of replacement labour was problematic.

Meanwhile, the national wage strike by thousands of Sacwu members in the chemical industry enters its third day while the CWIU plans a programme of action next week.

Employer spokesman Fanie Ernst said the majority of Sacwu plants had been affected by the strike. However, the overall picture was quite mixed, with some AFICI plants, for example, being heavily affected and others not.

The strike in the broader chemical industry — affecting sectors like industrial chemicals, pharmaceuticals, plastics, fast-moving consumer goods and petroleum — is to support higher wage demands and other conditions of employment.



City paint workers join wage strike

ARG 22/7/98 (152) (#3)

**CHARLES NGULUWE, VINCENT LALI
AND NORMAN JOSEPH**
STAFF REPORTERS

About 200 Epping paint workers have joined a national strike, demanding a 12% wage increase

The employees, all members of the South African Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu), joined 80 000 other Plascon Paint workers in the strike

The strikers gathered yesterday on the factory's premises in

Packer Avenue, Epping 2, chanted and sang, and dispersed peacefully after about three hours

General manager Ian Knight said centralised bargaining negotiations with Sacwu and other unions were under way

Airport strikes (152) delay City flights (270)

Three flights out of Cape Town International Airport have been affected by three one-hour work stoppages at Johannesburg airport today.

A Swiss Air flight to Cape Town and two domestic departures were delayed for about an hour.

The stoppages were staged by apron service staff over a tendering dispute in connection with the handling agents of all air flights and passenger carrier services. At Cape Town airport, apron service staff staged pickets yesterday and today.

ARG 22/7/98



Thousands stranded as strike grips airport

00 27/7/98

(152)

(270)

Reneé Grawitzky

DOMESTIC flights were cancelled and international flights delayed by strike action at Johannesburg International Airport yesterday, leaving thousands of passengers stranded.

The strike was part of an intensification of workers' protests against attempts by the Airports Company to invite tenders for some functions.

The strike action was called off last night and after negotiations, a joint statement by the SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu), Apron Services and the Airports Company said they had reached agreement to proceed with the tender and refused to comment further.

The SA Police Service fired tear gas after hundreds of strikers — employed by Transnet subsidiary Apron Services — blockaded a runway with buses, cars and trucks.

Passengers were stranded at airports countrywide and some had to wait for hours on aircraft before they could disembark. Some international travellers were forced to carry their own luggage onto the aircraft. Singapore Airlines said attempts to get its staff to load luggage were halted by threats from striking workers.

Other major domestic airlines such as BA/Comair were not affected as they perform the functions themselves.

The action was sparked by a decision by the Airports Company — which recently acquired Aeroporti di Roma as an equity partner — to invite tenders for ramp handling concessions in a bid to ensure world-class service.

Sarhwu general secretary Derrick Simoko said if Apron Services did not get one of the tenders issued the company could lose up to 50% of its work and jobs would be on the line.

Apron Services' workers were sup-

ported by hundreds of SA Airways (SAA) Cargo employees who threatened to go on a sympathy strike. They gathered at the cargo section carrying sticks, knobkerries and iron bars and presented management with a list of their own grievances. These included a demand for the end to "any attempt to separate SAA Cargo from the rest of SA Airways". Sarhwu said this was an

SAA spokesman Leon Els said discussions about the airline's privatisation were taking place at national level. There was no decision or separate negotiations to hive off SAA Cargo.

Johannesburg International Airport GM Rory Mackey warned that the "biggest impact" of the industrial action was "the negative impression left with the foreign airlines in terms of the

safety and reliability of services at Johannesburg International Airport".

The Airports Company said the issuing of tenders was not a new initiative and was aimed at improving service at its nine airports.

A source said the industrial action, which included a march on Monday by workers on the runway, could play into the hands of the Airports Company to motivate for the issuing of tenders. The Airports Company did not have a contractual arrangement with any of the

ramp handling operators such as Apron Services — a subsidiary of SAA which provided 84% of the ramp handling services at the airport — and therefore had no direct control over the level of services provided.

The contractual arrangements were between Apron Services and the individual airlines. The aim of the tender process was to ensure that the Airports Company emerged with a list of approved ramp handlers which could be made available to individual airlines.

SA 1207	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1025
SA 817	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1025
SA 8032	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1030
SA 1021	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1040
SA 415	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1045
SA 8002	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1050
SA 2730	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1100
SA 8102	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1110
SA 8140	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1115
BA 6211	DURBAN	1120
SA 1117	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1125
SA 315	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1130
SA 417	INDEFINITELY DELAYED	1130

The departure board at Johannesburg International Airport yesterday. Picture ROBERT BOTHA

attempt at "piecemeal privatisation".

Opposition to privatisation has been mounting in recent weeks, especially in view of the debate about the Eskom Amendment Bill, which aims to make Eskom a limited liability company. Labour claims this is the first step to privatisation. The National Union of Mineworkers and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA march on the Union Buildings tomorrow while a national strike is being considered for Monday to protest against the bill.



Teargas attack ... police disperse Apron Services Company strikers protesting on a restricted area of tarmac at Johannesburg International Airport.

Airport strike over after day of worker-police clashes and delayed flights

A strike by Johannesburg International Airport's baggage handlers was called off yesterday after workers' representatives, the Apron Services Company and the Airports Company of South Africa (ACSA) agreed to go ahead with an invitation for tenders to run the airport's ramp-handling operations

The strike, which disrupted a number of flights, started earlier in the day when baggage

handlers from Apron Services stopped work over ACSA advertisements inviting tenders to run the ramp-handling operations

Apron Services is a subsidiary of South African Airways and the striking employees are members of the South African Railway and Harbour Workers' Union

Their duties include driving passengers from terminal buildings to the aircraft and

handling baggage

Two police officers, one a woman, were hurt when strikers clashed with police

Nicky Rose-Innes of the ACSA confirmed that the strike had been called off, but said she had been instructed not to elaborate on the agreement brokered by a mediator from Independent Mediation Services of South Africa

A brief statement, issued last night, said negotiations be-

tween Sarhwi, Apron Services and the ACSA concluded with an agreement to proceed with the tender

Rose-Innes said the purpose of the tender was to form a contractual agreement between ACSA and service providers at the airport to improve services

Johannesburg International Airport was brought to a standstill and international and domestic flight schedules were disrupted yesterday when

about 300 workers went on the wildcat strike

Twenty international flights were delayed and SAA was forced to cancel seven international and 14 domestic flights, affecting about 3 000 passengers, before the strike by Apron Services employees was called off at 2 30pm

Police used a stun grenade and teargas to disperse strikers after they were attacked. - Sapa and Staff Reporters

Star 27/7/98 (270) (152)

Union to act after talks fail

By Mzwakhe Hlangane
Labour Reporter

THE Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) is heading for a showdown with the chemical industry's employers after wage talks this week failed to resolve the protracted strike in the industry, the union warned yesterday.

CWIU deputy general secretary Mr Nelson Mthombeni will today announce the programme of action to be embarked upon by the

union's members in protest against employers' "failure to accede to workers' reasonable demands"

Meanwhile, the SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu), also involved in the same interim central bargaining forum, yesterday reported progress in the negotiations with employers.

Sacwu spokesman Mr Masindi Mavhivha expected "possible change of positions by both parties" this week.

The unions are demanding a 12 percent wage increase and a minimum salary of R2 000 a month

Mavhivha said some employers had indicated they were prepared to meet the R2 000 a month demand

Chemical and industrial sector employers' coordinator Ms Christine Randall agreed that talks on resolving the strike continued

● Picket demonstrations by workers at the Sasol plant in Vanderbijlpark continued for the second day yesterday

152
sowetan 23/7/98

SAA flights grounded by apron strikers

JONATHAN ROSENTHAL

(192)

Johannesburg — A strike by baggage-handlers and bus drivers at the Johannesburg International Airport yesterday grounded South African Airways (SAA) domestic flights countrywide and delayed international flights by about two hours.

Three police officers and one striker were injured in scuffles when police moved in to clear protesters who were blockading approaches to the airport, paramedics on the scene said.

Leon Els, the communications manager for SAA, said SAA had suspended its domestic flights countrywide, affecting about 3 000 passengers, before resuming operations later in the day.

Between 100 and 150 employees of Apron Services, a state-owned company, blocked approaches to the airport building at 9.45am yesterday morning protesting against moves by the partly privatised Airports Company of South Africa (Acsa) to formalise competitive tendering for baggage-handling and other ramp services.

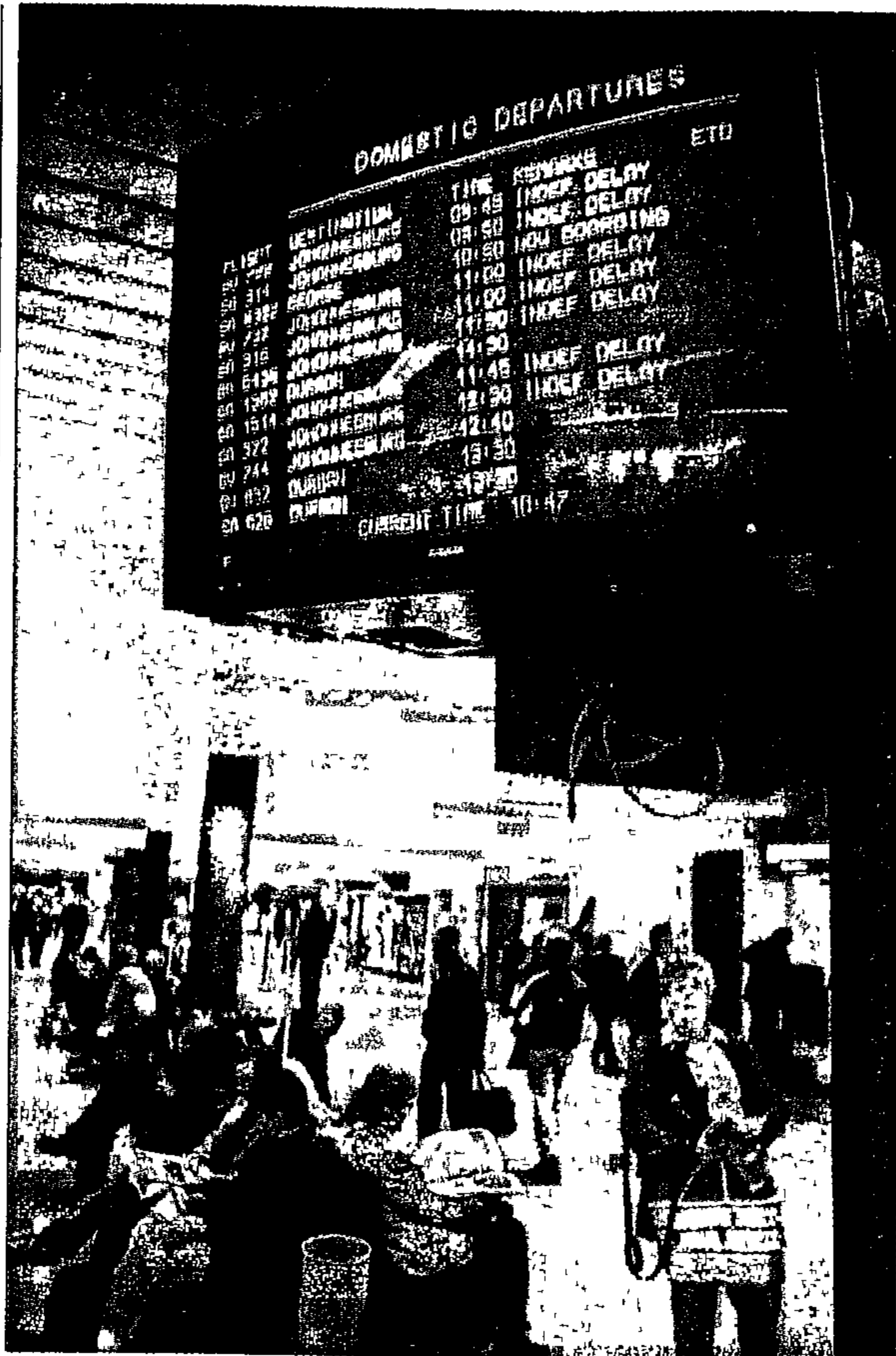
Striking workers formed picket lines and parked buses and trucks across aircraft parking bays before police moved in. Eugene Opperman, a police spokesman, said strikers threw stones at non-striking workers and police.

The South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union said one of its members was injured by the police when they allegedly assaulted protesters.

Several airport workers said they believed the new tenders could cut employment at Johannesburg International's Apron Services to half the present 700.

"They are instigating crime by retrenching people," said one worker, who asked not to be identified.

CT (PR) 23/7/98



ANDREW INGRAM

On hold: a flight indicator at Cape Town airport reflects the delays during yesterday's strike

Airport strike called off (142)

Johannesburg - A strike by Johannesburg International Airport's baggage handlers was called off after workers' representatives, Apron Services and the Airports Company agreed to proceed with an invitation for tenders to run the airport's ramp handling operations

The strike, which disrupted a number of flights, started early yesterday when baggage handlers from Apron Services downed tools over Airport

Company advertisements inviting tenders to run the ramp handling operations.

Apron Services is a subsidiary of SAA and the striking employees are members of the SA Railway and Harbour Workers Union

Two police officers were hurt when strikers clashed with police

An Airports Company spokesman confirmed that the strike had been called off - Sapa

ARG 23/7/98

Chaos as strike hits airport

Sowetan 23/7/98

By Charity Bhengu

MORE than 70 domestic and international flights were grounded at Johannesburg International Airport yesterday following a strike by members of the South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union.

More than 3 000 passengers were affected. The action was sparked by airport company decision to tender out its Apron Services Company ramp handling requirements.

South African Airways said as part of its strategy to improve service level at its airport, a tender was initiated for ramp handling competition. The tender was advertised on Monday.

Workers claimed the move would result in the retrenchment of 50 percent of Apron Service workers. They also said the tender was advertised without sufficient consultation.

Frustrated passengers had to be escorted by k to a packed terminal building where they spent many hours waiting.

The arrival of the local and international flights was also affected as planes were forced to land far from the terminal building.

Manual transportation of baggage also caused a delay because baggage was not operating.

SAA general manager Mr Roy Mackey said despite the Apron Services baggage handlers strike being called off yesterday afternoon, the airline's image may have taken a dent.

Mackey said the inconvenience could not be measured in monetary terms at this stage.

"It could be premature to try and estimate at this stage how much money the airline has lost. We must first assess the inconvenience caused to our passengers."

The airline resumed its services later yesterday. Mackey said. The airline also served, that during on flights consisted of light meals and refreshments only, to enable the normalisation of schedules.

The strike had started on Monday with a match by off-duty workers. It continued with a protest action early yesterday affecting even international flights and 14 local flights.

Teargas had to be used to disperse the crowd. The police managed to limit the protest action to picketing in prescribed areas.

Country may be hit by spate of strikes

BD 24/7/98 (152)

**René Grawitzky
and Pearl Sebolao**

THE country could be hit by further strikes, with a threat of action in the vehicle manufacturing industry from the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) planning 24-hour strike in the chemical sector on Thursday

Thousands of Numsa and National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM) members are expected to march to the Union Buildings today to protest against the Eskom Amendment Bill, which aims to transform the parastatal into a tax-paying company

NUM workers went on the rampage at Eskom last week. Their action halted wage negotiations which were under way at the time

Negotiations resumed this week with no resolution in sight. Eskom said it intended implementing its final

wage offer of a guaranteed 8% increase for all workers, with 12% for lower categories and 11% for upper categories

Eskom had tabled a revised offer of 12%, with 8,5% guaranteed on condition that all the unions agreed to it. It withdrew the offer later when four unions rejected it. Numsa spokesman Steven Nhlapo said. The NUM and Numsa indicated they might declare a dispute against the company's decision to implement the offer

Numsa declared a dispute against vehicle manufacturers during a conciliation conducted by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration this week

The dispute arose during the renegotiation of a three-year agreement covering 20 000 workers. Employers agreed to an 8% across-the-board increase as demanded by the union. The dispute relates to the increases for years two and three of the agreement and the wage differential between

grades. Numsa is demanding inflation plus 2% for those years, while employers have offered an inflation increase as provided for in the agreement

The week-old strike in the chemical industry over a wage dispute is set to intensify when the CWIU outlines its programme of action today. It includes countrywide marches and a strike on Thursday

There has been no co-ordination on the strike between CWIU and the SA Chemical Workers' Union up to now. The two are the main unions operating in the sector and are party to talks to form a bargaining council

The strike by Sacwu members has largely affected companies in the pharmaceutical, fast-moving consumer goods and industrial chemicals sector

Employer spokesman Fanie Ernst said some sectors of the industry had attempted to resolve the dispute through talks, but this had drawn mixed reaction from the unions

Sactwu workers to embark on pay strike

RAVIN MAHARAJ

ET(MR) 24/7/98 (152) (184) (197)

Durban — The South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) had declared a new dispute with the South African Footwear and Leather Industries Association (Safia) and the National Union of Leatherworkers (NULW), Andre Kriel, a Sactwu spokesman said yesterday.

At a meeting yesterday, Sactwu said the wage agreement reached last week between NULW and Safia,

who represent the employers, was invalid and that the matter could go to conciliation.

About 15 000 workers aligned to NULW returned to work last week after winning an 8 percent across-the-board increase, but about 7 000 Sactwu-aligned members, who were not party to the agreement, were still protesting yesterday.

Kriel said the strike would be held early next week. Sactwu is asking for a 12 percent increase against the employer's offer of 8,75 percent.

Crime-plagued, strike-hit Jo'burg International has woes by the trolleyful (152)

By CHARLENE SMITH

Johannesburg International Airport, battered this week by strikes and passenger complaints, has also become a target of organised crime.

And the object of desire among syndicates is the humble airport trolley. A thousand have been stolen in recent months at a cost of R1-million - and when it is considered that the airport handles 3 500 passengers during peak hours, and has only 1 200 trolleys to convey their baggage, the level of frayed nerves from passengers can be imagined.

To add fuel to their ire, when irate passengers ask staff for assistance, they are either fobbed off with "I don't work for the Airports Company, it's not my problem" from airways or security staff, or a bored "They're coming" from Airports Company of SA (ACSA) staff. And "They're coming" can mean a wait of an hour or more.

Rory McKie, general manager at Johannesburg International Airport, said the airport had stopped broadcasting apologies to passengers for delays with trolleys, and had not put up any signs apologising "because an executive at a car hire company told me it gave a negative impression".

To add to the situation, the airport, which is undergoing extensive ongoing renovations that periodically foul up



FRAYED NERVES: Passengers had to contend with a strike this week, but the shortage of trolleys is an ongoing hassle

parking, terminals and tempers, this week experienced a one-day strike by baggage handlers that disrupted flights.

Baggage handlers from Apron Services went on strike after seeing advertisements placed by the ACSA calling for tenders for the ramp-handling operations. Mediation by Independent Mediation Services saw the strike called off after just a day.

But for travellers, difficulties in finding trolleys to convey their baggage remain.

McKie said a syndicate appeared to have made two large raids, stealing 500 trolleys at a time, "probably through the basement parking. Although we have found some

trolleys at other airports, it seems most are destined for melting. The trolleys are of expensive stainless steel."

He said the ACSA had laid charges and taken additional security measures, including a nighty audit of all trolleys, but no arrests had been made.

"We have placed R2-million in orders for 1 300 new trolleys and will begin receiving 60 new trolleys a day from the middle of August. We have also put out a R75-million international tender for new trolleys that can be safely used on escalators too.

"Our new R190-million multistorey parkade, with 4 000 parking bays, will have escalator access so that trolleys must be able to go on those, but they will be much more expensive."

McKie said that although most business travellers don't need trolleys, international travellers certainly do; and at peak hours on a Sunday at international arrivals, scenes are chaotic, with dejected and angry tourists battling to find trolleys - and having their queries met with lack of interest from most staff.

McKie said: "Of the 15 000 people who work at Johannesburg International, only 800 work for the Airports Company." A booth had been set up to assist passengers.

SPAN 25/7/98

Union members set to strike

By Mzwakhe Hlangani

THE chemical industry is facing nationwide, crippling industrial action.

This appears inevitable as the estimated 40 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union are currently conducting strike ballots, the union has warned.

Its deputy general secretary Mr Nelson Mthombeni said last week that about 300 plants in the seven sectors of the chemical industry would be affect-

ed by the strike. Workers at 25 pharmaceutical, 15 petroleum, 12 industrial, rubber, 10 glass companies, 100 industrial chemicals and plastics companies and Sasol Collieries may strike on August 3.

While waiting for ballot results, workers will stage lunch-time pickets, said Mthombeni.

The union is demanding a 10,5 percent across-the-board increase and a minimum R2 000 salary. The employer body offered a 9,5 percent increase.

11/17/78
Mthombeni 152

Million commuters face Metrorail strike this week

(152) ~~170~~
Johannesburg - About 10 000
Metrorail workers will strike
from Friday after wage talks
broke down, the SA Footplate
Staff Association announced.

Conciliation between the compa-
ny and trade unions failed and dead-
lock was reached over negotiations

In a statement on behalf of all
unions involved in the dispute, Safsa
general secretary Chris de Vos said
the strike would leave more than a
million commuters stranded if alter-
native transport was not provided.

"This could also have a ripple
effect because of the impact on Spoor-
net's Blue Train and other freight
trains controlled by Metrorail's tram
control officers"

Since it would be a protected
strike, all members of the unions in

ARG 28/7/98
all regions of Metrorail's operations
would participate, the statement said.

A notice of the intended strike was
served on Metrorail yesterday, Mr De
Vos said.

Train drivers represented by
Safsa had already given the union the
mandate to force Metrorail to reach
an agreement similar to one reached
with Spoornet.

Safsa last week reached a two-year
agreement with Spoornet for an
increase of 7,5% back-dated to
March 1, a further 3,5% increase on
September 16 and a third rise on
March 16 next year.

Mr De Vos said Metrorail was not
prepared to meet similar demands. It
offered 7,5%, 3,5% short of what the
unions were prepared to agree to on a
one-year basis. - Sapa

Chemical industry prepares to limit effect of strike

Pearl Sebolao (152)

ED 28/7/98

CHEMICAL plant processes throughout the country have been reorganised and fuel supplies stockpiled in a bid to minimise the effect of the 24-hour strike by the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) tomorrow

Although the whole chemical industry will be affected by tomorrow's action, the petroleum sector was expected to be the hardest hit, with 18 companies being affected, National Petroleum Employers

Association chairman Chris Lucas said yesterday

He said on the whole the petroleum industry "would be able to ride it through as contingency plans had been put in place".

CWIU members would march in all major centres of the country, including Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London.

Memorandums would be handed to the employers, demanding that they agree to the union's demands for a 10,5% wage increase, a R2 000 minimum wage and the

improvement of other conditions of employment, CWIU general secretary Nelson Mthombeni said.

Mthombeni said if the union's demands were rejected members would embark on a full-blown strike next Monday, joining the SA Chemical Workers' Union which went on strike last week.

Meanwhile, the national stay-away by the National Union of Mineworkers to protest against the Eskom Amendment Bill, which was due to take place yesterday, was called off.

dj
28
07
nd
Z
d
2
r
st
o
d
is
[
[
4



Real power is economic

Petrol firms hoard supplies for strike

THE fuel industry has been stockpiling supplies in anticipation of a strike next week by chemical workers demanding a wage increase, Fanie Herbst, negotiator for the employers, said yesterday

This followed Friday's announcement by the Chemical and Industrial Workers Union (CIWU) that workers would protest on tomorrow

If their demands were not met, at least 40 000 chemical workers would strike from next Monday

"As a contingency, plants have been stockpiling and reorganising their plant processes, making it possible to continue with the remaining workers," Herbst said

Shell spokeswoman Koosum Kalyan said the company did not expect

any problems but as a contingency would make sure its customers received fuel supplies before mid-week.

Beverley Benjamin, manager of the Engen garage on Durban's Esplanade, said she topped up her supplies when she heard about the protest

Normal trade

By yesterday afternoon filling stations were reporting normal trade

CIWU general secretary Nelson Mthombeni said yesterday that the union planned marches tomorrow and a memorandum would be handed over to employers asking them to agree to the union's demand for a 10.5 percent across-the-board wage hike

Employers are offering between 6.5 and eight percent

(152)
Herbst said the employers would wait until they had received the memorandum tomorrow before considering the workers' demands again

"We don't know yet if they will come with new demands. We will see if we can resolve it before Monday," he said.

The industries affected include manufacturers of industrial chemicals and glassware, fast-moving consumer goods such as detergents, soaps and cosmetics, industrial rubber, plastic converters and pharmaceuticals

Salary negotiations between the affected industries and their unions started in May

After arbitration with the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration, a deadlock was declared on July 10 - Sapa

Eskom strike averted at 11th hour

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — A last-minute deal brokered on Sunday night between the government and Cosatu had led to the cancellation of a planned stayaway by more than 19 000 Eskom workers allied to the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa) yesterday to protest against the Eskom amendment bill, the unions said yesterday

Mbuyiselo Ngwenda, Numsa's general secretary, said that as a result of the deal, public enterprises minister Stella Sigcau would "run with Cosatu amendment proposals to the National Council of Provinces" (NCOP) for debate in September, while "in between there will be (ANC-Cosatu-SACP) alliance

discussions on the issue"

The amendment bill seeks the corporatisation of the electricity supplier under the Companies Act. It has already been approved by the National Assembly

Stephen Nhlapo, Numsa's energy sector co-ordinator, said Cosatu proposals would focus on the legal form of ownership, which in turn was linked to whether Eskom would pay dividends to shareholders and tax

Whether the alliance discussions will lead to the reversal of the government's proposed form of legal ownership will only be known after the debate in the NCOP

Ngwenda conceded "As labour we have no control over government action and can only engage it, using the law to embark on strikes, stayaways and mass action"

Douglas McClure, the department of public enterprises director of parliamentary affairs, confirmed that an agreement had been reached that would "allow discussions between government and labour on issues of mutual interest, the results of which will be discussed by Cabinet".

McClure said the tabling of the bill before the NCOP had been provisionally set for August 19, with discussions set for September 7 to 11

Cosatu argues that the corporatisation of Eskom under the Companies Act would loosen the grip of the state as the owner and put the price of electricity beyond the reach of the poor

Meanwhile, Nhlapo said Numsa and the NUM had deadlocked with Eskom over wage increases, with only 0,5 percent separating the parties

ET (PAR) 28/7/98 (152) (52)

Rail strike on track as Metro wage talks fail

RODNEY VICTOR

ET 28/7/98
SOUTH AFRICA faces what could be its most disastrous strike ever if Metrorail workers embark on a strike from Friday

Four unions representing 10 000 workers yesterday gave Metrorail 48 hours' notice of their intention to strike following the breakdown of talks yesterday

The strike would leave more than a million train commuters without transport, and would affect other transport sectors, including train and freight services controlled by Metrorail's officers.

General secretary of the SA Footplate Staff Association, Chris de Vos, said last night the dead-

(172)
lock followed Metrorail's refusal to grant its staff the same increases as those given to staff at Spoornet. Metrorail is a division of Spoornet.

Spoornet agreed last week that staff would receive an increase of 7,5% backdated to March 1 this year and a further increase of 3,5% on September 16. Metrorail, however, was prepared to grant an increase of 7,5% only.

"We cannot accept an agreement that is less favourable than that agreed to for Spoornet. We have a strong mandate to go ahead with the strike," De Vos said.

Metrorail spokesperson Fred Randa said he was not in a position to comment.

Rail commuters face strike chaos

(152)
SHARKEY ISAACS

STAFF REPORTER

ARG 29/7/98

The national strike called by Metrorail workers from midnight tomorrow will force more than 600 000 train commuters in Western Cape to find other ways of getting to work.

Four Metrorail trade unions representing 10 000 workers gave 48 hours' notice of their intention to strike after a breakdown in wage talks on Monday

Negotiations deadlocked again yesterday and if last-minute discussions fail to break the impasse, more than a million rail commuters nationally will have to travel by bus, taxi or private car on Friday.

The strike will also affect Metrorail freight services

Metrorail said a complete suspension of the suburban train service was expected

Golden Arrow would be supplying additional buses where possible and would honour tram tickets.

The dispute arose when Spoornet agreed last week to a pay increase of 7,5 percent backdated to March 1 and a further 3,5 percent on September 16 Metrorail offered only 7,5 percent.

Handwritten signature or initials at the bottom right of the page.

Talks may avert strike

Sawulan 29/8/98

(152)

TRADE unions representing Metrotrail workers have agreed to meet the company's negotiating team today in an effort to avert a planned strike by 10 000 workers, the unions said yesterday.

This followed a meeting between union representatives and Metrotrail chief executive Mr Z Jakovula yesterday. SA Footplate Staff Association (Safsa) general secretary Mr Chris de Vos said

The unions announced on Monday that their members would embark on a national strike from Friday due to the deadlock reached in wage negotiations and the unsuccessful

conciliation process. This would leave one million commuters stranded, they said.

Earlier Metrotrail said it had offered a wage increase of 7.5 percent and a further 2.5 percent in September.

It also offered a profit-sharing scheme so that employees could benefit from the company's profits. Metrotrail said implementation of this scheme still had to be negotiated.

De Vos said on Monday that train drivers represented by Safsa demanded an agreement with Metrotrail similar to one reached with Spoorwet Saisa's two-year agreement

with Spoorwet entailed an increase of 7.5 percent back-dated to March 1, a further 3.5 percent increase on September 16 and a third on March 16 next year.

A further increase for September next year would be negotiated later and would be based on the performance of the company's transformation process.

Metrotrail spokeswoman Ms Birtu Pelsana said yesterday that train services between Germiston, Daveyton and Leralla (on the East Rand) were expected to return to normal today after two days of disruption caused by train guards

The strike by some guards at the Germiston depot started on Monday in protest against a new timetable that meant they would have to start work an hour earlier, she said. "According to an agreement reached this afternoon, a committee made up of labour and management will be established to review the new timetable."

Suggested changes would, however, have to be in accordance with the agreement which was reached in November last year, Pelsana said.

The committee would submit its suggestions to management by noon on Friday - *Sapa*



Thousands march as wave of industrial action continues

**Reneé Grawitzky
and Pearl Sebolao**

THE wave of industrial action and shop floor demonstrations sweeping the country in recent weeks continued yesterday, with thousands of mineworkers marching on Lonrho's Western Platinum mines in Rustenburg

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said last night that thousands of members

BD 30/7/98 (152)
marched on the mines to present a memorandum detailing the union's demands in the current wage dispute. The dispute stems from a union demand for a 15% increase while the company has offered 6% and a further 1% linked to the provident fund.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) reported that thousands of its members took part in lunch-hour demonstrations at 12 Nampak plants in

support of demands for higher wages after most plant-level negotiations ended in deadlock. The company was offering 7% while the union was demanding 10%.

The Food and Allied Workers' Union said it planned to march on the offices of Nestlé in Randburg today to protest against retrenchment plans by the company. Nestlé said it was in the process of finding ways to "mutually resolve our differences".

Chemical industry faces full-blown strike

STAFF REPORTER AND AFRIS CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of chemical workers have taken to the streets across the country in marches to put pressure on their employers to accede to their salary increase demands.

In Cape Town, about two hundred workers yesterday marched to the Shell building where they handed over their demands to the National Petroleum Employers Association.

In Johannesburg about 4 000 members of the Chemical Workers and Industrial Union marched to Total House in Braamfontein
CWIU, the largest union in the indus-

try, yesterday gave the employers until Friday to move their offer of between 6% and 8% to 10.5% or face a full blown strike on Monday.

The workers are also demanding to work a 40-hour week and six months maternity leave with 4 months pay.

Chemical employers' negotiator Fanie Ernst said last night that he held little hope of meeting all workers demands before Monday's deadline

Industries which would be affected by the strike included manufacturers of industrial chemicals, consumer goods like detergents, soaps and cosmetics, and industrial rubber, pharmaceuticals and glassware manufacturers

AR 5 30/17/98



Wanted list: chemical workers march through Cape Town yesterday in support of demands for a 10.5% pay increase

MANDELA MNYAKAMA

Chemical workers warn 24-hour action could lead to longer strike

Pearl Sebolao and Renee Grawitzky

THOUSANDS of Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members went on a 24-hour strike with minimal effect on consumers, employers said yesterday.

Despite employers having put in place contingency plans — including stockpiling of fuel supplies to minimise the negative effects of the strike — one SA Airways flight to Miami was delayed by a few hours because it could not refuel in Cape Town as no jet fuel was available.

The strike was intended to put pressure on employers in the chemical industry to revise their wage offers, currently ranging between 6% and 8%, and took place as the strike by the SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu) entered

its ninth day. The CWIU threatened yesterday that a full-blown strike would start on Monday if the disputes in sectors such as petroleum, pharmaceuticals and industrial chemicals were not resolved by the weekend.

Both unions want a 10,5% increase, a R2 000 a month minimum wage and other improvements to working conditions.

Employer spokesman Fanie Ernst said the strike did not enjoy 100% support but large numbers of CWIU members had supported it and this could result in companies suffering financial and production losses.

The CWIU's national treasurer, Ronald Mofokeng, told thousands of members during a march in central Johannesburg yesterday that employers "were declaring war on the union" by refusing

BD 30/7/98 (15a) (1988)

to meet its demands. The union was prepared to take up the challenge, Mofokeng said. He threatened to mobilise other Congress of SA Trade Union affiliates to boycott supplying goods to the chemical industry.

Despite moves towards centralised bargaining in recent years, this year's wage talks and the subsequent strikes have been marked by a lack of co-ordination between the unions.

Both unions — Sacwu and CWIU — have demanded rising tensions between their respective leaders, but employers have received a growing number of reports of intimidation between the two unions' members and also between strikers and non-strikers.

A long strike may affect key industries dealing with petroleum, explosives and pharmaceuticals.



At least 3 000 Chemical Workers' Industrial Union members yesterday marched to the head office of petroleum company Total in Braamfontein, Johannesburg, in support of their wage demands. Thousands of workers in other parts of the country also took part in similar marches organised by the union.

Picture: TREVOR SAMSON



In full cry ... thousands of protesting members of the Chemical Workers and Industrial Union gathered at the Library Gardens yesterday to demand an increase of 10,5%.

Unlikely that chemical workers' demands will be met in time

Chemical employers' negotiator Fanie Ernst yesterday said he held little hope of meeting all the demands of the Chemical Workers and Industrial Union by Monday's deadline.

The union has said that if its demands were not met, at least 40 000 workers would strike.

In Johannesburg an esti-

ated 3 000 CWIU members (192) (180) / 20/7/98 marched from the Library Gardens in the city centre to Total House in Braamfontein to present a memorandum to Ernst.

Protests were staged in Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria, where about 10 000 workers marched through the city centres to hand memorandums to

representatives for employers.

The memorandum calls for a 10,5% 'across-the-board' increase, a 40-hour working week, six months' maternity leave with four months' full pay, and pensions based on salaries and shift allowances combined.

Industries which would be affected by the strike include

manufacturers of industrial chemicals, detergents, soaps and cosmetics, industrial rubber, plastic converters, pharmaceuticals and glassware.

The Mynwerkers Unie, SA Workers' Union and the National Engineers' Trade Union were considering joining the strike. - Sapa



Boxing junior flyweight champion Sydney Ellerine during the official award ceremony, on Monday. Ellerine is seen with his family and friends at the Mckgopong creche and PIC CLEMENT LEKANYANE

Train strike off after agreement

(152) (152)

Sowetan 30/7/98

By Mzwakhe Hlangani

A POTENTIALLY crippling nationwide strike planned for tomorrow was averted last night when six trade unions representing about 10 000 workers and management of Metrorail reached a last-minute agreement over wage increases.

Only one union, the SA Footplate Association (Safsa) with a membership of only 1 700, including train drivers, technical workers and train guards, rejected Metrorail's final offer.

Safsa spokesman Mr Chris de Vos said the union's demands were not met and it would report back to its members for a new mandate.

The deal followed lengthy talks in Johannesburg yesterday between the SA Railways and Harbours Workers Union, the Black Allied Workers Union and the Technical Allied Workers Union (Tatu) in a bid to resolve the wage dispute.

The signatories said social commitment was the major criterion for reaching consensus among all the parties

since the strike would affect the poor communities more than it would Metrorail's management.

Metrorail executive human resources director Mr Mark Ganstein-Bein pointed out that the deadlocked negotiations were reopened after chief executive officer Mr Z Jakavula and Sarhwa general secretary Mr Derrick Smoko had started informal talks with the aim of "putting out the flames that could be caused by the strike".

He said the doors would be left open for Safsa to join the fold as it had reneged in the final minutes.

If the union decided to go on with the strike, minimal disruption could be expected as buses had been hired in anticipation of the strike by some train drivers.

The terms of agreement include a 7,5 percent increase backdated to March 16 1998 and 3,5 percent to be effective from November 16 1998. There would be a further 5 percent from March 16 next year.

Both parties agreed to negotiate a deal on profit-sharing among the workers.

Hospital sets quotas

(98) (98) Sowetan 30/7/98

By McKeed Kotlolo

A CRISIS is gripping the Pretoria Academic Hospital, one of the capital's busiest hospitals, following an acute shortage of pharmacists caused by resignations.

As a result, hospital management has introduced a temporary quota system with a maximum of 150 outpatients accepted each day.

Dr Julius Kunzmann, the Pretoria hospital's director, said yesterday such situations occurred from time to time when pharmacists left to join the private sector which offers lucrative salaries.

Although the Pretoria Academic

Hospital has managed to cope with the situation in the past, the recent departure of four pharmacists in a short period had dealt the institution a serious blow, he said.

Kunzmann said the issue of improving hospital salaries was out of their control since it was negotiated at the national level.

The hospital's chief medical superintendent, Dr Zola Njongwe, said the new quota system came into effect on Monday in an attempt to ease the pharmacy's load.

She said the hospital had 32 approved pharmacist posts, but only nine were filled. Of the remaining nine, three have resigned their posts

and would be leaving us at the end of the month," Njongwe added.

The departure on maternity leave at the end of this week of one of the remaining six pharmacists would worsen the situation.

She appealed to residents, in particular those from the eastern and central suburbs of Pretoria, to take note of the limited number of patients to be admitted a day at the general outpatients clinic.

Njongwe appealed to qualified pharmacists "who are able and willing to assist us on a full-time or sessional basis (with remuneration)" to urgently contact Mrs A Engelbrecht on telephone number (012) 354-2235.



SA Trade Unions national treasurer Ronald Mofokeng addresses members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union at the Johannesburg Library Gardens yesterday to demand higher salaries and improved worker benefits. Union members also held protests in Durban, Cape Town, East London, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria.

PIC: ANTONIO MUCHAVE

Union workers take to streets

Sowetan 30/7/98 (105) (102)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani

MORE than 5 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) took to the streets nationwide yesterday as part of a campaign by 40 000 workers to demand pay increases

Demonstrations preceding an "all-out strike" planned for next Monday were held yesterday in Gauteng, Eastern and Western Cape and in Kwazulu-Natal.

High on the list of the union's demands are a 10,5 percent increase or a minimum of R2 000 a month, six months' maternity leave with four months at full pay, a 40-hour week and annual leave of 20 days.

Addressing marchers at Johannesburg's Library Gardens, Congress of SA Trade Unions national treasurer Mr Ronald Mofokeng assured the CWIU of the support of 18 Cosatu affiliates next Monday

Mofokeng also announced that Cosatu would take the lead in a campaign to "resist exploitation" by employers who

retrenched workers and then re-engaged some as casual workers and cheap sub-contractors.

CWIU secretary Mr John Appolis said the union would not compromise its legitimate demands as it prepared to engage industrial chemical employers in a "war"

He warned shopstewards and local and branch members not to negotiate strike or picket rules with management at plant level, pointing out that strike rules should be negotiated with the union's national office.

"We call upon chemical industry employers to seriously review their position and come back to the negotiating table with nothing less than a reasonable 10,5 percent offer before we embark on the full-blown strike next Monday"

Marchers proceeded to Total House in Braamfontein, where a memorandum was handed to industrial chemical employers' national coordinator Mr Fanie Ernst, who said he hoped the strike could be averted as the industry and the unions had reached agreement on many issues

Train services due to be derailed by strikers

BD 21/7/98
Dustin Chick

(152)

METROPOLITAN tram services around SA come to a grinding halt today, leaving about 1-million commuters stranded as the majority of train drivers and other operational staff begin their strike against Metrorail, a subsidiary of Transnet.

The SA Footplate Staff Association (Safsa) announced its intention to go ahead with the strike on Wednesday, after refusing to sign a two-year wage agreement with Metrorail that was agreed to by six other unions.

The union represents the majority of train operational staff and train drivers.

Metrorail spokesman Bantu Petsana said train services in Cape Town and Durban had been cancelled, while services in Johannesburg and Pretoria were expected to operate at about 15%-20% capacity.

Petsana said about 1 000 police officers had been deployed in Pretoria, in case commuters "turned violent".

She said Metrorail managers would be seconded to drive some trains, but commuters were advised to make transport arrangements as Metrorail could not guarantee that alternative transport would be available as in Johannesburg alone buses to carry about

500 000 people would have to be hired.

The pay agreement, signed on Wednesday by six other unions, grants a 7,5% increase backdated to March, an additional 3,5% in November and a third increase of 5% from March 1999. Safsa refused to sign the deal — after allegedly claiming it would in an informal meeting — because of a disagreement over the implementation date for the second increase.

A meeting has been convened today by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

Safsa general secretary Chris de Vos said his union would consider applying for an interdict against this move which indicated that "the fight is on".

The union would attend the CCMA meeting today in attempt avoid a protracted strike, but it had not been enough to stop workers from striking.

Metrorail criticised Safsa for bargaining in bad faith as the union had reneged on an informal agreement made with Metrorail CE Zandile Jakavula on Tuesday over the implementation of the second increase.

De Vos said he had indicated to Jakavula that the November implementation date had been a suggestion and would be mandated by Safsa.

ET (BR) 31/7/98

Fawu workers march on Nestlé head office

(156) (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — Hundreds of workers belonging to the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) marched to the head office of Nestlé South Africa in Randburg yesterday to protest against the company's limited severance package offer for retrenched merchandising employees.

"Our package for compulsory retrenchments is two months' notice pay, pro-rata Christmas bonus, all outstanding leave pay and three weeks' pay for each year of service up to a maximum of 52 weeks," said Jacky du Plessis, the corporate affairs manager at Nestlé.

Du Plessis conceded that the 52 weeks limitation would short-change workers who had given more than 20 years of service, for example. "The dispute is about the maximum severance package being offered on compulsory retrenchments," she said.

"It is unfortunate that Fawu has decided to embark on industrial action as we are in the process of finding ways and means to resolve our differences and to normalise the situation as quickly as possible."

Fawu is demanding at least four weeks' pay for each year of service.

Du Plessis said the decision to cut down on staff followed a market survey which indicated a growing trend for weekend shopping that had created greater customer expectations, and that the company "needed to provide a more flexible service, particularly in terms of how we could cater for the increasing number of retail stores".

In a separate development, thousands of South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union members are expected to march in central Johannesburg today to protest against an Edgars Group wage freeze for the current financial year.

Talks fail to avert railways strike

MOTSHIDI MOKWENA

THE first complete strike by Metro-rail workers will leave more than half a million daily commuters stranded all over the Metropole today as the South African Foot-plate Association (Safsa) goes ahead with its planned strike.

The strike follows a deadlock in wage negotiations between Metro-rail management and the union. Last minute negotiations failed to bear any fruit yesterday.

Metro-rail spokesperson Riana Jacobs said: "We have done everything in our power to avert the strike and we would like to apolo-

gise for any inconvenience the public may face due to the strike."

Safsa spokesperson Chris De Vos said the union would like to express its humblest apologies to the commuters for the inconvenience. But the union had no other option but to strike.

"Management was very arrogant and was not willing to accede to our demands. Our union members are prepared to strike for two weeks," he said.

Cape Town Traffic chief Mark Sangster said: "We are appealing to the public to exercise patience on the roads and leave home at least 45 minutes to an hour earlier than

usual. Instead of using the major freeways, M5, N1 and N5, motorists should use the Main Road, Lower Main Road and Voortrekker Road to avoid traffic."

Reggie Malimba spokesperson for the Congress of Democratic Taxi Associations (Codeta) said his organisation would have taxis on standby to help with the influx of commuters.

No arrangements had been made between Codeta and Metro-rail, Malimba said. Fears of a conflict between different taxi associations because of the commuter influx were played down by Malimba.

Police spokesperson Mark Romberg said police would be deployed at

the main train stations and others would maintain their presence at taxi ranks and other transport centres.

The only issue of disagreement between Safsa, which represents 99% of train operations staff including the majority of train drivers, and management is on when to implement the second wage increase. The union wants the increase paid as from September and not November.

De Vos said there were slim chances that the strike would be averted. He said his union would be meeting with the Centre for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration at 12.30pm today.



ALL ABOARD thousands of commuters queued for transport to take them home during the strike

Picture ORED ZILWA

Thousands queue at Cape Town taxi rank

(152) 
 LINDA DANIELS
 18/8/98

Emotions ran high last night at the Cape Town taxi rank as thousands of commuters queued on the station deck for minibus taxis to take them home.

Like hundreds of thousands of other commuters, these people had been left stranded by the ongoing strike by members of the SA Foot-plate Association, who were striking for higher wages.

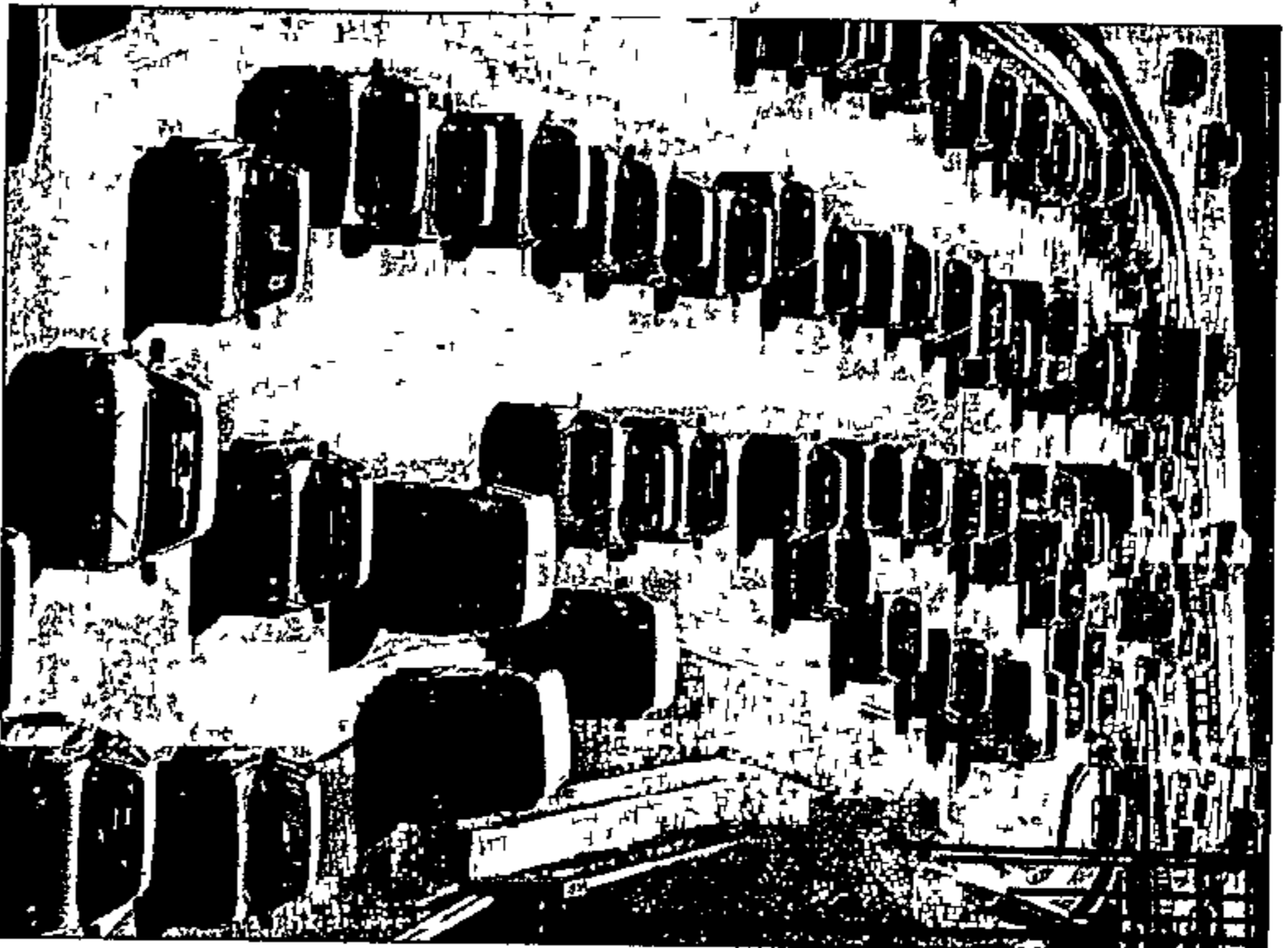
The station itself was deserted.

Beauty Mhapi from Site C in Khayelitsha waited for two hours in the queue to catch a taxi to Khayelitsha. Mrs Mhapi usually takes the 4.45pm train home but as a result of the strike she found herself waiting for a minibus taxi. "I am very angry. I have two little boys waiting at home and maybe I'll only get there at nine o'clock tonight."

Thamsanqa Skeya, also in the queue, said people had started to queue from early afternoon.

Monica Basson from Mitchell's Plain normally also takes a train. Yesterday she left work at 9pm, but hours later she was still queuing.

Not everyone at the taxi rank was upset about the disruption of the strike. Neave Kannemeyer, a taxi driver, said he had made over R1 600 since he started work yesterday.



JAM the roads were packed

Picture ANDREW INGRAM

WHAT A SILLY STRIKE

But thousands of Cape Town commuters pay the price during day of transport chaos

DANIELLE CRONIN

I about experts called it the "silly strike". But railway workers turned the lives of more than a million South Africans upside down yesterday - for about R500 each.

All train services were suspended because of the strike which started at midnight on Thursday.

The SA Footplate Association (Safsa) eventually agreed to suspend the strike last night following talks with Metrorail management.

The union said it had called off the strike because it had "been moved" by the plight of commuters. In return, the Metrorail management agreed to suspend a lock-out of workers. Train services are expected to be back to normal by tomorrow, the union said.

Yesterday about 600 000 stranded train commuters in the Western Cape had to find alternative transport. It is estimated that more than a million commuters were stranded countrywide.

Chaos reigned in Cape Town and other major cities as traffic jams developed along the main roads. Commuters jostled, pushed and shoved for the few seats available on minibuses taxis while crowded buses passed thousands of stranded workers who struggled to get to work and home again.

At least five people were killed and three people seriously injured in four separate accidents on Cape Town's congested roads.

The union's suspension of the strike last night came too late to ease the plight of stranded commuters.

Late yesterday afternoon the station deck in Cape Town was still jam-packed with commuters trying to find minibuses taxis home. Hundreds of irate people waited for their turn to board the taxis.

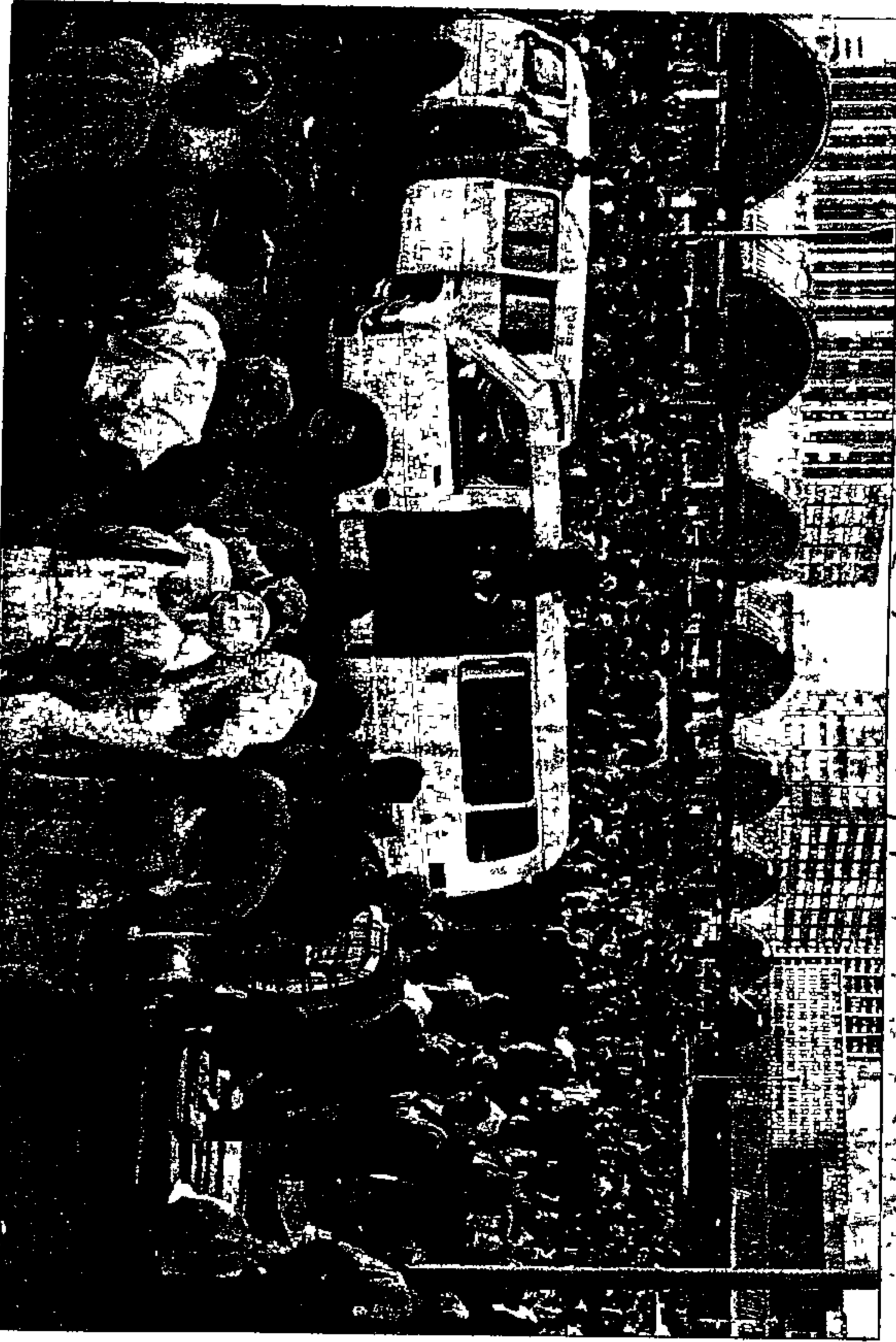
Cape Amalgamated Taxi Association president Steven Williams said road blocks hampered drivers' efforts to transport commuters to work. Taxi drivers had to push speed and load limits to keep pace with the huge demand.

Earlier in the day school children tried to hail passing cars without success as they struggled to get to and from schools. Thousands of students were late for classes across the Peninsula.

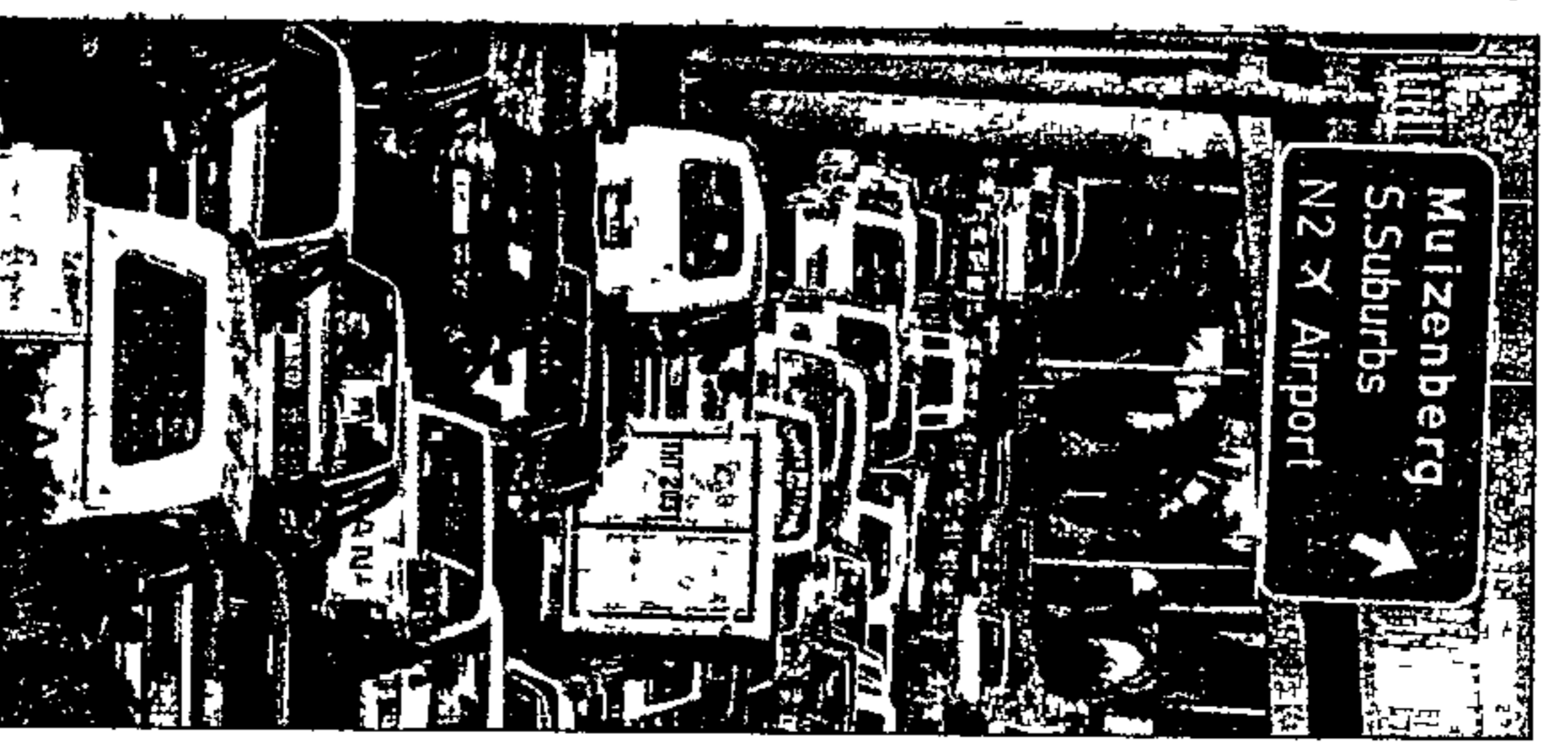
Before the strike See report, pictures on page 3

deputy general secretary Louis Brockett said the union sympathised with inconvenienced commuters. However, it was fighting for a principle and had the complete support of its striking members.

The union demanded a 3.5% increase on pensionable income from September while



TAXI RANK CHAOS as commuters jostle push and shove for a few seats on minibuses taxis on Cape Town's station deck. By late yesterday the taxi rank was still packed with commuters trying to get a ride home. Picture: ORED ZLWA



HIGHWAY HORROR as thousands of commuters try to leave the city. Picture: ANDREW INGRAM

(1578) RAK 1/8/98

Metrorail planned to pay the increase from November. Workers would have lost about 10% of this month's pay if the strike had dragged on for three days or longer.

Mr Brockett said Salsa members had endorsed the union's tactics because they wanted the same deal as other Transport employees a wage increase on September 16.

Earlier a Metrorail spokeswoman said all the strikers hoped to win was about R500 each - a "negligible amount". She said workers could lose hundreds of rands every day they

were on strike because of the "no work no pay" principle.

Clive Thompson, a University of Cape Town industrial relations professor, said workers would have lost out financially in the short term but "bigger" issues were at stake.

The exercising of industrial muscle could well have placed Salsa in a stronger position when a new wage agreement is negotiated in two years' time, he said.

Earlier Metrorail offered its workers a 7.5% pensionable income increase backdated to March 16, an extra 3.5% increase from November 16 and further increase of 5% from

March 1999.

Six of the seven unions signed the agreement, including the Employees' Union of South Africa, Salaried Staff Union, South African Railways and Harbours Workers' Union and the Black Trade Unions.

Salsa was the only union to reject the deal and members went on strike.

A Salsa spokesman said last night that although the union had agreed to call off the strike, it would retain the option to resume it should the talks reach a deadlock.

Negotiations through the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration are expected to continue on Tuesday.



Signs of frustration in strike action ⁽¹⁵²⁾ ST (MT) 2/8/98

MARCIA KLEIN looks at the trends which have developed in a tough labour environment this year

A NUMBER of high-profile strikes has given the impression of an escalation in the number and intensity of strikes over the past few months

But this is not borne out by statistics, which show that strike action this year to date is not dramatically up on last year. Labour sources say that recent strike action has attracted a fair amount of publicity, notably the burning of a building at the Eskom head office and chaos at the airport.

What these do show, however, is a high level of frustration in an increasingly complex and demanding social and economic environment.

Figures from labour consultancy Andrew Levy & Associates show that the 310 000 man days lost in the first six months is a slight increase on the previous year.

Researcher Jackie Kelly expects the number of man days lost this year to be 1-million or a little more. This compares

with 650 000 last year, 1.7-million in 1996, 1.6-million in 1995, 3.9-million in 1994, 3.6-million in 1993, 4.2-million in 1992 and 3.8-million in 1991. In 1987, at the height of the state of emergency, an astonishing 9-million man days were lost.

Kelly points out many negotiations are already complete. The steel and engineering sector settled while the mining industry is only negotiating at selected mines because a two-year industry agreement was reached last year.

Andrew Levy & Associates consultant Brian Allen says the high-profile nature of some of the recent strikes is not a reflection of what is happening in general terms.

The strikes have however, raised awareness of what is still clearly a huge divide between some sections of the

business community and labour. Recently, the Cape Chamber of Business said it was disturbing "that the trade union leadership appear to be ignoring the economic realities facing our country and the fact that the economy cannot afford wage increases that exceed inflation."

This statement seems only partly true.

Allen says "I would say that while the inflation rate is down, pressure on the disposable income of the low-income earner has increased. This will play a part in negotiations. One of the facets of negotiations is that union members must be better off than they were before."

Allen adds, however, that "there is a high level of frustration because the flexibility of employers in terms of what can employers can pay is re-

duced. Another important factor is the high level of retrenchments. There is an awareness of the risk of retrenchments, which has brought a whole new sensitivity into the negotiations."

Cosatu spokesman Nowetu Mpati agrees, saying retrenchments, linked to economic conditions, the crisis in the gold industry and new technology, have prompted labour to seek an amendment to the Labour Relations Act to include not only consultation but also negotiation around this issue. "What we are seeking is the full participation of workers in the transformation of companies."

Mpati says the role of the labour movement has changed from resistance to participation. We are playing more of a participatory role. The priority is to reach agreement, and if

employers adopt the same attitude in looking for a solution before a strike, there will be significant savings."

She says while most of the disputes or strikes this year have been around wages, other major issues have been privatisation, deregulation of industries and corporatisation.

● Andrew Levy & Associates said this week that unions obtained high wage settlements this year despite a lower inflation rate. An average 9.2% settlement was reached in the first six months compared with 9.7% in 1997. Inflation averaged 5.3% between January 1 and May 30.

According to the consultancy, lower inflation saw employers put on the pressure for wage settlements to closely reflect the inflation figure. But this was contrary to a trend in SA collective bargaining where "regardless of the movement in the inflation rate, the benchmark is generally the previous year's settlement."

Motor industry strikes the wall

ST (PT) 2/18/98
LABOUR DISPUTES
By DON ROBERTSON

THE R30-billion-a-year motor industry could come to a standstill this week in a full-blown strike arising from an unresolved dispute between employers and workers.

The strike, starting on Thursday or Friday, will affect more than 21 000 workers at seven plants in Rosslyn, Durban, East London and Port Elizabeth — and could upset billions of rands worth of exports orders recently won by Volkswagen, Samcor and other manufacturers.

The major contracts involve the production of 68 000 fourth-generation Volkswagen Golfs for the UK market over an 18-month period worth R5-billion and an order for 55 000 Ford engines a year over eight years which would earn more than R200-million a year in foreign currency. Both contracts have extremely tight delivery schedules.

To fulfil the VW order, it will be necessary to manufacture 10 cars an hour, on a three-shift basis, or one every six minutes. When this contract was announced, human resource director Brian Smith said: "A one-week strike would be critical to the operation, two weeks would be disastrous."

If the strike spreads to allied industries, including the components sector, BMW will feel the impact as its Babalegi factory produces 85% of leather seats delivered to Germany each week. This order is worth more than R900-million a year. The dispute between the Air-

tomobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo) and workers, represented mainly by the National Union of Metals Workers of SA (Numsa), was declared at the beginning of last month, and referred to the Commission for Consolidation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). If the deadlock is not resolved within 30 days, a legal strike can be called.

In an earlier effort to resolve the dispute, Ameo increased its wage offer in the middle of last month from the 6.5% previously offered to 8% for hourly paid production workers and to 7.5% for artisans in an effort to reach a three-year labour settlement. Ameo's offer included a wage increase linked to the CPI in the second and third years, but in a surprise move Numsa demanded the CPI increase plus 2% in second and third years. Ameo's increase would mean an average basic wage for production employees of R3 065 a month before benefits and overtime.

Ameo asked Numsa for another meeting on Tuesday, but the union said the possibility of resolution was not encouraging. Smith, who is also Ameo chairman, said a national strike would have dramatic consequences for the industry and the economy.

"All seven (manufacturers) have or are currently negotiating extensive export contracts. Strike action will impact on over-

seas plants, and certain parts that are produced locally (and exported) could even stop production overseas," he said.

"Many thousands of jobs in the industry are now dependent on export orders, and these could be placed at risk."

Describing motor manufacturers as "intransigent" and lacking in management skills, Tony Kgobe, Numsa's national sector co-ordinator, said the mandate from the National Shop Steward Council after two days of intense discussion was that "workers should embark on full-blown industrial strike action as soon as we receive the certificate from the commissioner".

The union will approach the CCMA on Tuesday for the certificate (for a legal strike) and give employers 48 hours' notice. "We will be on strike on either Thursday or Friday," said Kgobe. The right to strike was entrenched in the Labour Relations Act and the constitution.

In other developments on the labour front, all but two unions in the metal and electrical industries accepted the final settlement negotiated with the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (Selsa).

Selsa's executive director, Brian Angus, said that the Metal and Electrical Workers Union of SA and the Chemical Workers Industrial Union had yet to accept the terms.

The National Union of Metal Workers' of SA (Numsa), the Steel, Engineering and Allied

workers' Union of SA and the Radio, Television, Electronics and Allied Workers' Union representing about 270 000 workers accepted an increased offer of 7.2% from Selsa.

On Friday, the SA Footplate Staff Association went on strike after its wage negotiations with Metrorail deadlocked. More than a million rail commuters were affected. The matter has been referred to the CCMA.

On Thursday, the dispute between the National Union of Mineworkers and De Beers was resolved, but the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union was threatening a strike at retail group Edgars.

According to industrial relations group Andrew Levy & Associates, in 91.6% of wage negotiations surveyed in the first half of the year no industrial action was taken, and it took 84 days on average to reach agreement.

The survey showed that the average wage settlement in the first half of the year was 9.2% compared with 9.7% in the previous year, with increases ranging from 6% in the municipal sector to 18% in transport.

Initial union demands ranged from 9% to 150%, while employers offers range from zero to 10% with an average of 6%. The average minimum wage in the first six months was R1 884.

Andrew Levy said that in the first half of the year, 310 000 man-days were lost to strikes, compared with 260 000 in the same period last year.

W Cape workers join chemicals strike

BUSINESS REPORTER

Hundreds of Western Cape chemical workers joined their industry's nationwide strike today in support of pay demands.

The workers are demanding a 10,5% across-the-board wage increase, a minimum wage of R2 000, six months' maternity leave, a 13th

ARG 3/8/98 (152)
cheque, the recognition of traditional healers and also the inclusion of a prolonged illness under sick-leave entitlement.

The National Petroleum Employers' Association (NPEA) has offered the workers a package that ranges between 7% and 8%.

Chemical and Industrial Workers Union (CIWU) official Fazel Ernest

told the Cape Argus that about 4 000 chemical industry workers had joined the strike in the Western Cape, representing about 70%.

The strike also involves workers in the glass, pharmaceutical and industrial rubber sectors.

It follows protracted negotiations between the NPEA, CIWU and the National Union of Mineworkers.

Planned motor industry strike could harm exports

Reneé Grawitzky

A VEHICLE manufacturing sector strike planned for this week by 21 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) has raised concern that it could jeopardise vehicle export contracts worth billions of rands.

Government and industry leaders warned that export contracts depended on SA manufacturers meeting standards of quality, price and supply reliability. To the extent that the planned strike interrupted export contracts, it will reflect negatively, the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of SA said.

Numsa did not believe that the strike would lead to the cancellation of export contracts recently won by Volkswagen (VW) and BMW.

Numsa negotiator Tony Kgohe said the strike — arising out of a wage dispute with the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organ-

isation (Ameo) — would affect the seven major manufacturers countrywide from either Thursday or Friday. Whether the strike went ahead, he said, depended on the outcome of a meeting with employers tomorrow.

However, industry sources said the ball was in Numsa's court as employers intended to stand firm on their final offer. The parties have agreed to an 8% increase this year. The dispute centres on the increases for the second and third year of the three-year wage agreement.

Numsa is demanding inflation plus 2% — as tyre employers agreed to — while employers are offering an increase equal to inflation.

Ameo said the offer had to be seen against economic conditions the devaluation of the rand had increased industry costs more than 20% and high interest rates would negatively affect vehicle sales. The industry also faced a tough future with the continued reduction in

DD 3/8/98

international community that SA is a reliable partner.

Johan Cloete, department of trade and industry director for the car assembly and components sector, said strike action was always highly disruptive but especially so with "our international focus in the industry which has no other choice but to look for markets elsewhere in view of the declining domestic market".

Meanwhile, the three-week-old chemical industry strike intensifies today as more than 20 000 members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) join the strike.

CWIU, which claimed to have been forced to go on strike by employers' attitudes, said it would call off the strike if employers agreed to a 10,5% wage increase. However, no meetings have been held to avert the strike.

As the strike begins, employers and union have still not agreed on picketing and

strike rules, with the union claiming that the guidelines proposed by management were aimed at suppressing the strike.

However, the union was optimistic that today's meeting in the plastics and rubber sectors would yield positive results, with employers meeting the workers' demands.

Employers said the intensification of the strike would not have an immediate effect on the supply of critical goods such as petrol, explosives and pharmaceuticals. However, there might be a problem in the delivery of fuel to petrol stations and with the supply of jet fuel.

Meanwhile, Numsa said 3 000 workers planned a wage strike at Samancor's chrome and manganese divisions today. The union is demanding 10% and the company has offered 8%.

Wage dispute on hold as talks resume

Pearl Seholao

THE Metrorail strike, which on Friday brought almost all SA train services to a halt, has been suspended with immediate effect pending the outcome of this week's talks between Metrorail and the SA Footplate Association (Safsa).

The suspension was agreed to at a meeting brokered by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration on Friday night.

About 1 700 train drivers, ticket collectors and station staff went on strike last week after a wage dispute between Safsa and Metrorail.

The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce monitored the strike and said it caused a degree of economic disruption, especially in the first and last hours of the day.

However, because ample warning was given by Metrorail, the effect was contained.

Most employers and employees made alternative arrangements so workers could get to work and the taxi industry had also been prepared for the strike.

Metrorail spokesman Bantu Petsana said Metrorail and Safsa would resume talks on the implementation date of the second increase in the two-year wage agreement, which had already been signed by other trade unions at Metrorail. Safsa wanted the second increase to come into effect in September, while Metrorail has offered the increase from November.

The strike would resume if another deadlock occurred this week, Safsa spokesman Chris de Vos said.

2
H
fo
an
te
ha
of
re
er
ne
der
s fo
id b
mb
rst
iba
with
Fr
olice
b" Z
he h
afte
r. H
wn in
reate
one e
thoug
e bom
vestig
e testi
ja-DP
d yest

BA
S
M
192



Car export deals under threat

FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE

Johannesburg — Major export contracts worth billions of rands could be jeopardised this week if a wage dispute meeting between the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) tomorrow fails to reach a settlement

More than 21 000 Ameo workers allied to Numsa will go on a national strike on Thursday if the dispute is not resolved. This could upset Volkswagen's R5 billion contract to the UK, Samcor's export order of 55 000 Ford engines and BMW's R900 million leather seats export to Germany.

Strikes are also looming in the motor sector, where Numsa represents 60 000 workers at components plants, vehicle dealerships, fitment centres, panel-

beaters and service stations.

Hosea Morapedi, the motor sector co-ordinator for Numsa, said a stalemate had been reached with the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) last week. The union would be embarking on a 24-hour strike on September 1 this year.

Morapedi said this could become "rolling strike action if there was no change in attitude of employers"

The Motor Industries Staff Association (Misa) and Motor Industries Employers' Union (Mieu), which represented a further 40 000 workers, were also likely to participate in the planned strike action, he said.

Brian Smith, the Ameo chairman, said "National strike action will have dramatic consequences for the industry and the South African economy"

"Unlike in 1994, when we had the first national auto industry

strike, all seven OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) now already have or are negotiating extensive export contracts

"Strike action in South Africa will impact on overseas plants and certain parts produced locally could even stop production overseas

"Strike action will further strengthen overseas perceptions that South Africa has an inflexible and unstable labour market. Many thousands of jobs in the industry are now dependent on export orders, and these could be placed at risk by strike action," Smith said.

Tony Kgobe, the Numsa auto and tyre sector co-ordinator, said Ameo had requested the meeting with Numsa after a meeting of the chief executives of the motor companies.

Ameo represents BMW, Delta, Mercedes-Benz, Nissan, Samcor, Toyota and Volkswagen

LT (MR) 3/8/98 (152) (104)

Giant fuel strike hits top gear

CT 3/8/98
(152)

JUST THREE DAYS after a rail strike produced widespread chaos in the city, about 47 000 workers in the chemical industry have embarked on an indefinite nationwide strike, **JUDY DAMON** reports.

At midnight last night, workers in the chemical industry downed tools and braced themselves for a long wait until their demands are met.

All seven sectors of the chemical industry — glass, petroleum, rubber, plastic, industrial chemicals, consumer goods and pharmaceuticals sectors — are to stage marches and protests in the next week.

The decision to strike came as talks between the unions and employees reached a deadlock.

The unions are the South African Chemical Industrial Workers' Union, Mine Workers' Union and the South African Workers' Union.

Although fuel supplies to airlines and motorists will not be affected for several days, it is feared that the strike could have a severe impact if it lasts longer.

South African Airways has assured passengers that the strike will not interfere with scheduled flights, although problems arose last week.

"The airlines have made contingency plans for fuel and we don't foresee major problems during the strike," said SAA spokesperson Leon Els.

"We have also stocked up at other air-

ports in the country, so if problems arise planes can get fuel there."

About 1 000 workers are planning to demonstrate at Cape Town International Airport at 11am today and at the Caltex refinery in Milnerton later.

"Management refused to give us what we wanted — that is why we are going on this full-blown strike," said Colin Rani, branch manager of the South African Chemical Industrial Workers' Union.

The workers are demanding a 10,5% increase, a minimum salary of R2 000, a 40-hour working week, but without less pay, and paid sick leave.

"It is not as if they cannot afford to pay us," Rani said.

"It is a question of principle. We don't want the economy to be affected by this strike. The only way to avoid this is if they give in to our demands."

Industry chiefs disagree
Chris Clucas, chief negotiator for National Petroleum Employers' Association, said the demands "could not be met".

"What they are asking for is double the inflation rate. We have already made an offer of between 6,4 and eight percent."

If the strike drags on, the workers, industries and the economy will suffer.

47 000 strike amid fuel supply fears

(152) Stan 3/3/98
**OWN CORRESPONDENT
AND SAPA**

The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) went on strike at midnight last night, joining the South African Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu), which went on strike a week ago.

The strike by the two unions brings to 47 000 the number of workers in the chemical industry who are on strike.

Industries affected include manufacturers of consumer goods such as detergents, soaps and cosmetics, industrial rubber producers, plastic converters, pharmaceutical plants and glassware manufacturers.

CWIU spokesperson Colin Rani said the strikes would affect the availability of supplies of motor and aviation fuel if they lasted for some time, although there was unlikely to be any immediate disruption of supplies.

"We don't want the economy to be affected by this strike, and the only way to avoid it is if they give in to our demands," he added.

Leon Els South African Airways spokesperson said the airlines have made contingency plans.

Chief negotiator for the National Petroleum Employers' Association, Chris Clucas, said the workers' demands could not be met.

"What they are asking for is double the inflation rate. We have already made an offer of between 6,4 and 8%," he said.

Clucas spelt out the worst-case scenario if the strike continued longer than expected.

"The employees, the economy and the industry will suffer. Our doors are always open and it is up to them to make the next move," Clucas said.

Negotiator Fanie Ernst, acting for employers in the chem-

ical industry, said alternative plans were being made to counter the effects of the strike while employers continued their efforts to reach a settlement. However, employers would not go as high as 10%, and the CWIU was not prepared to accept an increase of less than 10%, he said.

In a memorandum handed to Ernst last week, the CWIU asked, among other demands, for a 10,5% across-the-board increase, a 40-hour working week, and six months' maternity leave, four on full pay.

Sacwu met employers' representatives on Friday to explore ways to reach a solution, said spokesperson Siphiso Ngozi.

The employers' representatives would go back to their principals and respond by today or tomorrow, he said.

Ernst said he had gained the impression that Sacwu wanted to reach a settlement.



We shall not be moved: strikers outside the Caltex refinery in Milnerton yesterday. The protest led to a traffic jam in Koeberg Road. A picket at Cape Town Airport's fuel depot delayed the departure of a flight to Miami.

3 hurt as cops fire rubber bullets at chemical strikers

LINDSAY BARNES
Staff Reporter

Police opened fire with rubber bullets on striking chemical workers blocking the entrance to the Caltex refinery in Milnerton today, injuring three people.

Abguyt 7 30am about 100 workers blocked

Platteklouf Drive between the Kynoch plant and Caltex, preventing cars and workers from getting through, said Milnerton police station commander Eholuhum Joseph.

Police said they stepped in when the protesters stopped a vehicle and assaulted the driver. A 35-year-old man was arrested.

Superintendent Joseph said the situation

had been calmed.

Nelson Mthombeni of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union said striking workers from the pharmaceutical, petroleum, glass, industrial rubber and plastic conversion industries would continue demonstrations and pickets today.

They want a better pay package and are

demanding a 10.5% increase. Employers have offered between 6% and 8%.

Motorists, in an attempt to beat tomorrow's petrol price increase and fill up before pumps run dry, placed a huge burden on petrol jockeys today. Service stations in the Peninsula recorded a huge increase in the number of drivers filling up.

ARC 4/8/98

(153)

Employers disappointed by violence

Reneé Grawitzky
and Bonile Ngqiyaza

EMPLOYERS expressed disappointment about the "level of intimidation and violent incidents" in the chemical industry strike which intensified yesterday with the participation of more than 20 000 Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members

The SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu) immediately denied that any of its members were involved in acts of intimidation and violence, saying its members had behaved well since more than 9 000 workers went on strike three weeks ago

Petroleum companies in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal reported that access roads to refineries were blockaded while Sasol said nonstriking workers were sjam-

bokked as they left Embalenhle township outside Secunda

National Petroleum Employers' Association chairman Chris Clucas said if the blockades were not removed employers would consider applying for interdicts against the strikers.

He said while the strike was well coordinated with large numbers of workers staying away, contingency plans had ensured that production was not affected dramatically. These included the use of stockpiled material and the restructuring of plant operations.

Employers and the union met yesterday to discuss strike and picketing rules as this could not be accomplished ahead of the start of the strike by CWIU members. Employers' spokesman Fanie Ernst said a draft agreement had been negotiated and had been referred back to the respective

parties for ratification.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) — in terms of the Labour Relations Act — can be called in to facilitate the conclusion of picketing agreements if both parties agree. If an agreement cannot be reached the commission can impose rules on the parties.

The strike stems from a demand by the unions for a 10,5% increase while employers have offered between 6% and 8,5% across the board.

Dustin Chick reports that petrol stations in Johannesburg, Midrand and Cape Town said they were confident petrol supplies would remain constant despite the strike. They did not expect a rush of motorists filling up for fear that supplies would run dry. Tomorrow's fuel price rise of 11c/l was not expected to compound this

BD 4 | 8 | 98

SA NEWS DIGEST

LABOUR

ET (BR) 4/8/98

(152)

Chemical industry strike not settled in spite of revision of mandates

Parties to the chemical industry dispute, in which thousands of Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) workers embarked on a full blown national strike yesterday, had revised their mandates but a settlement had not yet been reached, the Employers Association said yesterday.

Fanie Ernst, the employers' spokesman, said the CWIU was now demanding a 9 percent increase for workers earning above R1 500 a month and 10,5 percent for those earning less, while employers had revised their offers to 8 percent and 8,5 percent for upper and lower categories respectively.

Ernst said only the plastic converters sector, incorporated from the former homelands, was poorly paid, as the industry average was around R 2 000 a month. He said although there had been some "hiccups" on fuel deliveries yesterday, the industry did not expect petrol shortages unless the strike "became a long-term issue" by tomorrow. — Frank Numafo, Johannesburg

Petrol stations run on empty

ET 4/8/98

NOT ONLY WILL THE PETROL PRICE INCREASE at midnight tonight but motorists may be lucky to fill their vehicle tanks at all if a pay dispute between employers and workers in the chemical industry is not resolved. **TROYE LUND** reports.

If your car is low on petrol there is a chance you may have to catch a bus till workers in the chemical industry stop an indefinite nationwide strike. While employers spent yesterday applying for urgent interdicts to remove picketing workers from blocking access to refineries and making contingency plans to distribute petrol, some filling stations said they did not have enough "juice" to last until the end of today.

Petrol station managers were waiting on tenterhooks last night for petrol tankers to arrive. The situation may be exacerbated as motorists fill up to beat the 11 cent price increase that comes into effect at midnight tonight.

Members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union are on strike in a bid to force employers to agree to their demand for a 10,5% salary increase.

Oil companies said contingency plans to deliver petrol had been made, but warned consumers that they would be affected if the strike action was prolonged or if negotiations with other unions in the industry failed.

One city petrol station manager who, like others, advised motorists to fill up, said: "We will run out of petrol very soon. We are living on mercy. Petrol usually takes two hours to arrive after ordering it. It has now been 24 hours."

However, a Waterfront petrol station last night said it had plenty of fuel and was not expecting difficulties.

By last night some airlines flying between Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg had started diverting to George and Port Elizabeth for refuelling.

South African Airways spokesperson Mike Pfeiffer confirmed that a picket at the aviation fuel depot at Cape Town International Airport had delayed the departure of flight SAA 203 to Miami by over 23 minutes yesterday, and that problems relating to the strike at Johannesburg International had delayed a plane to Zimbabwe.

"Our depots have enough fuel for a long period, but we have a serious manpower problem filling the aircraft," Pfeiffer said.

Cape Town International's information centre advised passengers to double-check arrival and departure times should the strike continue throughout the week.

A spokesperson for employers in the petrol industry, Chris Clucas, said: "So far the strike has not impacted on consumers. Manufacturing and distribution is running as normal. We anticipated the strike and made contingency plans. So far it is only the workers who are being negatively affected because of the no work, no pay clause."

Clucas said employers in the industry had moved from their original offer of 6,4% to 8%. "We simply cannot meet the 10,5% demand. The other three unions in the industry have agreed to negotiate with us and have dropped below the 10% mark."

The Mine Workers Union (MWU), South African Workers' Union (SAWU) and SA Chemical Workers' Union (SACWU) are still negotiating. While the MWU and SAWU have not been on strike, SACWU has returned to negotiations after members endured three weeks of strike action without pay. The CWIU has not returned to negotiations.

Though the minimum wage in the chemical and petroleum industry is R2 000 a month, the average starting wage is R4 000. Pension, medical aid, housing and education benefits are included in workers' packages.

Cosatu, the umbrella organisation for the striking unions, has supported the 10,5% demand.

Spokesperson Nowethu Impathi said: "This increase is justifiable under the present socio-economic situation where apartheid's wage gap has to be narrowed. It is also justifiable considering the risk and skill required to work with petrol and chemicals. Critics who believe the demand is greedy need to look at the reality of the circumstances these workers find themselves in, especially at what things cost. What can one do with R2 000 a month?"

Motor strike could have interim benefit for trade

ROY COKARNE

Pretoria — The weakening rand could benefit motor manufacturing workers, who are threatening to go on strike because of a wage dispute, Tony Twine, a motor industry analyst and director of Econometric, said yesterday.

This was because it would make it "horrendously expensive" to displace local assembly with increased completely built up imports, he said.

However, Twine said, the motor industry may also to some extent be relieved if there was a strike because

there had been a build-up of stock during the second quarter of this year.

"But inevitably the manufacturers will run out of fast-moving model lines and be left with a highly unbalanced build-up stock if the strike was to last for any length of time," he said.

Twine was commenting on the impact of more than 21 000 workers at South Africa's seven vehicle manufacturing plants embarking on a strike.

Tony Kgobe, the auto and tyre sector co-ordinator for the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), said last week workers in the motor

cr (nr) 4/8/98

(192)

manufacturing industry would embark on "full-blown industrial action" if a meeting today with the Automobile Manufacturing Employers' Organisation (Ameo), which represents the seven local motor manufacturers, did not settle their wage dispute.

Twine said the impact of industrial action depended on how long it lasted.

"In 1994, there was a very extended strike of five weeks as the gap between wage demands and employer offers closed. The strike this year is expected to affect 21 000 workers, or about 60 per cent of the manufacturers' employment,

which means running even small portions of the assembly and distribution operation will be rather difficult."

Twine said the perception of South Africa as a source for exports to other countries would be negatively affected if anything happened to slow down motor manufacturers' export deliveries.

Volkswagen South Africa, for instance, has just started a fourth generation Golf export programme, worth R5 billion, to the British market.

"It will be kind of difficult to do that when, one month into the programme, you have a strike," he said.

Petrol pumps start to run low

(152)

152

Star 4/8/98

CAROLINE SUZMAN

Motorists filling up before the midnight price rise add to rush as strike goes on, but suppliers promise to meet demand

By Hopewell Radner and Rodney Victor

Petrol began running low at petrol stations in Gauteng yesterday as unions and employers dug in their heels, refusing to meet in order to end a strike by chemical industry workers.

The strike is affecting fuel deliveries to stations. Numerous petrol stations said their reserves would not last longer than 24 hours because of the expected rush on the pumps today ahead of the 11c-a-litre increase coming into effect at midnight. Suppliers have promised to meet demands, but fears that pumps will run dry this week if the strike continues could also contribute to a customer stampede.

Manager Don Horrsby of Courtesy Service Station in Denver said his supplier, Shell, had promised there would be "contingency plans" but had not shared details of such plans with garages so that customers' fears could be allayed.

Louis Human of Bruma Cal-tex Service Station said his problem was compounded by the impending petrol price increase at midnight.

"Although I am filled to capacity, I would not be able to handle motorists who are usually serviced by other distributors who have already run dry," he said.

A Wynberg retailer, who did not want to be named, said he ran out of petrol at 6pm yesterday. His supplier, Engen, was not able to promise that it would make deliveries in the immediate future, he said, and he was not sure he would still be operating today.

A spokesperson for a BP garage in Westdene did not foresee major problems, although he was running short of diesel and unleaded petrol.

The National Petroleum Employers' Association has assured its 4500 distributors nationwide that "they will not be faulted".

Chris Clucas, chief negotiator for the association, said suppliers would supply retailers, but he was unwilling to divulge further details. The expected rush tonight was not unique because motorists were known to fill up before petrol price adjustments, he said.

He said the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union was the only union not wanting to back down on its demand of a 10.5% pay increase. Three other unions were considering employers' offers of between 9 and 10%.

South African Airways spokesperson Mike Pfeiffer confirmed that a picket at the aviation fuel depot at Cape Town International Airport delayed the departure of Flight SAA 203 to Miami by more than 20 minutes yesterday.

"Our depots have enough fuel for a long period but we have a serious manpower problem filling the aircraft," Pfeiffer added.

The Star understands that suppliers have had difficulty replacing the specialised labour which services major depots, including airports.

South African Chemical Workers' Union spokesperson Masindi Mavira said there was no solution in sight. The union believed there would be pressure on employers when motorists began to be affected.



Strike starts to bite... motorists have been urged to drive economically as fears rise that some fuel pumps could run dry today

47 000 workers embark on strike

(152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

MORE than 47 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) downed tools yesterday in nearly 300 plants nationwide, adversely affecting petroleum refineries and depot distribution services

National employers coordinator Mr Fame Ernst expressed disappointment at reports of alleged intimidation and blockades of petroleum refineries and distribution depots, reportedly by union members in Durban, Secunda, East London and the Western Cape

He condemned the strikers' reported actions, saying they were against the

spirit of strike rules in terms of the framework guidelines agreement. The agreement deals with the code of conduct regarding peaceful demonstrations, non-interference with production activities and delivery

Other industries affected by the strike include pharmaceutical, rubber and plastic conversions and consumer goods such as detergents, cosmetics and glasswork manufacturers

The strikers joined hundreds of South African Chemical Workers Union members who embarked on industrial action two weeks ago

CWIU deputy general secretary Mr Nelson Mthombeni refuted the allegations of intimidation and the blockading of petroleum refineries. From reports

compiled by plant shop stewards, striking workers at various plants had engaged in peaceful pickets, he said, emphasising that there had been no reports of violence of any nature

The union is demanding a 10,5 per cent across-the-board increase, a 40-hour working week and six months' maternity leave with four months' full pay

Management and union representatives met in Johannesburg yesterday. Mthombeni said the union had submitted a list of counter-proposals to those made by management on Friday

"There are a few amendments. The employers are consulting on them and will come back to us by this afternoon (Monday)," he said

82/1517/1988
KONKOR 4/15/88



Y petrol flows again

Court halts fuel blockade

GHANTAL EFFORT AND THABO MABASO
STAFF REPORTERS

The stranglehold on Cape Town's fuel supplies by striking chemical workers has been broken after a blockade at the Caltex refinery at Milnerton was lifted last night.

Caltex spokesman Pierre Mynhardt said the company secured an urgent High Court interdict yesterday preventing striking members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union from blockading the refinery's gates and restricting workers' access to the premises.

Mr Mynhardt said by 9pm fully laden

tankers were rolling out of the depot delivering fuel.

"The deliveries continued throughout the night and hopefully by later today we will have overcome the backlog."

Hours before the petrol price went up 11c a litre at midnight, most tanks at filling stations in Cape Town were running dry - the effect of two days of strike action and non-delivery of fuel.

Last night, at petrol stations across the Peninsula, motorists queued to fill their tanks before the increase came into effect - and before supplies ran out.

Staff at a petrol station in Orange Street in Gardens had to turn away many

motorists when supplies ran dry early in the evening.

Leon Fourie, of a petrol station in Knuts River, predicted they would run out of petrol before midnight, but by 3pm higher-octane fuels and diesel were sold out.

The price increase will force consumers to dig a lot deeper into already depleted pockets, economists have warned.

Tony Twine of Econometrics said the increase would add 4,5% to consumers' overall annual expenditure.

"Other costs will tend to increase as a result of the petrol price hike," he said.



ROY WILHELM

ation in the Gardens which had run out of supplies turns away a motorist

Petrol price rise set to hit fares

ART 5/8/98
From page 1
(152)

About 80% of all goods transported go by road.

The increase was caused by the rand's 20% tumble against the US dollar in the past two months.

"The sole reason for the petrol price increase is that the rand was a lot weaker in July than it was in June," Mr Twine said.

It is expected that the increase will lead soon to fare rises in the taxi, bus and rail industries. Golden Arrow Bus Services spokeswoman Jean Welsh said the company was considering raising fares. A Metrorail spokesman said prices were likely to go up next month but this was linked to inflation.

ART 5/8/98

To page 3

Wave of strikes 'may be disastrous'

CT (MR) 5/8/98 (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The present wave of national strikes could result in more man days lost compared with the same period last year (510 000 to last September), with disastrous consequences for the economy, Andrew Levy & Associates, the labour analysts, said yesterday

"Because we are an export-driven economy and prompt deliveries are one of the prime responsibilities, these strikes would have a serious effect on the economy should they interfere with deliveries to our

customers overseas," said Brian Allen, of Andrew Levy

Allen said a typical example of this phenomenon was the looming strike in the automobile sector, in which protests by more than 21 000 Numsa members could jeopardise export contracts that had been concluded or were being negotiated

Thousands of metalworkers' jobs are also dependent on these contracts, which are worth billions of rands

They include VW's export deal, valued at R5 billion, of 68 000 fourth-generation Volkswagens to the UK, Samcor's export order of 55 000 Ford engines, and BMW's R900 million

export of leather seats to Germany

Jackie Kelly, a researcher with Andrew Levy, said a common characteristic of the present strikes was that both employer and worker parties "wanted to entrench their position"

In addition, as with the strike by security workers in February this year, the chemical workers now on strike were also negotiating in a bargaining council for the first time ever

Also, as during the security workers' strike, the chemical workers' strike has become violent, with reports of intimidation, coercion and factory blockades throughout the country



DRAINED: A city petrol station last night, where petrol had run out. The scene could be repeated at many garages if the strike continues

PICTURE: KARIN REID

Strikers, petrol bosses clash

ET 5/8/98

ALL-OUT war has been declared between 47'000 striking chemical workers and their bosses yesterday in clashes outside refineries in Cape Town and Durban

Contrary to statements by the National Petroleum Employers' Association (NPEA) that fuel distribution had not been affected, petrol station managers across the country had either run out of petrol by last night or were anticipating their stockpiles to run out in the course of today

Werner Nletz, manager of the Wineland One Stop on the N1 out of Cape Town, who had sold about 10 000 litres more than his daily usual, yesterday said "Things have been crazy here today. Other petrol stations have run out and people are coming here. I have petrol to last me until tomorrow morning. I have heard rumours that we will get more delivered. If we do not, I am in big trouble."

Worried taxi drivers were angry about chemical industry strikers saying that if they did not get any petrol they would take it by force

Drivers operating from Cape Town to Guguletu, Nyanga and Langa said that if there was no petrol available to them they would lose up to R500 for a day's work.

"We all need money to survive, everyone is struggling to make ends meet," said taxi owner Benson Makhilipi.

"Don't misunderstand," said driver Simon Nonzaba, "we support the strikers, they are dead right to want a wage increase." He added that the price of petrol increases a few times every year but the taxi industry still supports petrol stations. What the taxi industry demands, he said, is that if there is a price increase in petrol, everyone else should get wage increases.

Another driver, Columbus Mzikulu, said that "an injury to one is an injury to all" and even though taxis will work at a loss, they will stand with strikers.

Meanwhile, at Cape Town International Airport, assistant general manager Amen Niefagodien said the fuel situation at the airport was back to normal yesterday following a day of fuel shortages on Monday which forced two flights to divert to George for refuelling.

Niefagodien said the airport had a "tanking-up" capacity of two days and that this supply had been replenished during the course of the day. The airport has sufficient fuel to last till tomorrow.

"In the short-term we have a tanking up capacity for two days. In the long-term we don't know what the situation will be. It all depends on the production of fuel and the bulk storage of Caltex."

He said that a fuel supplier was providing the specialised manpower needed to refuel passenger aircraft while striking workers picketed outside the airport terminal. The strike is expected to continue today.

Spokesperson for the NPEA, Chris Clucas, said fuel distribution had not been affected by the strike and contingency plans were in place to ensure fuel was delivered to filling stations.

He believed fears that the fuel supply would dry up were due more to the high petrol price increase, as motorists rushed to fill their tanks ahead of the midnight deadline.

"Irrespective of whether there is a strike or not, our distribution networks are capable of keeping filling stations supplied," he said.

Total spokesperson Peter Latta said the company was doing its best to maintain effective contingency plans in the short-term.

Total's ability could be hampered if strikers continued to interfere with company fuel trucks, he said.

While Caltex Oil in Gauteng was delivering fuel to filling stations, no Caltex petrol was being delivered in the Western Cape because workers were blockading access to it.

— Staff Writer

□ Turn to Page 3

ET 5/8/98

Contingency plans in place

□ From Page 1

Caltex spokesperson Pierre Mynhard said the company had made contingency plans. Its refinery was fully operational and workers not on strike would be doubling up to meet demands.

But Fazel Earnest, spokesperson for the striking Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) in the Western Cape, said "Even though the refineries have got other non union members to drive delivery tankers, no trucks are leaving the refinery. We believe if we exert enough pressure, our bosses will start feeling the pinch and give into our demand of a 10,5% increase."

But, employers are adamant that they cannot consider a demand so high. They believe that striking workers will settle for an increase closer to 8% when they start to miss the wages that the days away are costing them.

Tensions were exacerbated yesterday when police injured four strikers with rubber bullets aimed at dispersing picketing workers at the Kynoch fertiliser plant near the Caltex refinery in Milnerton.

One worker was arrested and charged with pointing a firearm.

The CWIU is the only chemical workers union not at the negotiating table. Although the South African Chemical Workers' Union (SAWU) has been on strike for the past three weeks, they have joined the Mine Workers' Union and the South African Workers' Union (SAWU) in negotiations.

The unions are demanding a 10,5% wage increase, a 40-hour work week, paid sick leave and a minimum of R2 000 a month.

Capetonians unfortunate enough to fall ill or victim to crime need not fear. Their chances of speedy police or emergency service will be as good — or bad — as usual during the nationwide fuel strike.

Fuel stocks run low as strike hots up

By Mzwakhe Hlangani and Sapa

CHAOS erupted in petrol distribution services nationwide as fuel supplies were reportedly running out on the second day of the strike over wages by about 47 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU).

Reports of violence and intimidation were on the increase yesterday

Meanwhile, garages countrywide reported that their tanks were running low

The shortage was made worse by motorists rushing to fill up ahead of the 11c a litre petrol price increase at midnight and in anticipation of fuel supplies running out because of the strike

Most garages approached said no petrol was delivered on Monday

"Our tanks will be dry today if petrol is not delivered soon," said Engen garage owner Mr Cobus Coetzee in Pretoria.

Smaller petrol stations might be out of fuel before today because of their limited storage capacity, he said

Downed tools

CWIU members downed tools on Monday to force employers in the pharmaceutical, petroleum, glass, industrial rubber, plastic conversion, and fast-moving consumer goods sectors to meet their demands for a 10,5 percent wage increase or a minimum of R2 000 a month

One garage owner, Mr Seun Oelofse, said his last petrol delivery was on Friday

By noon yesterday motorists were waiting in long queues to fill up their tanks

Western Cape police yesterday fired rubber bullets to disperse striking workers outside the Caltex refinery in Milnerton. Four strikers were injured in the incident

Police spokeswoman Sergeant Vivienne Phillips said about 60 workers obstructed traffic and threatened members of the public order policing unit

Shell and BP SA Petroleum Refineries (Sapref) denied that one of its managers tried to run over a group of strikers in Durban yesterday morning

Blockades erected

At the Island View complex in Durban, which houses Caltex, Engen, BP and Shell's central tankers, blockades were erected to prevent tankers leaving and non-strikers from entering.

Sapref spokeswoman Ms Lora Rossler said stone-throwing and intimidation were reported.

CWIU spokesman Mr Nelson Mthombeni said there was an altercation between workers and management at the Consol factory in Bellville, Cape Town, when non-strikers were refused entry

Employers national coordinator Mr Fanie Ernst said there had been some movement in negotiations with the plastic and rubber sectors

He said that at Monday's talks management offered an 8,5 percent increase to workers earning less than R1 500 a month and eight percent to those earning more than R1 500 - Sapa

Sowetan 5/8/98

The United Nations has received negotiations this week in Angola. The United Nations has received negotiations this week in Angola. The United Nations has received negotiations this week in Angola.

lifesaving medicines

Deaths in city feared

LINDSAY BARNES AND THABO MABASO
STAFF REPORTERS

Pharmacies are running short of life-saving supplies such as asthma medication as the nationwide chemical workers' strike takes its toll of the pharmaceutical sector.

State hospitals have warned that they, too, may have problems next week if the strike continues

Strikers yesterday blockaded at least three Cape Town manufacturing and distribution companies, cutting off vital drug supplies to hospitals, doctors and pharmacies

Pharmacists expressed anger at the strike, warning that loss of life would result if the blockades were not ended in the next few days

But union officials said yesterday strike action would continue for the time being

The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union, the Mine Workers' Union and the South African Workers' Union are engaged in bitter wage negotiations with employer organisations in the petroleum, glass, pharmaceutical and industrial rubber sectors.

On Monday 40 000 CWIU members embarked on an indefinite strike for a 10,5% wage increase, a 40-hour working week and paid sick leave

The Cape Medical Depot in Green Point had been warned by pharmaceutical manufacturers to expect difficulties with delivery in the next few days, said director of provincial health support services Anne Brand

The depot stores drugs for all state hospitals in the Western and Northern Cape. It was already short of some medicines because of national or international shortages, she said

Tygerberg Hospital would run into supply problems within a week if the strike continued, chief pharmacist Elaine Schlanders said. A supplier had warned her that epilepsy medicine had already run out

"We usually lend medication to private hospitals in emergencies, but if there are going to be shortages we won't lend to anyone. Our patients will come first," she said

"It's a very sad day when things come to this. If you cannot get drugs, there

To page 3

Action 'threatens exports'

MOTORING EDITOR

Motor industry manufacturers say car and component exports worth millions of rands will be threatened by a national strike called by the National Union of Metal Workers for tomorrow.

Industry spokesmen said today that the strike would damage the economy - and could cost jobs

A union spokesman said Numsa was disappointed with the way the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation had conducted itself, and gave notice that more than 21 000 workers would strike

Two manufacturers, Samcor and Volkswagen, have been increasing staff to meet high-value export orders from Europe

Volkswagen SA is to supply the British market as the company's German capacity is strained. The companies have been able to prove their ability to produce to high standards, but are concerned about the potential effect of the strike

Volkswagen spokesman Matt Gingrich said "We believe that in the interests of the economy and the industry, the strike should be called off

"It may have a very negative impact on the various manufacturers' export contracts and create a negative image, which will further erode overseas investor confidence in the country, especially in the light of the recent currency crisis." He said Volkswagen believed the offer to workers was fair and that Numsa was damaging the industry.

Pharmacists fear drugs will run out in days

AR 6/8/98 (152)

chemical manufacturer Warner-Lambert in Retreat prevented distribution yesterday, a spokesman said. The CWIU has vowed to maintain the blockade of Warner-Lambert "for as long as possible". Union spokesman Fazel Ernest told the Cape Argus the blockade was part of tactics aimed at forcing the industry to meet its demands. National union officials are negotiating a picketing agreement which excludes blockade action.

AR 6/8/98 (152)

A blockade had cost pharmaceutical wholesaler Amalgamated Chemists in Montague Gardens R1,1-million on Tuesday alone, a spokesman said. Workers had blockaded the company for two days, preventing distribution during working hours. A spokesman for Fine Chemicals in Epping Industria said staff had blockaded the premises partially for three days and were expected to continue. A vehicle blockade of the pharma-

he would not be able to fulfil our orders. But if our customers are desperate we will drive around to other pharmacies to get their drugs." Pharmacies in Wynberg and Rondebosch reported sporadic supplies over the past few days and having to "beg, borrow or steal" from pharmacies carrying large stocks. Grootte Schuur's pharmacy store head Kriton Stephano said the hospital would have problems if it did not get stock next week.

From page 1

will almost certainly be loss of life across the country," she said. Pharmacy owners are deeply worried about supplies running out in days if the strike continues. Strandfontein Pharmacy owner Pro Arumugam said since Monday he had battled to get emergency medication for children and asthmatics as well as a painkiller for cancer patients. A distributor told us on Monday

CAPE TOWN
SADRALIBRARY

BUSINESS DAY

RSDAY, AUGUST 6 1998

www.bday.co.za

VAT Subscription R2,00 inc VAT (where available)



A BDFM publication

**YOUR ACCIDENT IS
OUR PROBLEM.**

Our Fleet Accident Management takes care of everything!

TOLL-FREE 0800 117993

AVIS FLEET SERVICES

We know Fleets

D&MRS-T&M P624667

Officials hopeful that petrol supplies will stabilise as blockades end

Reneé Grawitzky

MINERALS and Energy Minister Penneil Maduna expressed concern yesterday that the strike in the chemical industry would affect motorists as an increasing number of petrol stations indicated they were running out of supplies.

However, the minerals and energy department said the shortage could have been the result of yesterday's petrol price increase and consumer concern over the strike.

Theunis Burger, a director in the

department, said the situation was not serious. National Petroleum Employers' Association chairman Chris Cincas said it would be stabilised in the "next day or two" as the blockades were lifted and deliveries resumed. Close to 20 interdicts had been granted by the Labour Court against striking workers blocking access roads and entrances to refineries countrywide.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, which has been asked to assist in negotiating picketing rules, said most interdicts were granted to petroleum, glass and pharmaceutical companies.

The strike has been characterised by a high level of intimidation and violence since Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members laid down tools on Monday, joining their counterparts from the SA Chemical Workers' Union (Sacwu) who have been on strike for three weeks. Employers said levels of violence would hopefully decline as workers complied with interdicts and picketing rules.

Numerous incidents of intimidation, stone-throwing and the smashing of nonstriking workers were reported in Durban yesterday. Striking workers also picketed at Cape Town International Airport.

Chucas said fuel shortages in Cape Town on Tuesday were due largely to the inability of Caltex and Engen to deliver because of blockades, which had now been cleared.

BP and Shell had been able to deliver adequate supplies in the Western Cape. However, the two companies had been unable to make deliveries in Durban as a result of blockades. This would be corrected after interdicts were granted yesterday, he said.

Dustin Chick reports that a snap survey of petrol stations in Gauteng and the Western Cape showed that some stations had run out of petrol by last night while others feared they would run dry by today.

Meanwhile, negotiations were under way between employers and Sacwu in various sectors to reach agreement. Employers said the CWIU was not interested in talking, but the union said no approaches had been made. Industrial chemical employers tabled a final offer of 8,5% during negotiations with Sacwu yesterday.

Ed 6/8/98

Federation rejects linking of wages to inflation

Cosatu declares full support for wave of strikes

(152) et (NR) 6/8/98

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) yesterday said it was "in full support" of the current wave of national strikes by its affiliates, including the national automobile industry strike planned for tomorrow by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), its second biggest affiliate

Zwelinzima Vavi, Cosatu deputy general secretary, said the umbrella union supported in particular the industrial action on which members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) had embarked

"We are concerned that the intransigence of the bosses will soon undermine the economy as a whole as petrol pumps may dry up in the near future

"We further call on workers to refuse to handle any goods to and from the petroleum, glass, plastics, rubber, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals and fast-moving consumer goods," he said

Vavi said the labour federation "rejected with contempt the strategy advanced by most bosses to link wage increments to inflation and productivity"

He said while linking wages to inflation appeared to make economic sense on paper, "it is completely inappropriate in the South African context"

However, Penuell Maduna, the minister of minerals and energy, expressed concern about the strike, especially the effect it would have on the supply of fuel to motorists

Theunis Burger, a director in the energy department, said the minister had indicated although he appreciated the fact that this was a labour dispute, the people most affected were consumers

"(The minister) hereby urges all parties to come to a speedy resolution in the interest of the country," Burger said

Fanie Ernst, chief co-ordinator for the chemical industry employers' association, said no settlement had been reached by late yesterday except for the signing of an agreement on picketing rules

"The picketing rules will help alleviate fuel shortages as these have been mainly caused by blockades and intimidation at factory gates," he said.

CWIU wants a 10,5 percent salary increase across the board, a 40-hour working week and paid sick leave. Employers are currently standing at 8,5 percent

STRIKE TO CONTINUE

High Court interdicts release flow of petrol

ET 6/8/98
(152)

THE PETROLEUM Employers' Association says deliveries of petrol to service stations around the country will be completed today. **TROYE LUND** reports.

ELEVEN interdicts have made petrol freely available again, but no end is in sight to the strike that 47 000 workers in the petroleum and chemical industry started on Monday

High Courts around the country ordered striking members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) away from chemical manufacturing plant and refinery entrances

Full tankers have spent the past 24 hours delivering loads to empty and emptying petrol bowsers.

Although several petrol stations in other provinces were still waiting for fuel yesterday afternoon, it was business as usual by yesterday morning in most of the Western Cape.

In KwaZulu-Natal, police escorted tankers to service stations

Cape Town International Airport also stocked up on two million litres of fuel yesterday.

But striking workers are as

determined as ever to continue their strike until employers give in to their demands for a 10,5% increase, a 40-hour working week, four months paid maternity leave, a 13th cheque and a minimum salary of R2 000 a month.

CWIU national spokesperson Wuelile Noling said: "This is a very profitable industry that requires many workers to be subjected to dangerous chemicals.

"Our membership is determined to continue with this strike even though it is no work, no pay. We will not give in, but our doors are open if our bosses want to negotiate"

He pointed out that the strike did not only affect the petroleum industry, where workers are generally better paid. Some 80% of the union's 47 000 members earned less than R2 000 a month. These were workers from other sectors of the chemical industry, namely pharmaceutical, glass, industrial

rubber and chemicals, fast-moving consumer goods and plastic industries.

Noling is confident employers will soon "feel the pinch" and offer more than the eight percent that the petroleum industry is offering and the 6,4% other sectors are offering.

"If the strike continues, these industries will be brought to their knees. Petroleum employers will also not be able to continue functioning fully without our members," said Noling

The National Petroleum Employers' Association (NPEA) said it was sticking to its guns on the eight percent offer. Anything higher was unaffordable.

As some filling stations had run dry in the first 24 hours of the strike, before the interdicts were obtained, the NPEA said deliveries would be completed by today and that the situation would "ease" and "return to normal".

Although employers and unions said their doors were open for negotiations, no attempt had been made by either party to resume negotiations

Taxi chaos looms as petrol supplies dry up

Cosatu calls for solidarity with 47 000 strikers

By HOPEWELL RADEBE, SIMON ZWANE AND ANSO THOM

Fears that taxi services could come to a standstill in Gauteng surfaced yesterday.

And the Congress of South African Trade Unions has called on members to embark on solidarity action in support of the 47 000 striking chemical and petroleum workers

Cosatu's call came as high courts throughout the country ordered the striking workers to stop their crippling blockades at refineries, depots and chemical manufacturing plants

Police in KwaZulu Natal had to be called in to escort 14 tankers from the Engen plant in Isipingo to service stations.

Cosatu's Nowetu Mpati said its members should "refuse to handle any goods to and from the petroleum, glass, plastics, rubber, pharmaceuticals and industrial chemicals industries as well as fast-moving consumer goods".

This came as long-dis-

tance taxi drivers in Gauteng expressed concern that they would be "terribly affected" if the strike were not resolved by the weekend as this was normally their busiest time.

"We are able to feed our families because of the migrant labourers who travel to visit their families then," said Johannes Hlophe.

"I hate to imagine what will become of these people if taxis come to standstill because of lack of petrol," he added.

Another taxi driver, Siphon Hlongwane, who travels between Soweto and Johannesburg, said he had found the Giant Garage in Nancefield empty and had to drive to Mondor to fill up

Filling station owners also felt frustrated by the inability of petroleum companies to maintain supplies.

The Star found Harvey Sithole, owner of Africoil's Zhut City Garage in Orlando West, fuming, and claiming that his suppliers had not informed him about the possibility of an

irregular supply.

"Just because we are township businessmen, they did not worry about us - we are affected now because trucks will not deliver in our areas. People have not changed," he said.

Hanif Bhabha, owner of the Shell Garage in Melville, had to drive to the depot to demand his delivery. He said he had tried to contact his supplier but did not get any assurances that petrol would be delivered yesterday.

An Orlando Service Station manager, who wanted to remain anonymous, said he placed more orders yesterday but his supplier, Total, asked him to be patient.

"I ordered petrol on Tuesday, when I realised my stock was dwindling and would not survive Wednesday, but up until now I have not received anything," he said.

Pharmacies contacted by The Star said although delivery had been delayed, later in the day they managed to get all the medication they had ordered.

(152) (1000)
Star 6/8/98

Rail workers' talks scuppered

(102) ~~SA~~
TALKS between Metrorail and the SA Footplate Association (Safsa) broke down yesterday over a refusal by the company to consider arbitration

Metrorail, at talks in Johannesburg brokered by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, refused to consider arbitration, arguing that there was nothing to be gained by arbitrating on an issue for which no funds were available

Safsa declared a dispute last week, resulting in a national strike last Friday over the implementation of a 3,5 per-

cent increase. Safsa insisted it come into effect in September, while Metrorail offered the increase from November

The agreement includes a 7,5 per cent increase to be implemented with immediate effect and backdated to March this year, and a five per cent increase in March 1999

Safsa general secretary Mr Chris de Vos said the union would approach Labour Minister Shepard Mdladlana to intervene in the matter rather than resume the nationwide strike

"Metrorail refused point-blank to

consider the arbitration process, which is in line with the requirements of the Labour Relations Act, saying there were no funds available for them to move the implementation date forward," De Vos said

Last Friday's strike by 1 700 train drivers, ticket collectors and station staff belonging to Safsa left thousands of commuters stranded or late for work.

Safsa agreed to suspend the strike on Friday night pending talks with Metrorail to be held on Tuesday and yesterday - Sapa.

Sowetan 6/8/98

Motor industry strike may harm exporting

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

SOUTH Africa's seven car manufacturers could suffer heavy losses in sales and export deals if the planned strike by about 21 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA goes ahead tomorrow

Talks between Numsa and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo) hit another snag yesterday when the employers failed to influence the union to accept its final offer, Numsa spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said

Numsa is demanding a guaranteed consumer price index plus a two per cent improvement factor on wages for

next year and the year 2000. The union gave employers 48 hours notice in terms of the Labour Relations Act to embark on a legal strike

"The length of the strike will be determined by the employers' seriousness to give an offer that will end the apartheid dominated labour market," said Tony Kgobe, coordinator for the auto and tyre sector.

"The employers have the opportunistic behaviour of wanting to impose the terms of negotiations. We are playing a constructive role in reaching agreement and it seems to us that they don't want to find a solution

"They can afford to give better wages because the industry is making a turnover of R30 billion a year and the

issue is not the lack of affordability," Kgobe said

BMW, Nissan, Volkswagen, Delta, Toyota, Mercedes Benz and Samcor automobile assembly plants would be affected by the strike, which could hurt both their R50 billion export deals and car sales, Ntuli said

An agreement had already been reached on an eight percent across-the-board increase and 7,5 percent for artisans

Ameo chairman Mr Brian Smith said the national strike would have dramatic consequences for the industry and the SA economy

It would impact on overseas plants. He said thousands of jobs in the industry were dependent on export orders

(152)

South Africa's seven car manufacturers could suffer heavy losses in sales and export deals if the planned strike by about 21 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA goes ahead tomorrow



Strikers facing a tough battle

7/8/98
Reinie Booysen

(152)
~~(152)~~

STRIKING chemical workers face an uphill battle if they hope to cause serious disruption to SA petrol and diesel supplies. They will have to blockade no less than 28 distribution depots dotted around the country — many of which are supplied by direct pipeline link to refineries in Durban and on the Highveld.

So far there have been some disruptions at some of the depots but the oil companies have a distribution network with substantial flexibility to source and move oil products by alternative routes if necessary.

In the industrial heartland from the Highveld to Mpumalanga, most depots are linked to an extensive oil product pipeline network, extending all the way from the Durban refineries owned by BP, Shell and Engen up to the Sasol/Total Natref refinery south of Johannesburg, and to Sasol's synthetic oil facilities near Secunda.

The Free State is also connected. Apart from pipelines, the industry also makes use of railcars to move white oil products from Durban into the interior.

The Cape distribution system is largely reliant on oil product tankers, which fan out from the Milnerton refinery owned by Caltex, and Moss gas, near Mossel Bay, which supplies the area from around East London to the Mossel Bay region.

The pipeline network is owned and operated by Petronet, while the depots belong to the oil companies.

A Petronet official said yesterday its network was unaffected

Chemicals strike may hit mining sector

(152)
~~(152)~~

BD 7/8/98

Reneé Grawitzky

AS FEARS arose yesterday that the strike in the chemicals industry might threaten mines, the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) said it was prepared to enter negotiations.

The CWIU, which represents more than 20 000 workers who have been on strike since Monday, has so far not participated in negotiations that have been taking place between employers and the SA Chemical Workers' Union. Sacwu members have been on strike for three weeks.

AECI, the largest supplier of explosives to the mining industry, warned that production on gold and platinum mines could be halted if the strike continued beyond next week.

AECI Explosives MD Vernon Liddiard has written to four cabinet ministers and African National Congress secretary-general Kgalema Motlanthe advising them of the consequences of the company's inability to provide explosives to the mining industry.

Liddiard said by the end of next week supplies of certain crucial products would be exhausted. The failure of the company to supply these products could slow down, if not stop production on some mines.

Anglogold said it was aware of the situation and had put in place contingency plans. However, it could not speculate how long such plans could keep production going.

While the situation regarding petrol supplies in most of the country appeared to be stabilising yesterday, violence and intimidation continued mainly in the Durban area. The SA Police Service confirmed a number of

shootings in Durban where drivers delivering petrol were shot at.

National Petroleum Employers' Association chairman Chris Clucas said intimidation in the area was so high that companies had been unable to use contract labour to deliver petrol while police had to fetch their own. Workers continued to defy interdicts. As a result Durban had the highest percentage of filling stations running dry.

He said the situation in the rest of the country, in terms of deliveries, would stabilise by today.

Bulelwa Boqwana reports that the Eastern Cape had hardly been affected while there were some problems in the Western Cape. Workers at the Caltex refinery in Cape Town were locked out.

Employers were notified of impending sympathy and secondary strikes in a number of related sectors.

The CWIU said its move to join the negotiations was not a sign of weakness but was considered in the country's interests and "everyone else who is being affected by the strike".

It denied employer allegations that it had refused to negotiate then far in order to prolong the strike.

Meetings between Sacwu and employers have taken place this week. Sacwu confirmed that the CWIU had chosen not to attend these meetings.

Sacwu said employers in the fast-moving consumer goods sector had tabled an offer of 9% which was being taken back to workers. Both unions initially demanded a 10,5% increase.

Meanwhile, the strike by more than 20 000 National Union of Metalworkers of SA workers in the vehicle manufacturing sector starts today.

S
I
n
a
d
d
c
o
m
p
l
e
t
e
d
t
h
e
f
r
e
e
p
r
e
s
s



Dunlop Africa must pay ~~R12~~ R12m to end historic strike

CT(DR) 7/8/98 (152)

SHIRLEY JONES

KWAZULU NATAL EDITOR

Durban — Dunlop Africa, the tyre and industrial rubber products manufacturer, would pay nearly R12 million in compensation to settle the longest-standing industrial relations dispute in South African history, it emerged yesterday.

The company and the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (Numsa) said agreement had been reached on the compensation of workers dismissed in 1985 from BTR Sarmcol.

In terms of this agreement, 890 workers will each receive about R13 000 in compensation.

Mike Hankinson, the chief executive of Dunlop Africa, said he was pleased that the matter, which had been inherited from BTR in the UK, its previous majority shareholder, had been finalised.

Dunlop Africa was formed after a management buyout at the beginning of the year.

In March, after 13 years of dispute and debate, the Supreme Court of Appeal in Bloemfontein held in favour of the workers by finding their dismissal during a strike unfair. The matter was referred back to the industrial court to determine compensation.

Soon after the appeal court judgment, the parties agreed to explore other ways to settle the matter. After months of negotiation, the parties arrived at an agreement, which was endorsed at a general meeting of workers in Mphophomeni.

Peter Daantjie, the deputy general secretary of Numsa, said the union was very pleased with the outcome.

Hankinson said wiping the slate clean would allow Dunlop Africa to fine-tune and then meet set targets.

Strike: 'Public not at risk'

CT 7/8/98 (152)

TROYE LUND

CHEMICAL industry bosses have dismissed warnings by unions that "society is being placed at risk" because unqualified replacements are being called in to manufacture medicines and drive petrol tankers.

Amid pickets and speculation about a meeting scheduled for today between striking workers and employers, Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members who downed tools on Monday warned that the implications of their strike were not only being felt in the petrol industry

It carried serious implications for the whole industry and consumers, including the pharmaceutical, glass, plastic and fast moving consumer goods sectors, the union said.

CWIU's Fazel Earnest said. "We are very concerned that petroleum employers are using drivers who do not have public driver's permits or certificates to carry hazardous chemicals. The quality of medicines also stands to be compromised."

But employers in the petroleum sector said that they would never put a person at the wheel of a tanker unless the person was qualified to be there.

Pharmaceutical manufacturing companies like Intramed in the Eastern Cape said quality would not be compromised. Like the petroleum and plastics and glass sectors, the pharmaceutical industry said contingency plans were working well enough for plants to continue as normal, without the striking workers, for an "extended period".

Reacting to press reports that lifesaving medicines were not getting through to hospitals, clinics and pharmacies in the Western Cape, wholesalers and distributors, Amalgamated Chemists Associated (ACA) and Heynes Mathews — the two largest in the province — said deliveries had not been hampered.

"The strike rules are in place and distribution has been continuing," said ACA's Peter Willig.

Caltex spokesperson Pierre Mynhard said. "One must remember that not all members of the

unions are supporting the strike."

The other two unions represented in the chemical industry, the Mine Workers' Union (MWU) and the South African Workers' Association (SAWA), are not on strike. These two unions and SACWU are currently negotiating on wage increase demands.

Employers and the CWIU, which stopped negotiating when a deadlock was declared, were still not talking formally by yesterday, four days into the CWIU strike.

The unions said that their strike would continue "full steam ahead" until their bosses listened to the demands, including a 10,5% increase.

● The driver of a Total petroleum tanker was shot near the Tongaat toll plaza north of Durban in Kwazulu-Natal yesterday.

Police agreed with Total's opinion that the shooting was linked to the nationwide strike. The 22-year-old driver continued driving, but when he reached the plaza, he realised that he had been wounded in the leg. The tanker was hit by five bullets.

Hopes high for fuel strike to end today

By Mzwakhe Hlangani

THE wage deadlock in the chemical industry which led to a crippling strike by more than 47 000 workers nationwide may be resolved today

National Petroleum Employers' Association (NPEA) spokesman Lutz Krantz expressed hope yesterday that progress towards the resolution of the crisis would be made at a planned meeting of all stakeholders today

Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Penuell Maduna has also issued a statement encouraging both parties to come to a speedy resolution as the petrol crisis was adversely affecting the country and its economy

Several petrol stations across the country reported that they had run dry yesterday, despite petrol companies' claims that deliveries had gone ahead as normal

Most garages said they had not received petrol deliveries this week and were under pressure because other garages in surrounding areas were out of fuel.

The Orlando West Shell garage ran out of fuel on Wednesday morning. The owner said they had been promised delivery since Wednesday

The strike by members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union in demand of a 10,5 percent pay increase, a 40-hour working week and paid sick leave, entered its fourth day yesterday

The NPEA said the association had moved its position on the pay increase from six percent to eight percent.

"Thus far the unions have not moved away from their original demand of 10,5 percent - a demand not borne out by the fundamentals," Krantz said

With reference to the filling stations affected by the strike, the NPEA said the Durban area was the worst hit with the highest percentage of filling stations running dry.

"This is because of high levels of intimidation and violence that have occurred around the biggest depot in that area.

"A driver was shot in the leg after his vehicle was hit by gunfire," Krantz said.

Yesterday both strikers and police officers ignored the High Court interdicts to prevent workers from blocking access to fuel depots and from intimidating non-striking workers.

Deliveries to the rest of the country would hopefully be back to normal today, Krantz said

A Johannesburg filling station manager said yesterday that only 15 000 litres of petrol were delivered to her station on Wednesday night, while she normally received more than 41 000 litres a day

When she asked her fuel wholesaler about further supplies, she was told she could put in an order for more, but she was not guaranteed to get any more before next week.

This week's strikes show that the understanding required for economic growth is not there. Charlene Smith reports

8/18/98

Economy counts the cost of South Africa's strike season

(152) AR4 8/8/98

Growth is the most powerful weapon in the fight against poverty, according to the World Bank. But it requires a common understanding of growth strategies among government, labour and business. Casting the normal posture of strike season aside for the moment, this week has shown that the understanding required for economic growth is sorely lacking.

Unions seem more militant than they have in years, and even appear to be sabotaging the Government's job creation orders.

Labour could also be facing a huge community backlash next week if, after the long weekend, renewed strikes dry up petrol pumps, strand taxis, stop trains running and cause losses in wages. Cosatu has never experienced this sort of confrontation before, and it could threaten the union federation's strength.

But perhaps the confrontation could finally force it to get down on the shopfloor and speak to workers and their communities - instead of swarming around union investment companies, Nedlac and the Government.

Cosatu is faced with a lack of strategic leadership which, after being depleted by the Government four years ago, it has still not recovered.

One senior analyst pointed to the recent strike at Eskom, which saw cars burnt and the multi-million-rand conference centre torched.

"What happened at Eskom showed a gap between union leadership and membership. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has servicing problems with members. An effective union can mobilise members and..."

- remind us that South African unions are not specifically irresponsible. "The challenges we face in South Africa are different", says Gerrie Bezuidenhout, labour analyst at the SA Chamber of Business.

He says "South Africa is not France. France is highly developed, it is stabilised in many respects, with a well-established democracy. We still have to make a mark. High wage settlements could have negative effects.

"Competitiveness is about delaying orders, being attractively priced. We are all in this together. If jobs are lost all of South African society suffers."

Let us put the current spate of strikes in context.

Vehicle sales are down a quarter. Unless export orders can be secured - and that is dependent on reliability of production - jobs will be lost. Yet, yesterday 85% of the 21 000 workers in the automotive industry went on strike, demanding increases of 2% above inflation in 1999 and 2000. Numsa says the strike could spread to panelbeaters, tyre and exhaust centres, car dealers, petrol station attendants and the manufacturers of vehicle components.

Petrol tanks began running dry this week as a strike in the petroleum and chemical industries saw 47 000 workers walk off the job and demand a 10.5% pay rise - double the inflation rate of 5.2% (in June). They also want a 40-hour week, paid sick leave and a minimum of R1 750 a month.

Employers are offering an increase of between 6% and 8%. Over the next five years, petrol stations will be deregulated, which, says Gordon Sibuya, the deputy director-general in the Mineral

three years have begun. Workers agreed to an 8% wage increase - almost 3% above inflation, but want a guaranteed 2% above inflation in 1999 and 2000.

Mr Gingsrich says that worker-employer relations have been good over the last three years. "In 1994 we lost about 45 days due to work stoppages. That went down to about three days in 1995, 10 in 1996, and four last year. So far this year (before the strike) we had lost only three days."

Eddie Webster, director of the Sociology of Work unit at the University of the Witwatersrand, said labour relations in all sectors had begun normalising in recent years, particularly with increased use of the Council for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

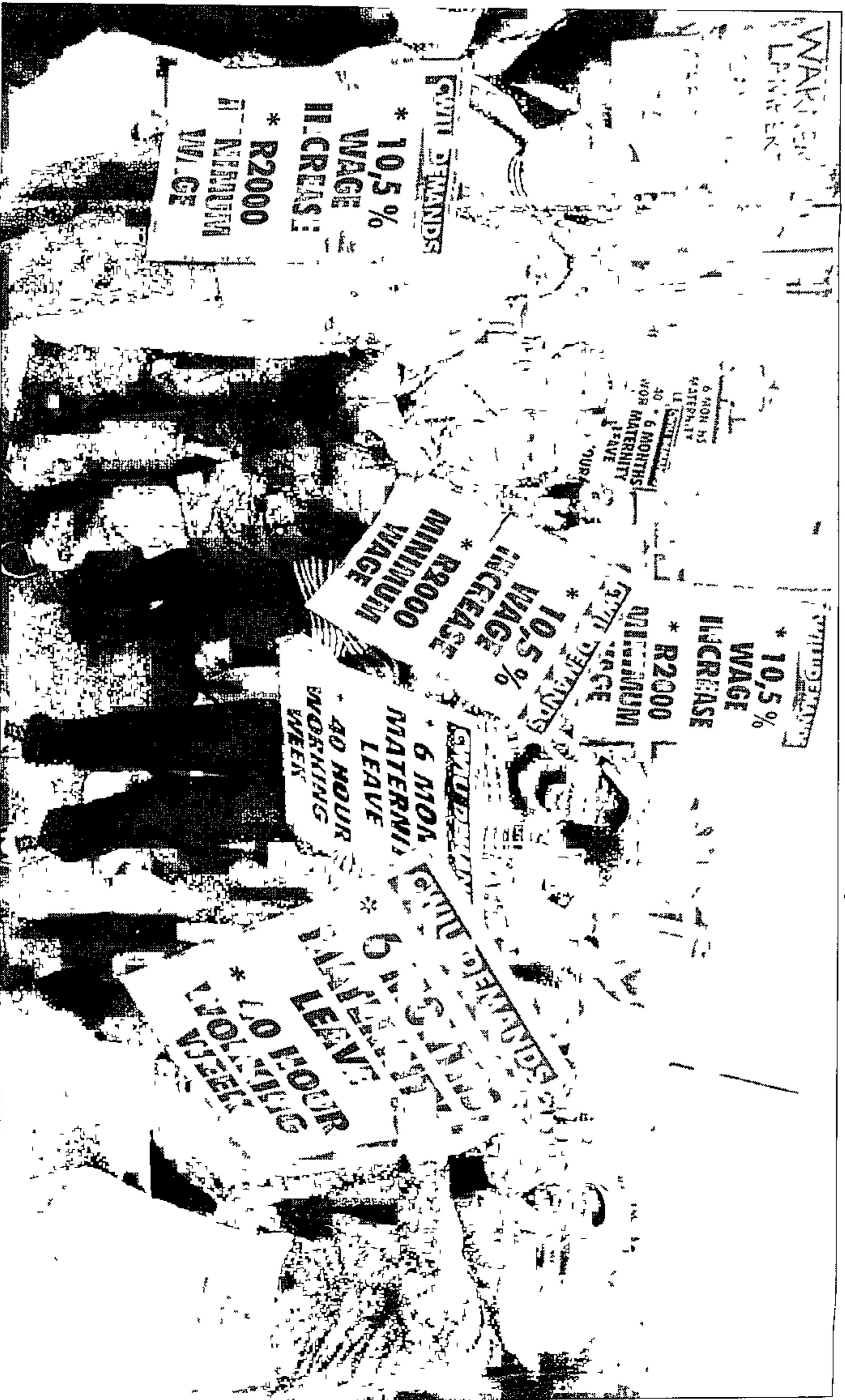
"On the one hand, there are moves toward normalisation, while, on the other, there are some of the confrontational, violent and disruptive labour politics of the past. But this is strike season, a time when people flex their muscles and a lot is brimmanship."

"The Numsa strike seems as though it could be disastrous for export orders, but I am not close enough to the issues to know if one can nail Cosatu for a lack of strategic action."

Attempts by Saturday Argus to obtain comment from Cosatu were unsuccessful.

Mr Webster says a failure to implement workplace forums (which many unions believe could erode their power base) and the labour-market pacts recommended by the Labour Market Commission of 1996 was bedeviling labour peace and growth.

"We need export orders and we need investment, but at the same time workers have real griev-



BALANCING ACT: the unions are flexing their muscles, but the country also needs export orders and increased foreign investment

Picture LEON MULLER



"There is a danger of a demogra-
tic rupture between unions and
their membership"

Bosses know this, and are taking
a hard line - perhaps in the hope of
laying off some

workers for the
hard economic
ride ahead. The
Government is
keeping its head
down and saying it
is not its place to
interfere

although if petrol
shortages contin-
ue next week, and
trains also stop
running, it may be
forced to intervene
in those strategic
industries

The Govern-
ment's strategy for
growth, Gear, is
back under the
whip

Last month,
President Nelson
Mandela and his
deputy Thabo
Mbeki lashed out
at Cosatu and the SA Communist
Party for their ongoing criticism
of Gear, but perhaps the time has
come for those complainers to be
reconsidered

Perhaps Gear, particularly in
the light of the severe economic
crisis in emerging markets, needs
serious re-evaluation from all
sides as old economic solutions
worldwide are being tossed out of
the window

The old medicines applied to
economies in the past, at the
behest of the International Mon-
etary Fund in particular (and Gear
is based on some of that traditional
thinking), are being jeered out of
court by capitalist analysts all
over the world

In a recent issue of Forbes maga-
zine, David Roche, a London based
investment strategist, noted that
high interest rates (which the IMF
demands to ensure bail-out pack-
ages) increased domestic debt,
which in time "dwarfs foreign debt
as a burden on these economies"

The latest issue of Forbes ranks
South Africa fourth among the
emerging markets (behind Singa-
pore, Taiwan and Hong Kong) and
says "economies fare best where
capital is cheap, plentiful and fair-
ly allocated. They fare worst
where politicians and oligarchies
control the purse strings"

Whether South Africa will main-
tain that favourable rating next
year is moot

And although transport strikes
in France - the aeroplane pilot
strike before this year's World Cup
and the frequent truckers' strikes

Government will not sponsor a
mass retraining programme,
as I have heard some say. The Gov-
ernment will have negotiations
with labour and stake holders. The
process will be

drawn out so that
people become edu-
cated to seek work
elsewhere, but
there will be pain
People will lose
jobs," Mr Sibuya
said

Just over a fort-
night ago, workers
at Eskom had a
brief, violent strike
Eskom is resisting,
probably success-
fully, suggestions of
privatisation. It is
also acknowledged
as one of the most
progressive and
enlightened
employer organisa-
tions in the coun-
try

On the one hand,
some say workers
have become more
militant because they are resisting
privatisation, deregulation and
job loss

But how does one equate that
view with the nihilistic attitude of
workers at Numsa, who are strik-
ing in an industry that is manag-
ing to save jobs, and gain others,
by securing export orders that will
fall away if production is affected
by strikes?

Volkswagen, for example,
secured a R5-billion export order
earlier this year to produce 68 000
vehicles for export over the next
two years, 8 000 this year, and the
remainder in 1999. Matt Gungach,
Volkswagen's spokesman, said the
company had started producing
the cars and had shipped the first
100

"We are not yet in full volume
production. We have just finished
a training programme for 1 000
new employees who will work on
the project. A couple of hundred
jobs that would have been lost
have been saved. We are con-
cerned about what strike activity
will do to investor confidence, par-
ticularly as a number of other
manufacturers are negotiating
export contracts"

Indeed, BMW has just received a
major export contract, Sanmor has
obtained one to export engines,
Mercedes Benz has been awarded
the export contract for right-hand
drive C-class vehicles, and others
are under discussion

What has happened in the vehi-
cle industry is that a three-year
wage agreement drew to a close in
June and negotiations for the next

might start improving things like
public transport and wider social
aspects, and management draws
workers into decision-making
processes more, including the
development of social benefits
such as health and education
And some sort of cost contain-
ment from the workers' side"

But do toy-trying workers
have a case?

Michael O'Donovan, chief
researcher at the Human Sci-
ences Research Council, says
"heightened aspirations have
been coupled with economic
reforms that have not yet been
associated with job creation and
increasing incomes. What tran-
spires is an increasing juxtaposi-
tion of affluence and poverty and
a heightening sense many have
of their own deprivation"

But few state the case of union
members as eloquently as Muzi
Buthelezi, the general secretary
of the Chemical Workers' Indus-
trial Union

"We are aware our wage
request is above inflation, but
workers got 10,5% last year, and
they don't want less now. It is
going to take some education to
explain the economics

"If a worker is earning say
R1 200, he says, 'If I get 10% that is
still only R120. How will I survive
with that?'"

"We have a chunk of workers
who earn nothing, especially
from the homelands, and the
plastics sector. At factories
around Dimbaza (a notorious
human dumping ground in the
apartheid years) we found people
earning R250 a month. Last year
when we settled they were earn-
ing about R450 to R750 a month. If
we get the increase we want they
will be earning R900. Most of
them have no benefits in terms of
retirement or anything else

"We want a minimum across
industries. Over the last two
years high earners have been
held back by us, while we have
raised rates for low earners. Per-
haps we were strategically at
fault for not pushing for
increased benefits too"

**'The poor are
told to hold
back on wage
demands, yet
their bosses are
earning
R600 000 to
R20-million a
year. If sacrifices
have to be made,
then we all have
to make them'**

On the one hand,
some say workers
have become more
militant because they are resisting
privatisation, deregulation and
job loss

**But how does one equate that
view with the nihilistic attitude of
workers at Numsa, who are strik-
ing in an industry that is manag-
ing to save jobs, and gain others,
by securing export orders that will
fall away if production is affected
by strikes?"**

Volkswagen, for example,
secured a R5-billion export order
earlier this year to produce 68 000
vehicles for export over the next
two years, 8 000 this year, and the
remainder in 1999. Matt Gungach,
Volkswagen's spokesman, said the
company had started producing
the cars and had shipped the first
100

**"We are not yet in full volume
production. We have just finished
a training programme for 1 000
new employees who will work on
the project. A couple of hundred
jobs that would have been lost
have been saved. We are con-
cerned about what strike activity
will do to investor confidence, par-
ticularly as a number of other
manufacturers are negotiating
export contracts"**

Indeed, BMW has just received a
major export contract, Sanmor has
obtained one to export engines,
Mercedes Benz has been awarded
the export contract for right-hand
drive C-class vehicles, and others
are under discussion

**What has happened in the vehi-
cle industry is that a three-year
wage agreement drew to a close in
June and negotiations for the next**

might start improving things like
public transport and wider social
aspects, and management draws
workers into decision-making
processes more, including the
development of social benefits
such as health and education
And some sort of cost contain-
ment from the workers' side"

**But do toy-trying workers
have a case?**

Michael O'Donovan, chief
researcher at the Human Sci-
ences Research Council, says
"heightened aspirations have
been coupled with economic
reforms that have not yet been
associated with job creation and
increasing incomes. What tran-
spires is an increasing juxtaposi-
tion of affluence and poverty and
a heightening sense many have
of their own deprivation"

**But few state the case of union
members as eloquently as Muzi
Buthelezi, the general secretary
of the Chemical Workers' Indus-
trial Union**

**"We are aware our wage
request is above inflation, but
workers got 10,5% last year, and
they don't want less now. It is
going to take some education to
explain the economics**

RUBIN

HIGH RETURNS INSTANT AVAILABILITY


NO WONDER OUR NEW FNB MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT IS ATTRACTING
SO MUCH INTEREST

*Effective rate based on a nominal rate of 18,63%

Combine the high interest rate of
a call account with the immediate
availability of a cheque account.

Minimum deposit R20 000.
Capital guaranteed.

Easy access via ATM's countrywide
or simply by writing a cheque.



Building a Better Bank

First National Bank of Southern Africa Limited

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND THE UP TO DATE INTEREST RATE PHONE OUR NEW FNB MONEY MARKET ACCOUNT HOTLINE TODAY

0800 1222 644

OPEN FROM 07H00 - 19H00
MONDAY TO SATURDAY

www.fnb.co.za

Auto industry wage strike costs millions of rands every day

By QUENTIN WRAY (1998) (152)

CP 9/8/98
THE AUTO industry strike that started on Friday will cost the industry about R130 million and workers R4,2 million each day it continues

The problem lies with wage increases in years two and three of the agreement being negotiated

The Auto Manufacturers Employers' Organisations (Ameo) has offered an eight percent increase this year and increases equal to inflation as determined by the consumer price index (CPI) in 1999 and 2000

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) has accepted this year's increase but wants two percent above CPI in each of the next two years.

Ameo backed down partially in later meetings by offering a deal which would see wage increases higher than inflation being given as long as it fell below seven percent

Ameo's Brian Smith said Numsa had rejected this "out of hand"

Smith said it was "strange" and "highly irresponsible" of Numsa to "risk the future of the industry and export contracts" for a wage increase of two percent above inflation which would only be enjoyed in two years' time

He said workers had to "break the culture of expecting wage and salary increases well above the official inflation" if the country was to get its inflation levels under control

Smith said other benefits would accrue to workers in addition to the guaranteed inflation-linked increases offered by Ameo

The offer tabled by Ameo also gave workers the opportunity to increase their earning power through skills obtained through multi-skilling

He said the industry had spent "millions of rands on education and training programmes to increase the skills and education levels of

production workers"

Smith said at least 30 000 workers in the Eastern Cape alone would suffer because of the strike

He also criticised the strike decision because "it will have dramatic consequences for the SA motor industry and the South African economy in general"

He said although industry turnovers seemed enormous it had very low profit margins and, in 1997, industry-wide losses had amounted to about R550 million

Smith said 1998 looked set to worsen he said the industry was already being squeezed by increasing costs and falling sales.

He said industry costs had been increased by more than 20 percent because of the rand's devaluation

Escalating interest rates had hit motorists' pockets - which would reduce new car sales over the next few months

Smith said given the high profile enjoyed by the seven car manufacturers, the strike would strengthen "overseas perceptions" that South Africa had an inflexible and unstable labour market

Smith said the strike was putting thousands of jobs on the line because the industry was increasingly dependent on export orders

"This certainly is not a good omen for the planned job summit".

□ Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli denied reports in the local press this week that workers in the Eastern Cape were against striking

He said "the most militant shop stewards" were from the province and they fully supported the strike

Ntuli has maintained that the union's position is a legitimate one and that employers earned massive profits - none of which have accrued to workers

He said Numsa would not be swayed by the "employers' propaganda language" and that it was the employer's intransigence that had brought the industry to its

knees

Numsa National
Auto and Tyre

sector's Tony Kgobe said Ameo members had failed to develop human resources in an industry that was "sustainable"

He said training had to offer economic equity in the workplace by improving workers' real incomes and buying power

He said it was a "fallacy" that strike action would scare away investors and said the right to strike was "entrenched in the Constitution and the LRA"

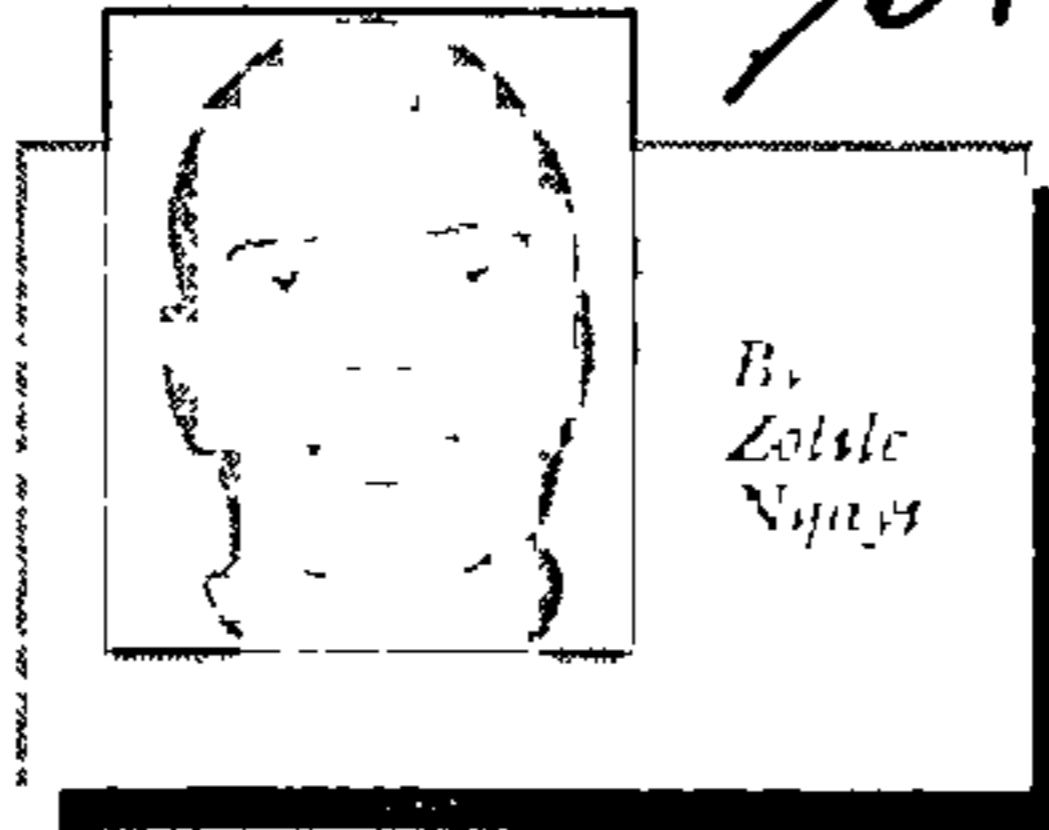
Commenting on the fact that a "no work, no pay" policy would be applied, Kgobe said workers were willing to make a short-term wage sacrifice for a long-term improvement in wages

He claimed Numsa had tried to settle the dispute with employers but employers had behaved opportunistically and "did not want to find a solution"

Ntuli said Numsa had complied with the Labour Relations Act before striking

It waited for the go-ahead from the CCMA before it went on strike and had given employers the required 48 hours notice. - ECN
Weekend Service

Fears for economy as chemical strike continues



B.
Zolile
Nqaya

DESPITE fears that the chemicals strike may spread to other sectors of the economy and erupt into open violence, a meeting between workers and employers on Friday failed to resolve the dispute.

The week-old nationwide strike by the 20 000 members of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) is set to continue this week.

Analysts have said that if the strike continues into this week, this would have dire consequences for the economy. By Friday most petrol stations across the country were reportedly running low on fuel, and a few in the Durban area were already dry.

A meeting between employers and the union on Friday failed to resolve the impasse.

Employers are steadfast on their final wage offer increase of between six and eight percent. The union is still demanding a 12,5 percent increase in wages.

Striking workers are picketing major oil companies' depots and sporadic incidents of violence have been reported by the National Petroleum Employers' Association. Employers have reported intimidation against drivers and non-striking employees.

Some employers said striking workers had stopped black drivers from working, but had allowed white drivers to deliver fuel to petrol stations unhindered.

"I only employ black drivers in my company and this effectively means that I cannot deliver at all. Does this mean that I must now employ white drivers to ensure that petrol is delivered?" asked Goli Mngomezulu of Kalusha Transport.

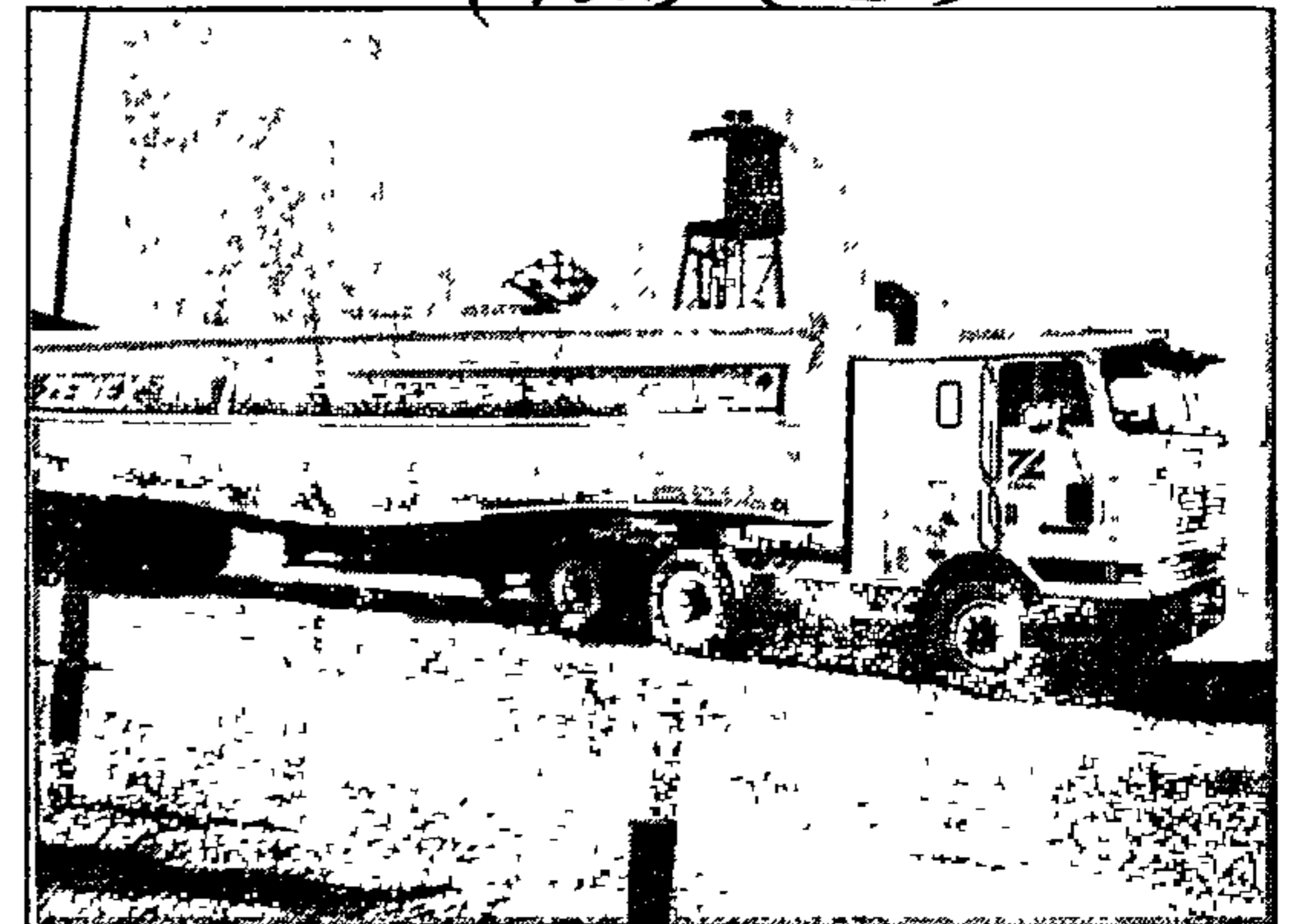
On Friday, striking workers prevented tankers transporting fuel from leaving the Caltex/Zenex plant in Alrode on the East Rand.

The South Africa Police Services' Public Order unit was called to the scene to escort trucks out of the plant. The police had hardly left their vehicle when a truck driver forced his way out of the plant.

The striking workers stoned the tanker but the driver negotiated his way through and in the process collided with the police vehicle. No one was injured.

Deliveries at the nearby Sasol distribution depot, however, continued.

Workers said this was because there were insufficient workers to man all the depots.



DISRUPTION OF SERVICES...

How much fuel will this Zenex tanker be carrying - if any - in the midst of the strike by chemical workers which has resulted in petrol stations running low in fuel supplies (above)? On the right, chemical workers toyi-toyi

■ Pics: TLADI KHUELE



Fuel strike turns into 'guerrilla war'

CAROL PATON

VIOLENCE in the week-long fuel strike by 21 000 workers has taken a sinister turn in Durban, where three petrol tankers have been shot at by gunmen, an employer spokesman said on Friday.

The chairman of the National Petroleum Employers' Association Chris Clucas said the strike had become a "guerrilla war" and that in addition to the shootings, there had been numerous incidents of stone-throwing as well as intimidation of contract drivers and their families.

Almost every driver is reluctant to drive any tanker anywhere. There have been three shootings, drivers' homes have been threatened and most vehicles are now being escorted by police. There are also claims that our tankers are being trailed by people in cars," said Clucas.

Douglas Zulu, a manager at the Island View storage terminal in Durban, said a driver on his way to Empangeni was shot when two people ran in front of his tanker and fired at him as he approached a toll plaza near Tongaat. He was hit in the leg.

Clucas said that in another incident a driver who had attempted to get out of his vehicle was shot in the ankle. The tyres of the vehicle were then shot out by the gunmen.

In a third incident a vehicle was damaged by gunfire but the driver escaped unharmed.

The drivers are all employed by transport contractors.

The national spokesman for the Chemical and Industrial Workers' Union, Nelson Mhombeni, said the union was aware two drivers had been shot.

"But we don't know who was shot or who shot whom," he said.

The violence has had a severe impact on the fuel supply in Durban, where it was estimated that about 40 percent of pumps were dry at the start of the week-end.

In the rest of the country the fuel supply has returned to normal after employers obtained interdicts to remove picket lines blockading fuel depots.

Clucas said that supplies in Durban were expected to have improved by next week, but were not likely to reach normal levels soon.

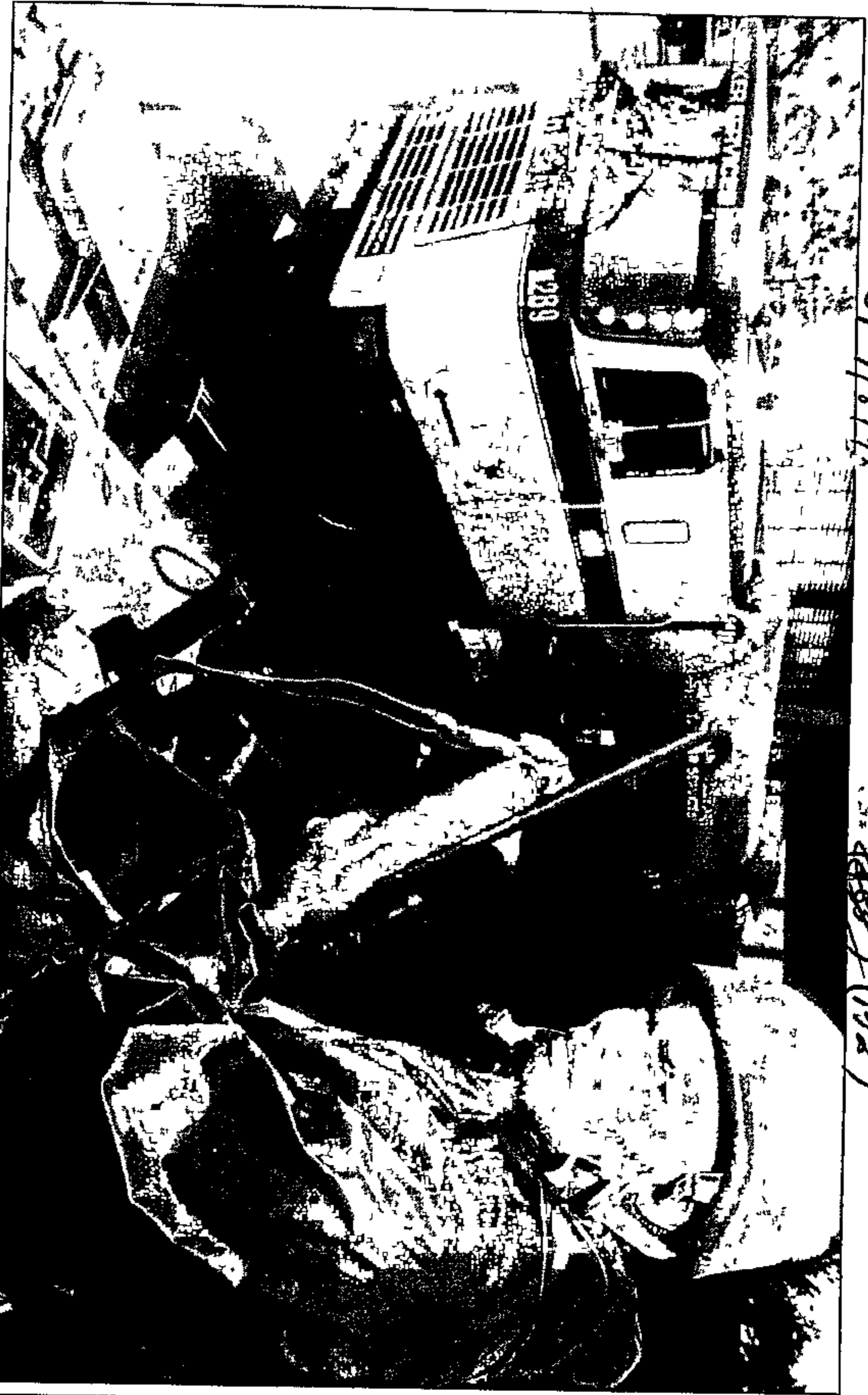
Union members in Durban said the high level of violence in the area was due to provocation by employers who had hired private security firms notorious for their provocative behaviour.

Union sources alleged that soldiers and police were being used to drive tankers, but this was denied by fuel companies.

The employers organisation and the union are due to meet on Tuesday afternoon to discuss the wage dispute.

The wage offer still stands at eight percent and the union demand at 10.5 percent.

Chemical workers in another six sectors are also locked in wage disagreements and their strikes are unlikely to end before Wednesday.



RIDING SHOTGUN Most fuel tankers are being escorted by the police after three separate shooting incidents

Picture: MICHAEL WALKER

ST 9/8/98

(192)

Jobs on the line as strike spreads

Government says it will review labour market flexibility if necessary

THE strike action crippling SA's chemical and motor industries is set to continue this week, resulting in production and wage losses running into billions of rand and potential job losses. Analysts say the action is threatening to hit other sectors and is also weighing on foreign investor sentiment.

Car makers will lose about R130-million a day in sales while an estimated 21 000 workers will forfeit R4,2-million a day in wages during the "what has been called a full-blown" strike by unions.

The strike by over 40 000 workers in the chemical industry enters its second week tomorrow with little hope that the dispute will be settled before Wednesday.



Picture: TERRY SHEEN

STRIKING AT THE HEART... About 21 000 workers will forfeit R4,2-million a day in wages during the strikes

Labour flexibility has become a political hot potato as economic growth slows and it becomes clearer that SA has no hope of meeting job creation targets as set out in government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme.

In his first three weeks in office, Mdladlana has witnessed more strike action than he would have liked.

Motor industry employees on Friday joined what has at times been violent industrial action involving unions in the chemical industry. There is also dissatisfaction among rail workers and employees at Iscor, which plans to retrench 6 000 workers in the next three years.

The most significant aspect of the motor strike is its impact on export orders, especially the deal recently negotiated by VW for the production of 68 000 Golfs for the UK over 18 months. The contract has a tight delivery schedule.

The VW deal is worth R5-billion and when at full tilt, will require the production of a new car every six minutes.

A legal strike was initiated by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), which declared a dispute with the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Association (Ameo). This was subsequently referred to the Commission for Consolidation and Arbitration (CCMA), but was not resolved.

Numsa has proposed a three-year agreement based on the inflation rate plus 2% in 1999 and 2000. Ameo, having increased its initial offer from 6,5% to 8% for hourly paid production workers and to 7,5% for artisans, insisted that wages be linked to the CPI.

Andrew Levy of industrial relations group Andrew Levy & Associates says it is too early to establish how many days have been lost to the strike in the past weeks, but at least 40 000 chemical workers have been out for a week, and 21 000 motor workers began their strike on Friday — resulting in a loss of at least 220 000 days in the week.

In the first six months of this year, just 310 000 man-days were lost to strikes.

National Association of Automobile Manufacturers of SA (Naamsa) head Christoph Kopke says the biggest priority facing SA is the total lack of jobs being created. He says the job summit is doomed to failure without a common vision between labour, business and government.

"A total focus on exports could compensate for the lack of domestic demand and assist in much-needed economic growth. Every step taken to jeopardise export initiatives will jeopardise not only new job creation, but threaten existing jobs as well."

"I am deeply concerned that the current dispute (in the motor industry) will negatively affect employment in the longer term and that this will be to the detriment of all South Africans, especially the unemployed," says Kopke.

Brian Smith, human resource director at VW and Ameo chairman, says the production of Golfs is now in the build-up stage and only one shift is being worked. A second shift will begin at the end of this month and a third shift in September.

A two-week stoppage would be critical, but not serious at this stage. "The message it is sending overseas, however, is bad," Smith says.

The chemical industry has also been battered by strike action which has affected deliveries of petrol and could, in time, have an impact on the mining sector.

Levy adds that with the current poor economic conditions, the disputing parties will probably not allow strike action to last too long — *Business Times Staff*

↓ Petrol deliveries stabilising as pay talks resume

DB 11/8/98

(172)



(172)

(172)

Tarvin Lamberti
PETROL companies and unions representing more than 20 000 striking workers, who have been disrupting the delivery of petrol to service stations countrywide, will meet in Johannesburg today in a bid to end the wage dispute.

Lutz Kranz of the National Petroleum Employers' Association said he did not expect a resolution ahead of a Chemical Workers' Industrial Union national executive committee meeting tomorrow, and a final resolution was expected only on Friday.

"The employers' association negotiators will meet in good faith if the unions are willing to resolve the situation," he said.

Kranz said the situation countrywide was stabilising and commercial customers who were open yesterday had received supplies. Other customers would receive deliveries today and tomorrow.

The situation in KwaZulu-Natal, which was the hardest hit by strikes with high levels of violence and intimidation, was "under control" with petrol firms employing different contingency strategies.

Kranz said there were very few stations that were dry and those that were would receive petrol within 48 hours if further strike action at fuel depots was held off. Main holiday routes had been a priority over the long weekend.

Tshidiso Gakisa reports that in the wake of the ongoing strike a number of petrol stations in Durban, Pretoria and Johannesburg could suffer financial losses.

Several garage owners who spoke to Business Day said they had been forced to stockpile thousands of litres of petrol to avert any possible shortage.

Most of them said they were caught napping on the first few days of the strike, which resulted in them running out of petrol.

One highly affected service station was in Malvern, Durban, where the owner said he had been without petrol for three consecutive days.

Other petrol stations had ordered more petrol than usual in anticipation of a strike. Orders ranged from 40 000 to 50 000 litres, which owners said could be finished within three to five days.

Most petrol stations in Johannesburg were unaffected by the strike and none of those contacted reported running out of petrol.

Dustin Chick reports that no production was expected at SA's seven motor manufacturing plants today, as the strike by about 20 000 industry workers moves into its second day.

Brian Smith, Automobile Manufacturers' Employers' Organisation (Ameo) chairman, said yesterday the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration had called for a meeting between Ameo and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA in an attempt to resolve the strike.

NEWS BRIEFING

Car makers warm up their motors as Numsa members call off their strike

Pretoria — More than 20 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) would return to work at all seven South African vehicle manufacturing plants today, Brian Smith, the chairman of the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo), said yesterday.

Tony Kgobe, the auto and tyre sector co-ordinator for Numsa, confirmed that another three-year agreement had been signed and workers would return to work. "The agreement is an integrated package which aims to overcome the legacy of apartheid wage differentials and improve pay for workers," he said.

The end of the strike, which cost the industry R780 million in lost turnover, follows an agreement in principle reached between Ameo and Numsa at a meeting convened last week by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration. — Roy Cokayne

LABOUR Department considers 'urgent changes' to law

CT(BR) 11/8/98
(152)
the current labour issues

Mdladlana slams union violence

FRANK NxUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — Shepherd Mdladlana, the new labour minister, last week condemned unprocedural actions and violence in the rash of industrial disputes sweeping the country, particularly in the chemical industry

Mdladlana said the "wave of high-profile strikes" in the past few weeks had caused "a great deal of anxiety and concern to the public"

"We must condemn all unprocedural actions, particularly acts of violence taken by the parties in the course of their disputes," he said

"The law provides adequate avenues to deal with disputes and strikes in a procedural way I acknowledge that this is a time when tensions run high, but I call on all parties to exercise restraint"

Mdladlana instructed the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to consider either advising the parties involved in



NOT AMUSED *Shepherd Mdladlana slates rash acts*

the spate of strikes to approach the essential services committee for a determination or invoke Section 150 of the new Labour Relations Act (LRA)

Mdladlana said a determination in terms of Section 73 of the LRA would facilitate an agreement on the supply and distribution of petrol "whether these are essential or not"

He said his department was considering a series of "urgent amendments" to the LRA which would deal with a number of

These included the case and management problems of the CCMA caused by the "unexpected high volumes of disputes", the phasing out of the industrial court and the preservation of pension and provident funds and medical aid schemes functioning in terms of collective agreements when bargaining council are dissolved

The leadership of the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) is expected to meet industry employers' associations this morning as its national strike enters the second week

The CWIU is demanding paid sick leave, a 40-hour working week and a 10,5 percent wage increase The amount involved is equal to the settlement level of last year, and this appears to be the main obstacle to a settlement as it is higher than the employers' offer of 8,5 percent

The strike is expected to continue deep into this week even if there is a settlement today because the union first has to report back to its members

Numsa strike depends on Ameo offer

CT (BR) 11/8/98 (152) (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) warned yesterday that the national strike by more than 21 000 of its members would continue unless car manufacturers put "something positive on the table" when they met to negotiate today.

The union said it would not "sacrifice workers' rights at the altar of profit" when it met the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) this morning in a dispute resolu-

tion meeting called by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA).

Tony Kgobe, Numsa's auto sector co-ordinator, said there was "little room in terms of our movement, given that our position is close to zero" But he hoped reason would prevail.

"We hope we will emerge out of the CCMA with a short strike. We don't want a long strike—for us it's a sacrifice. We have already lost R4,2 million in wages, but it is a short-term sacrifice for a long-term gain."

Numsa downed tools on Fri-

day to demand a 2 percent improvement factor in the second and third year of a three-year wage agreement.

Sources put Ameo's losses as a direct result of the strike on Friday at R130 million.

The parties had settled at 8 percent across the board, a wage spread of 10 percent between minimum and maximum wages and a 7,5 percent rise for artisans.

But they did not agree on linking the improvement factor to the consumer price index and the inflation rate.

Epping plant hit by strike

AKG 12/8/98

(152)

ED WEST
DEPUTY BUSINESS EDITOR

Nearly 100 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) have started a picketed strike and picketed Donaldson Filtration Systems factory in Epping.

Shop steward Omar Elmie said yesterday that workers resorted to strike action after talks on pay rises deadlocked.

The company offered a 6% increase, while the union wanted 12%.

Donaldson human resources director Mike Parfit said roughly half the employees were on strike but the factory was still operating.

Although the strike was not related to the national strike by 21 000 Numsa members in the motor industry, it had contributed to raised expectations for higher wages among workers at Donaldson's, said Mr Parfit.

The strikers complained about lack of access to company toilets and canteen facilities yesterday.



Picket fences: Donaldson Filtration Systems workers at the factory in Epping yesterday

ED WEST

NEWS



ACTION AND WORDS Employers and CWIU workers have no date for further negotiations

Employers reject union's 10% offer

(152) (152) CT (BR) 12/8/98

**FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE**

Johannesburg — The striking Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) last night scaled down its wage increase demand of 10,5 percent to 10 percent, but this was rejected by employers as "still too far away" "We welcome the movement, but a double-digit figure is still far away," said Fanie Ernst, the employers' association chief co-ordinator

Ernst said employers had not moved from their wage offers of 8 percent for the petroleum sector and 8,5 percent for other sectors

He said that no date had been set for further negotiations.

The CWIU and the employers rejected suggestions by Shepherd Mdladlana, the new labour minister, that the two parties approach the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) for a determination in terms of section 73 of the new Labour Relations Act. "From the employers' point of view, we will not go for a determination," Ernst said.

Nelson Mthombeni, the CWIU spokesman, said the union was "concerned" by what the minister had said "We are not sure why the minister has

jumped to that conclusion. He should let the CCMA be involved without invoking section 73 — there is no justifiable reason to say petroleum is an essential sector"

Meanwhile, the strike by more than 21 000 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) over a 2 percent improvement factor in the second and third year of a three-year wage agreement, would continue today as the employers had not tabled an offer as had been hoped by late last night.

The meeting was adjourned until Friday

Petroleum industry strike talks make some progress

(152) (152)

RODNEY VICTOR and SAPA

JOHANNESBURG: Progress has been made towards a settlement in the nationwide strike by petroleum industry workers that has disrupted petrol distribution and caused shortages in some areas, according to National Petroleum Employers' Association spokesperson Lutz Kranz.

The industry tabled an offer of 8,5% in talks yesterday, but the unions had not yet ratified this, he said. The unions have been demanding a 10,5% increase.

Two of the three unions involved — the SA Chemical Workers' Industrial Union and the SA Workers' Union — have settled their strikes in other sectors, Kranz said. He hoped they would also settle soon in the petroleum sector.

The unions announced yesterday that they have accepted increases of 8,5% in the industrial chemicals sector and 9% in the fast-moving consumer goods sector.

Nelson Mtombeni, spokesperson for the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union, which has not yet settled, said his union was also hoping to find a solution soon.

Meanwhile, talks were continuing last night to find a solution to the four-day old strike by more than 20 000 workers in the motor industry, South Africa's largest manufacturing sector.

The strike is costing the industry about R135 million a day, said Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation chairperson Brian Smith.

It threatened to jeopardise export contracts held by most of the country's car makers and which were vital to their survival, he said.

It would also further strengthen overseas perceptions that South Africa had an inflexible and unstable labour market.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA was demanding a 2% above-inflation increase, while employers were offering inflation-pegged increases.

Meanwhile, despite another breakdown in talks between train drivers and Metrorail, the SA Footplate Association has ruled out another rail strike like the 24-hour industrial action last Friday which caused major chaos at stations and road congestion throughout the country.

PD 12/8/98

Workers
at BP on
strike too

(152)
BY RODNEY VICTOR

AND SARA
Kran 12/8/98

Workers at oil company BP who are attached to the Oil, Chemical, General and Allied Workers' Union joined a week-long strike by chemical workers yesterday, dashing hopes for an early end to industrial action that has disrupted petrol distribution and caused shortages in some areas.

A statement said the union felt there should be unity. This was in the face of what it termed attacks by employers in the form of low wage offers and "high-handed action" by the state, which included deploying police and army units.

It said the union rejected threats to turn the petroleum sector into an essential service.

The statement came shortly after National Petroleum Employers Association spokesperson Lutz Kranz said progress had been made towards a settlement in the nationwide strike.

Meanwhile, eleventh-hour talks were continuing last night to find a solution to the four-day-old strike by more than 20 000 workers in the motor industry. The talks will continue on Friday.

Chemical workers ⁽¹⁵²⁾ settle

Sowetan 12/8/98
By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

EFFORTS to end a crippling strike by 47 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) heightened yesterday as another union reached a settlement in the multi-sectoral industrial action.

CWIU spokesman Mr Nelson Mthombeni said the union was engaged in various strategic committee meetings to resolve the dispute.

The National Petroleum Employers Association (NPEA) negotiators and CWIU rescheduled their meeting before meeting with other unions yesterday to prepare for protracted talks to end the strike, NPEA spokesman Mr Lutz Krantz said.

The SA Chemical Workers Union (Sacwu) has settled at 9 percent across-the-board or a minimum of R2 000 a month with employers in the consumer and industrial chemical sectors, Sacwu spokesman Mr Masindi Mavhuvha said yesterday.

Meanwhile, negotiations between the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) resumed in Johannesburg yesterday in a bid to end a nationwide strike by 21 000 workers which started on Friday over a wage dispute.

Numsa spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said the deadlock hinged on a two percent "top-up factor" that the union wanted included in a new three-year wage package. Both parties had agreed to an eight percent increase for the first year, he said.

Numsa wants the inflation rate plus two percent for the following two years.

Ameo is offering only the inflation rate or the Consumer Price Index rate.

Garages run dry as fuel strike bites

(152) (152) *Sowetan 6/8/98*
By Mzwakhe Hlangani and Sapa

DWINDLING fuel supplies across the country are now approaching crisis point as the strike in the chemical industry entered its third day yesterday.

Most petrol stations approached yesterday said no petrol had been delivered since Monday.

"We have to turn away our clients. We can do nothing but wait," one owner said.

Engen garage owner Ms Carn Coetzee said the station's unleaded petrol and diesel supplies had dried up on Tuesday.

"Our premium petrol will be gone in an hour. I only hope that supplies arrive sometime this week," she said.

Several garages had run out of petrol in Pretoria by noon yesterday, garage owners said.

Willem de Jongh, owner of a garage in the Pretoria city centre, said he was informed by his depot that he was 30th on the waiting list. He said he ran out of premium petrol yesterday morning, but still had some unleaded petrol and diesel left.

More than 47 000 members of the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) vowed yesterday to continue their strike until their pay demands were met. The union wants a 10,5 per cent pay rise and a basic salary of R2 000 a month. Employers are offering 8,5 per cent.

Union spokesman Nelson Mthombeni said a

labour and management meeting had successfully resolved picketing rules yesterday.

A BP depot spokesman said 40 of his 58 permanent staff members were on strike and all nine delivery trucks were idle as a result.

Contract workers stayed at home yesterday after receiving threats from union members, the spokesman said.

"We have managed to smuggle out four delivery trucks at night, but we were still not able to reach all our clients," he said. The depot delivered about 800 000 litres to 65 clients in and around Pretoria daily.

"I know of at least 32 stations that are going to run dry soon."

The Engen and Caltex depots said administrative staff in possession of truck drivers' licences had pitched in to help deliver petrol.

National Petroleum Employers' Association chairman Chris Clucas claimed that violence and intimidation remained a feature of the striking workers' action.

He confirmed that filling stations had run out of certain fuel grades, but could expect deliveries in 24 hours. The position was worsened by motorists who rushed to fill before the increase in the petrol price yesterday.

There had been no indication that the union has shown any willingness to resolve the dispute, despite repeated open door invitations to do so, Clucas said.

Chemical employers and union agree on bid to end wage strike

DD 13/8/98

(152) (152)

Reneé Grawitzky

CHEMICAL employers and the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) agreed yesterday to a request by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to facilitate a resolution to the continuing wage strike.

The intervention by the commission follows the return to work of almost 9 000 SA Chemical Workers' Union members after a strike of three-and-a-half weeks.

At the same time, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) are consulting their respective constituencies on a settlement offer proposed by the commission on Tuesday. The parties agreed at the meeting — initiated by the commission — that they would meet again tomorrow.

The settlement offer, crafted by senior commissioner Gavin Hartford, is aimed at addressing some of the union's concerns, which led

Reneé Grawitzky

THE Congress of SA Trade Union's (Cosatu) head office resolved yesterday to postpone an antiprivatisation strike called by the federation's Mpumalanga region for next Wednesday.

The region called the strike in protest against a the Nelspruit town council's decision to priva-

to the strike. The dispute centres on Numsa's demand that during year two and three of the three-year wage agreement, increases should be inflation plus 2%. The improvement factor of 2% is intended to protect workers in the event inflation falls to low levels.

Ameo chairman Brian Smith said employers hoped the strike could be over by Monday.

Reuter reports Smith said the strike could cost the industry R650m in lost turnover. "Friday will be the fifth day of the strike and each day we are losing about R130m in turnover," he said.

Numsa attacked those claiming the strike would scare investors, saying such arguments were misplaced because investors based their decisions on a range of issues. Numsa negotiator Tony Kgobe said there were strikes recently in the US's General Motors and South Korea's Hyundai. "This bears testimony to the fact that even in developed countries workers embark on strike action."

Smith said if the strike became protracted it would become problematic for companies with export contracts and would negatively affect workers. The Volkswagen deal, for example, would create more than 1 000 jobs over the next four months.

Employer spokesman Fame Ernst said employers had agreed to the commission's intervention despite its previous unsuccessful attempts to resolve the dispute.

Meanwhile, Sapa reports that Metrorail and the SA Footplate Staff Association (Safsa) have reached a wage agreement.

A national strike on July 31 by 1 700 Safsa-affiliated train drivers, ticket collectors and station staff left thousands of commuters stranded or late for work.

Safsa general secretary Chris de Vos said the package gave employees a 7,5% pensionable increase backdated to March 16, and a 3,5% rise from November 16 this year. A further 5% would be granted from March 16 next year.

NEWS

Vehicle manufacturers set to lose R650m by Friday

21 000 car workers may end strike soon

CT(DR) 13/8/98

(152)

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — The strike by more than 21 000 workers at South Africa's seven vehicle manufacturing plants, which started last Friday, had so far cost the industry R390 million in lost turnover, Brian Smith, the chairman of the Automobile Manufacturing Employers' Organisation (Ameo), said yesterday.

The strike is set to continue at least until Friday, which means it will have cost the industry about R650 million in lost turnover.

Smith said the strike was expected to continue for the rest of this week, but it was hoped that a final settlement could be reached on Friday.

"If some finality is reached on Friday, Ameo would hope

that the strike can be ended on Monday," he said.

A meeting between Ameo and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), which was being chaired by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), reconvenes on Friday. The meeting started on Tuesday but was adjourned.

Smith said certain proposals had been put forward at the meeting, mainly by the CCMA, on how to resolve the dispute.

"The parties undertook to go away and look at these proposals and come back on Friday fully mandated to discuss them. The parties agreed that they wouldn't publicise these proposals until they had a mandate on them," he said.

Smith added that there had not been any violent incidents

at any of the plants since the start of the strike.

Tony Kgobe, the auto and tyre sector co-ordinator for Numsa, said that the strike was an attempt by the workers to seek dignity in the workplace and to secure workplace democracy.

"There is a lot of hullabaloo about the strike action. The sad truth is that there was no strike action after 1994, but the automobile employers have retrenched 5 000 workers in the past five years."

Agreement has been reached between Numsa and Ameo on an 8 percent across-the-board wage increase this year and 7,5 percent for artisans. But the two sides have deadlocked in trying to set increases for the second and third year of the agreement.

Fresh breakthrough in petrol strike

CT 14/8/98
ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

The National Petroleum Employers Association and the Chemical Workers Industrial Union are set to go to mediation today on the two-week-old industry pay strike

Employers' negotiator Fanie Ernst confirmed last night the two sides have agreed to allow the

(152)
Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to intervene in the impasse.

However, another union, the National Petroleum Workers Association has been reluctant to allow the CCMA to intervene.

Thousands of workers returned to work on Wednesday after agreements were reached in four sectors

(152)
in the industry between the SA Chemical Workers Union (Sacwu) and employers. But that still left thousands on strike.

Meanwhile, the CCMA is also scheduled to oversee a meeting between the National Union of Metal Workers of SA and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Association

Misplaced militancy hurts the economy

South Africans must stand up to the bullying tactics of the labour movement, argues **Thami Mazwai**

P20 14/8/98 (152)

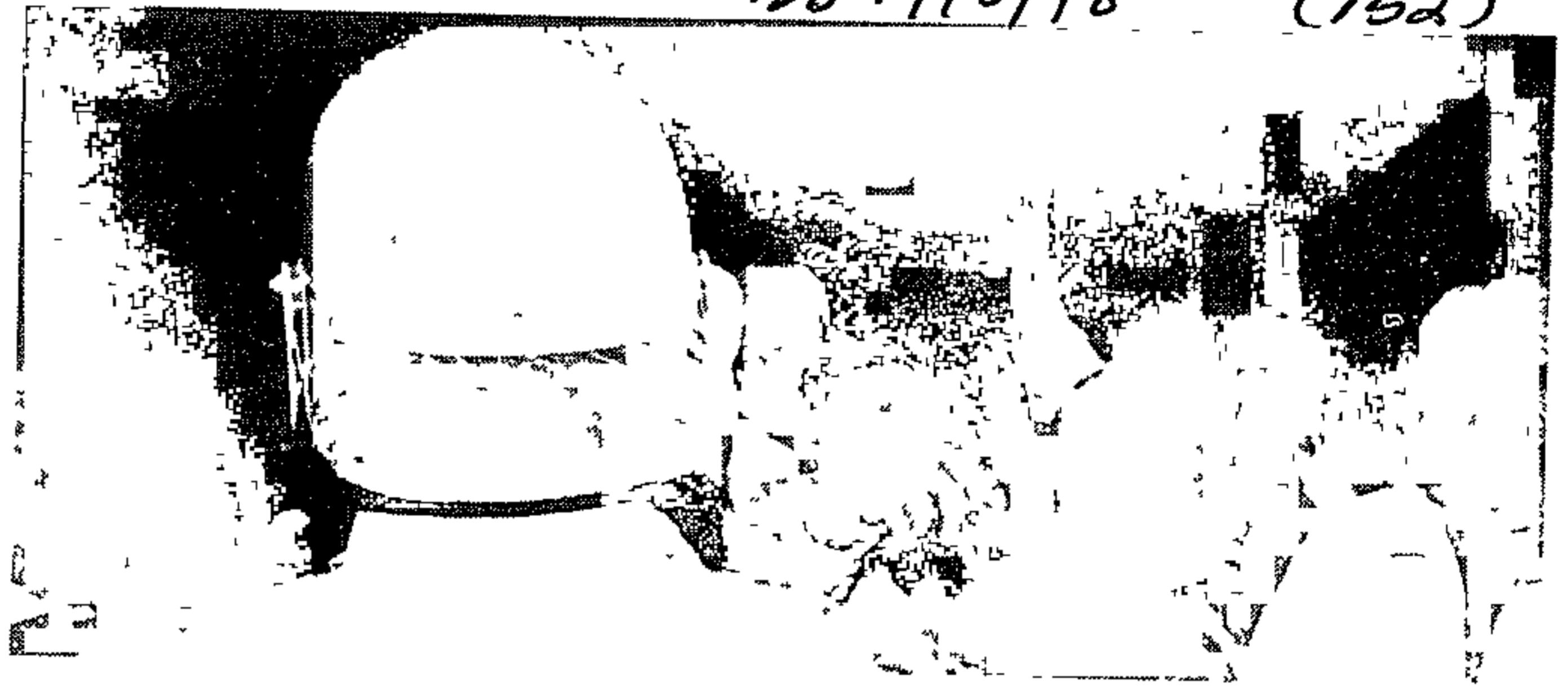
IT IS about time something was done about the arrogance and bullying from sectors of the labour movement. Enough is enough, we can no longer be subjected to this tyranny. It appears that some unions are interested only in pushing their agendas. They hardly care a hoot for the rest of us and most importantly, the unemployed.

For the record, strikes are a feature of the market economy and there can be no doubt about the worker's right to strike. However the reasons some unions go on strike and the things they do when on strike, simply make one angry.

Firstly, transparency and consultation do not mean a veto. Some in the union movement have arrogated unto themselves the right to veto government's macro-economic policy, Gear. Admittedly, there may be short-term problems with Gear. However any union leader worth his salt should know that economic transformation is unlike political transformation: you do not sit around a table and come up with a date for the transformation of the economy. It is a drawn out process in which basics must be put in place. This is what Gear is about.

If people doubt its effectiveness, let them come up with sensible suggestions. The suggestions so far have a suffocating dose of socialism and welfare spending. Let me make it clear: I am not against welfare spending. After all, we are talking about the poorer sections of SA. We need investments in job creation and economic growth. However unions are killing the creation of jobs with their misplaced militancy.

Now I turn to the strike affecting car makers. Volkswagen is now able to sell right-hand-drive cars to the world market, thanks to a decision by Volkswagen in Ger-



Strikers at Eskom

many Volkswagen will have to increase its capacity and hire more people. A strike by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) means Volkswagen will not be able to meet overseas orders.

It goes without saying that customers will then buy other makes of vehicles. Volkswagen in Germany will have to ask another country to produce the cars. This leads to retrenchments. If I have my facts right, Numsa members will then go on strike against the retrenchments and blame Volkswagen.

Lastly, a month ago some hoodlums masquerading as trade union members went wild at Eskom. I do not know if these people were demented, under the influence of drugs, or simply anarchical. What I do know is that no sane person could wreak such havoc. What took the cake was the reaction of their union, the National Union of

Mineworkers. It slapped these ruffians on the wrist. Furthermore, the NUM then criticised Eskom, saying that it took strong exception to its words of censure.

"We agree that our members were wrong but this does not give you the right to slam us in public," it admonished. In other words, I can raze your house to the ground, but your anger must not tread on my toes.

This is the type of bullying and arrogance I am talking about. If you take into account that unions have tens of thousands of members and that some of their leaders are the type described above, who hardly know how the economy works, then the full horror of what we face presents itself. We have to stand up to defend our economy. It must now be this far and no further to this wanton destruction of our economy.

□ Mazwai is MD of Mafube Publishing

Mediators called in to solve petroleum dispute

(152)

CCMA to begin facilitating discussions today

STAR 14/8/98

BY HOPEWELL RADEBE

The National Petroleum Employers' Association and the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union have agreed to allow the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to intervene in the impasse which has led to a two-week strike in the industry.

Employers' negotiator Fanie Ernst said last night that the mediation process was scheduled to begin today.

However, another union, the National Petroleum Workers' Association, has been reluctant to allow the CCMA to intervene in the dispute.

Thousands of workers returned to work on Wednesday after agreements were reached in four sectors in the industry between the SA Chemical

Workers' Union (Sacwu) and employers.

But that still leaves thousands of other workers on strike.

About 47 000 workers went

Only one union reluctant to allow intervention

on strike after unions and employers deadlocked over wage increases and working conditions, among other things

Unions are demanding a 10% rise in wages while employers have made offers ranging between 8 and 8,5%.

Meanwhile, the CCMA is

also scheduled to oversee a meeting between the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa) and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Association (Amea).

Numsa went on strike last weekend after a deadlock with the employers.

The two parties committed themselves to consult their constituencies and to study a settlement proposal tabled by the CCMA and to return today with responses.

Amea spokesperson Brian Smith said the automobile industry has lost at least R650-million.

The workers were losing at least R4,2-million per day

But Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli said about 21 000 workers would probably continue with the first stage of the strike.

ONE THEATRE, TWO PLAYS

Failing to bridge the gap

14/10/98

If anything, a series of strikes that intensified over the past week shows employers and labour were caught flat-footed by this year's low inflation rate and cannot agree on ways to balance militant worker demands and reasonable increases

Labour analysts say the strikes are unlikely to be protracted because both capital and labour realise they will suffer heavy losses if strikes drag on. One of the major stumbling blocks has been lack of consensus on where increases should be pegged

"With the low average inflation rate, there is pressure from employers for wage settlements to align themselves closely to this figure," say labour consultants Andrew Levy & Associates

They argue "This, however, runs contrary to a firm convention in SA collective bargaining, which makes major shifts from a previous settlement difficult to achieve"

Cosatu remains wedded to its stance that the apartheid wage gap needs to be narrowed and that in-

creases should not be linked to inflation

The organisation's assistant general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi says whereas "linking wages to inflation appears to make economic sense on paper, it is completely inappropriate in the SA context"

He says in some sectors of the economy the ratio between the highest- and lowest-paid workers is 100:1, the federation wants it to be reduced to at least 8:1. The overwhelming number of workers' wages fall well below the minimum living level. "A growing number of workers are in the category of 'working poor'," Vavi says

Independent labour analyst Pat Stone says there are immense pressures on unions to deliver to their members. However, as recent market turmoil has shown, "we are no longer masters of our own universe", but have to abide by some of the dictates of the world marketplace

This reality was underlined by Mercedes-Benz of SA chairman Christoph Kopke, who says traditionally manufacturing has been confined to national borders, but factories now produce for regional markets

He says for the company's East London plant to survive it is "absolutely essential" that it expands its trade worldwide

"We cannot become world class with the markets available to us in Africa alone. The volumes are just too small. We have to become part of Daimler-Benz AG's global manufacturing strategy to ensure we build products for markets beyond the African continent," Kopke says

Analysts are divided on whether this year's spate of strikes marks a departure from the decrease in industrial action over the past three years

Stone believes the strikes are not the usual symptoms of the annual pay round. They reflect the tensions within the ANC-led tripartite alliance on economic policy, and the economic uncertainty in SA

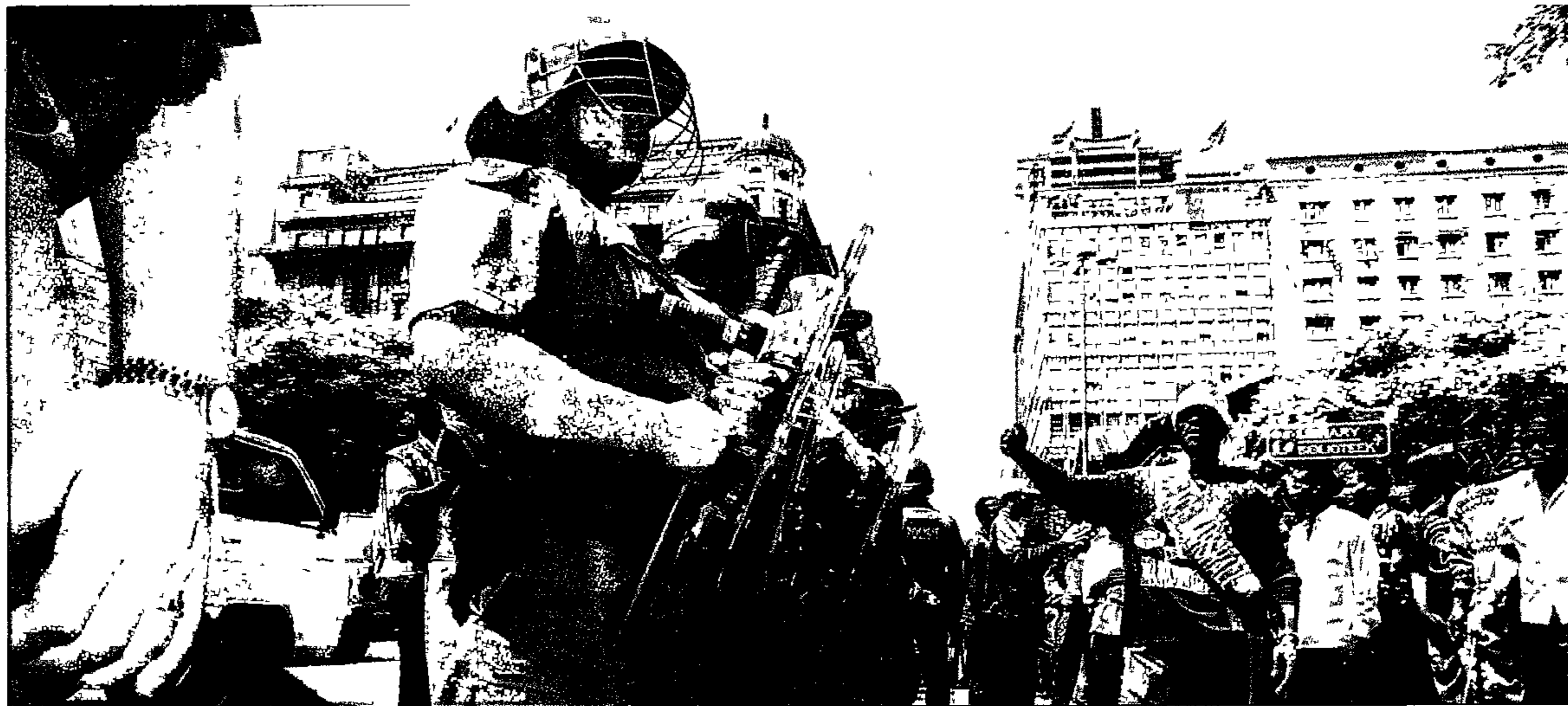
Labour analyst Gavin Brown says though the chemical and automobile industries' strikes have attracted attention, "we must not forget that thousands of settlements have been reached without any kind of industrial action" Levy & Associates found that in 91.6% of surveyed wage negotiations this year, no industrial action was undertaken (see table)

Justica Malala

THE BARGAIN BAROMETER
Wage Settlement survey to June 30 1998

- Average level of settlement until June 30 1998 was 9.2% (Average for 1997 as a whole was 9.7%)
- Average inflation rate until May 30 1998 was 5.3%
- Settlements ranged from 6% in the municipal sector to 18% in the transport sector
- The average minimum wage until June 30 1998 was R1.88
- Initial union demands ranged from 9% to 150% — averaging 33%
- Management counter offers ranged from 0% to 10% — averaging 0%
- The average time taken to settle from the date the wage demands were tabled was 84 days
- The majority of wage agreements (84.6%) remainder being for 15 months to two years
- In 91.6% of surveyed wage negotiations, no industrial action was experienced

SOURCE: ANDREW LEVY & ASSOCIATES



STANDOFF . . . striking security industry workers and police square up at Library Gardens in Johannesburg earlier this year

Workers show they are losing patience

THE recent surge in strike activity, which in the past two weeks alone has seen more than 60 000 workers down tools, is part of South Africa's annual strike season — when bargaining over wages reaches a critical point in most sectors across the economy

But, while the propensity of unions to strike has steadily declined over the past three years, this year more workers are ready to act — a sign, say union leaders, that workers have run out of patience

In the first half of this year, man days lost to strikes rose by 19% compared to last year and with major strikes in the chemical and motor industries as well as industrial action from teachers, the percentage for the second half of the year is certain to rise further

The strikes are part of a wave of militancy brought on by growing economic pres-

As economic pressures increase, trade unions are becoming more militant. CAROL PATON reports

ST (PT) 16/8/98

ures on workers and the realisation that their expectations of the post-1994 period are far from being met, say Cosatu officials

While inflation so far this year has been low — around 5% — the new business environment of global competition has been responsible for tariff reduction and rationalisation, often resulting in job losses

This, coupled with government austerity which workers believe is responsible for the poor progress made in addressing apartheid's "social deficit" in black communities are two of the central factors driving strike action, according to Cosatu spokesman Nowetu Mpati.

A third important factor propelling the strike action is the

drive by unions to equal or better last year's wage settlements when inflation was about 4% higher

"Workers are making the link between economic policy and their own situation. In a sense, they are subsidising the unemployed and are feeling the pinch as jobs are lost. A strike is the last alternative and embarking on one is not an easy decision to take," says Mpati

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA's negotiator for the motor industry, Tony Kgobe, says there is a strong link between the preparedness of workers to strike and the perception that in the post-'94 period little has changed on the shopfloor

"The inequalities are still there. In previous years you

could say there was a call, which was not made public, for patience. People sat back and waited to see if things would change. But now they are prepared to heed any call for a strike," says Kgobe

In the chemical sector, workers had also held back on a number of demands over the past three years, in order to win one overriding demand for centralised bargaining, says Chemical Workers Industrial Union official Nelson Mthombeni

Added to these frustrations and pressures has been a call from Cosatu to renew the campaign to close the "apartheid wage gap" — the gap between the highest and lowest paid

The wage gap campaign throws industrial relations in-

to an impasse. While for unions it is morally unjustifiable, for business it is obvious that market pressures will not allow it to be bargained away

"Companies are responding to the market for people in managerial positions. The view that you can suppress wages at the top and push them up from the bottom is removed from reality," says AECI executive Bokkie Botha

"If you freeze wages at the top, the international players will rape you of all your top skills," says Vic van Vuuren of Business SA.

Employers, too, are feeling the heat. "We have come down to the hard-core economic realities of playing in a global field. For business, labour costs are a question of survival at a time when expectations among workers are high. The gap between employers and workers is just too big," says Van Vuuren

Vehicle industry strike resolved

Reneé Grawitzky

(152)

MORE than 20 000 vehicle manufacturing workers return to work tomorrow following a week-long strike as the chemical industry strike enters its third week.

Tony Kgobe, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA's (Numsa's) chief negotiator, said yesterday the union was satisfied that it had achieved what it wanted.

Numsa and employers reached an agreement at a meeting with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) on Friday. They are expected to sign a deal addressing some of the concerns that led

to the strike today

(197)

Chemical employers and the Chemical Workers Industrial Union resume talks tomorrow after the CCMA intervened on Friday to try resolve the strike. Employer spokesman Fanie Ernst said the parties had moved closer and had explored settlement positions, which they had taken back to their constituencies. The commission said it hoped the parties would settle their dispute by the end of the week.

Meanwhile, Numsa members are expected to march on Nampak offices in Johannesburg today to highlight their wage demands after disputes were declared during plant level negotiations throughout the organisation.

SD 17/8/98

Prices up as motor giants face strike bill

ARGUS 18/8/98 (192) (152)

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - The 11-day motor vehicle workers strike has cost nearly R1-billion in lost turnover, and has been greeted by a flurry of increased prices.

So far new price lists have been issued for Opel, Isuzu, Volvo, Ford, Mazda, Honda and Colt, adding from a few hundred to a few thousand rands to each model

Examples of increased prices are Opel Corsa up from R41 815 to R44 357; Honda Encore from R67 300 to R69 800; Ford Laser from R37 215 to R38 190, Volvo S40 from R135 995 to R139 995, Isuzu KB200 SWB from R68 992 to R72 482 and Colt 2000 SWB from R61 500 to R62 500

Motor vehicle sources forecast that further increases this year were possible to make up for the falling rand

Meanwhile the 21 000 striking motor vehicle workers yesterday agreed to return to work today after signing an agreement fixing wages for three years

The agreement gives an 8% increase for workers and 7,5% for artisans while in the second and third year, workers will get increases based on the consumer price index increase.

The strike cast a shadow over export contracts for billions of rands from the seven plants

VW's Matt Gennrich said the company lost turnover of R17-million a day during the

strike, but the industrial action had not greatly affected a R5-billion export deal to supply 68 000 right-hand drive vehicles over the next 18 months

Mr Gennrich said South Africa was known internationally to have a volatile labour force and this strike would further damage the industry's image overseas

BMW's Richard Carter said its overseas markets, such as Australia, Britain and Taiwan, were "terribly sensitive" to the timing of delivery orders and the question of reliability.

BMW's factory near Pretoria has secured orders for its right-hand drive 3-series cars. Other main exporters include Toyota and Nissan.

Bus commuters warned to use other transport

Refuse removal and council libraries also likely to be affected by today's municipal staff rally in Johannesburg

By **THAMBA SEPOTOKHE**

Bus commuters in the Greater Johannesburg area should try to use alternative transport today because municipal workers are attending a feedback meeting on salary increases at Rand Stadium in Rosettenville.

Metropolitan Bus Services chief executive officer Fouch Fouché yesterday urged commuters, especially school and peak afternoon bus users, to arrange for alternative transport because half of the 3 100 scheduled bus services in the Johannesburg area would not take place.

Drivers would possibly return to work after the rally, he said. Fouché said the council and its four local authorities had agreed to allow staff members to attend the meeting. Other services that could be disrupted include refuse removal and metro libraries.

The leadership of the SA Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu) and the Independent Municipal and Trade Union are to seek mandates from their members because the council failed to implement a 4% or R175 wage increase from July 1. Samwu regional chairperson Chris Mabaso said the council had reneged on the agreement to implement the increase. He said the council claimed it was experiencing financial constraints and had applied for exemption, but the unions had a right to check its books and financial standing. Mabaso said the council had also agreed that by January next year it would implement another 2% or R55 wage in-

crease, but now that it had re-neged on the July 1 agreement, the unions had to seek new mandates from their members. Council negotiator Patrick Fusk said the council had applied for an exemption.

"If we apply for an exemption it means we cannot afford the increase," he said.



Strike confusion as CCMA jumps the gun

Reneé Grawitzky

(152) BD 19/8/98
THE Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) jumped the gun yesterday in announcing that striking chemical workers would return to work tomorrow after claiming that agreements had been reached in five of the seven affected sectors.

The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) denied that the strike was over and said agreements had been reached only in the industrial rubber and plastics converters sectors.

CWIU assistant general secretary Nelson Nthombeni said negotiations were still in progress in the other sectors and the union was hopeful that

settlements would be achieved. "We cannot say workers are going back to work when there is no finality. Why would workers go back to work if agreements have not been finalised?"

An industry observer said the CCMA's statement could place some delicate proposals intended to end the dispute in jeopardy and could put pressure on the parties. The statement could also result in workers returning to work when the strike had not been officially called off.

The statement was made yesterday by CCMA senior commissioner Kaizer Thibedi at a news briefing. Thibedi claimed that agreement had been reached in five sectors, excluding petroleum and glass.

He said parties would report back to their constituencies and that the commission was happy that its intervention had stabilised the industry and resulted in workers returning to work tomorrow.

Employer spokesman Fanie Ernst said caution was needed in how the phrase "in principle agreement" was interpreted.

He said parties had found possible solutions in some sectors which could result in settlements. Ernst said the potential for deals was there, but parties had to take proposals back to their constituencies for consideration.

Parties in the five sectors where agreements have yet to be reached were still in talks last night.

CWITU strike is looking to end

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THERE has been a breakthrough in the long-standing dispute between the Chemical Workers Industrial Union and the chemical industry following the intervention of Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to stabilise the industry.

CCMA senior commissioner Kazzer Tibebe announced yesterday that in-principle agreements had been reached in the multi-sector negotiations to resolve the two-week-old strike by 47 000 CWIU members.

Parties were required to consult

their constituencies for ratification of the positions taken in the negotiation process before terms of the "in-principle agreements" were spelt out, he said.

The petroleum and glass sectors were still locked in talks last night to reach a final settlement. The industrial rubber sector agreed on final offers of nine percent and 10 percent for the lowest paid employees, while plastic conversions settled on 9,5 percent. Other sectors could not disclose their positions before reporting to their principals.

Chemical Industrial Employers' Association chief negotiator Fanie Errens said both parties had

found solutions to major points of dispute. "Only minor issues need to be finalised."

He agreed with the CCMA's Tibebe that the strike might end tomorrow.

CWIU spokesman Nelson Mthombeni also expressed the hope that final agreements would be reached soon, saying much progress had been made.

The parties considered options over the weekend proposed by the CCMA last Friday. The CCMA was asked to intervene to help stabilise the industry after deadlock had been reached. The CWIU had demanded a 10 percent increase and the National Petroleum

Employers Association had offered 8,5 percent.

Meanwhile, Sapa reports that two unions representing workers of the Airports Company of SA were planning industrial action to protest against what they have termed the secret payroll of the company's management and its failure to resolve wage negotiations.

The Transport and General Workers' Union and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union had declared a dispute with the Airports Company management. Nehawu spokesman Allistair Charles said in Johannesburg yesterday

Sapa
Sowetan
19/8/98

Strike over pay hits city rice mill

BUSINESS REPORTER **ARL 20/8/98**

(152)

Workers at Rice-Tic, a milling and packing company in Paarden Eiland, are on strike over wages and conditions of employment.

The strike has been organised by the Food and Allied Workers Union, which says management is refusing to negotiate with the workers

Union spokesman Sabatha Ngcai

said the strike would continue until management agreed to negotiate

The workers, who have been picketing the premises, are demanding a wage increase of R50 a week across-the-board, three weeks' bonus guaranteed and a heavy duty allowance of R20 a week for workers who carry bags weighing more than 50kg.

Rice-Tic management declined to comment.

ART 20/8/98
3 shot in strike violence

(152) (183)
Johannesburg - Three petrol tanker drivers have been shot and wounded in KwaZulu Natal amid a continuing petro-chemical workers' strike, an industry official said today.

Lutz Kranz of the National Petroleum Employers' Association (NPEA) said the shootings late yesterday had come just before the resumption of another round of talks to end the three-week-old wage impasse.

He said that while two other chemical workers' unions had reached a wage settlement last week, the 40 000-

strong Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) was still out on strike and employers believed its members were responsible for the violence.

"We believe that this is union-inspired thuggery of the worst kind, especially because these violent incidents have happened while we are talking," Mr Kranz said.

He said the drivers were in a satisfactory condition in hospital. Mr Kranz said fuel delivery around the country - severely disrupted when the strike began on August 3 - was "stable but not normal". - Reuters

Airports strike threatens major conference in SA

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

(152)

ARG 20/8/98

Durban - Staff at South Africa's nine main airports are threatening a major strike that could cripple services and disrupt the arrival of thousands of high-profile delegates to the Non-Aligned Movement Conference to be held here next week.

One of the workers' unions, Nehawu, confirmed last night that its members would engage in industrial action this week which could lead to a full-blown strike.

Against what they have called a "secret payroll" of the Airports Company's management and the company's alleged failure to resolve wage negotiations.

ly sensitive, but the ball is in the court of management". They are demanding a 12% increase as opposed to the 9% offered.

A second union, the Transport and General Workers' Union, is also expected to join the strike.

Questions about the impact of a possible strike on the travel arrangements of the Non Aligned Movement delegates - who will be arriving in South Africa for the organisation's summit in Durban next week - Mr Charles said the union was "political-

But the Airports Company of South Africa said that should a full-blown strike take place, a contingency plan would be put into operation.

The two unions are protesting

Company Dirk Ackerman said it would do everything possible to resolve the dispute before hundreds of Non Aligned Movement delegates - including presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers - began to arrive

CT (MR) 20/8/98

Fawu strike to continue

RAVIN MAHARAJ

(152)

Durban — The Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) would continue a nationwide strike until the resolution of a wage dispute with Rainbow Chicken, the loss-making broiler producer, the union said yesterday.

Thompson Ramalala, Fawu's national negotiator, said the union, which represented more than a quarter of Rainbow's workforce, had rejected Rainbow's offer of 6 percent across the board.

Rainbow has offered a minimum wage package of R1 972,08 a month for factory workers, and R1 778,18 a month at farming facilities.

Four of five recognised unions — the Food and Beverages Workers' Union, South African Typographical Union, South African Workers' Union, and the Farm, Food, and Rural Workers' Support Association — have accepted a Rainbow offer of a 6 percent increase across the board from December 1 and an annual bonus.

Rainbow had two offers on the table, the other being a 7 percent across the board increase, without an annual bonus, effective from April 1.

Rainbow said Fawu had been privy to all financial information and had

~~REJECTED~~
rejected offers to send its own auditors to study the books.

Both parties said they would try to iron out these problems in Durban this week, to prevent further strikes and loss of production.

In the meantime, Ramalala said the strike at Rainbow's farming and processing operations across the country would continue for at least another week, if agreement was not reached this week.

Ramalala said in principle the union could accept Rainbow's offer if it was backdated to April 1. But the company said Fawu was then in fact asking for an 18,33 percent increase, taking into account back-pay.

Rainbow has also offered to negotiate a gainshare scheme outside the present scheme.

Rainbow, which is in the Rembrandt stable, said it could not afford to better its wage offer in the light of substantial losses. Rainbow reported an attributable loss of R268,3 million for the year to March 31, and R229,1 million in the previous year.

Rainbow said that despite its losses, it had been a leader in improving wages and working conditions for employees during this period.

Airports strike threat grows

(192) (192)
ARGUS CORRESPONDENT AND SAPA

ARG 21/8/98

Durban - Two unions representing disgruntled airport workers nationwide will today meet management of the Airports Company of South Africa (Acsa) for crisis talks in a bid to avert a full-blown strike.

But a third union yesterday threatened to join the planned strike, which would cause chaos at the Non-Aligned Summit here next week.

The president of the SA Railway and Harbour Workers' Union, Bolakele Jonas, said a dispute had been declared with three airport services companies - Acsa, SA Airways and Apron Ser-

vices

This follows disputes lodged by the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu)

If it goes ahead, a strike at the country's nine main airports could cripple some essential services and disrupt travel for thousands of international heads of state, cabinet ministers and other VIPs who will begin arriving for the NAM summit in Durban from August 28.

In July Acsa and Apron Services employees caused havoc at international airports when they went on strike to protest against expected job losses.

Car industry faces new strike

~~(1997)~~ (1997) ARG 21/8/98

Johannesburg - Just two days after ending a six-day strike at South Africa's seven car factories, the industry's main union said it plans to down tools again on September 1.

The National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa) yesterday said the new strike by about 60 000 workers would be in the motor sector, which groups workers from spares shops, car dealerships, component manufacturers, service workshops and filling stations.

The new action will exempt the seven motor manufacturers, who settled their dispute with Numsa earlier this week. During that dispute, 21 000 workers downed tools.

"We are planning another strike on September 1 which will be like the one we've just had recently. The strike will involve the motor sector and the issue is

about wages," Dumisa Ntuli, a Numsa spokesman, said.

Industry sources said Numsa's wage agreements in the motor sector expired on September 1, making another crippling strike a possibility.

Employers in the motor sector are represented by the Motor Industries Federation, which was not immediately available for comment.

The previous strike had cost the vehicle manufacturing industry an estimated R780-million in lost turnover, industry spokesman Brian Smith said.

The strike also cast a shadow over vehicle export contracts for billions of rands, but Mr Smith said the contracts were "still in line".

Volkswagen SA has secured a R5-billion UK order over the next 18 months, and BMW South Africa has signed export deals for its 3-series cars. - Reuters

Violence hampers strike's resolution

Reneé Grawitzky

21/8/98

PETROLEUM employers warned last night that the resurgence of violence and intimidation associated with the chemical workers' strike was hampering a resolution of the three-week-old dispute.

The warning was made during the resumption of negotiations with the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) yesterday when employers threatened to walk out of the meeting.

This week workers trashed the offices of a number of companies, including Caltex and Consol, causing losses estimated at more than R2m.

Yesterday a pharmaceutical company in Alrode, east of Johannesburg, was firebombed while a number of truck drivers were shot at, some sustaining serious injuries in the attacks.

The National Petroleum Employers' Association said deliveries of petrol out of Island View depots in Durban were stopped over

the past 24-hours due to shootings and high levels of intimidation.

Employers said: "In a potential catastrophe, a nitrogen tanker on the way back to a company's premises had its windscreen smashed by a rock, causing the tanker to turn over onto another truck." Three people were injured in the incident and damage exceeded R1m.

Petroleum employers said the union had agreed to address the question of violence after it became evident that this was slowing down the negotiations.

A formal conditional offer of 8,5% was made to the CWIU.

A bilateral agreement was also reached between the union and Sasol, ensuring a return to work of Sasol employees tonight.

The agreement provides for an 8,5% increase now and a further 0,5% from January.

In addition, the union would support Sasol's application for variation from the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

(19/8/98) (19/8/98)
CWIU assistant general secretary Nelson Nthombeni said Sasol was still committed to centralised bargaining and would remain part of the national employer body, despite the agreement.

Pearl Sebolao reports that more than 300 striking workers at Eskom subsidiary, Rotek Industries, yesterday gathered at the company's Rosherville plant in Cleveland in a bid to force management to agree to their wage demands.

The workers, represented by the National Union of Mineworkers and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA, are demanding a 9,5% wage increase on a sliding scale and have rejected management's offer of a 7,3% across the board wage increase.

Meanwhile, the Airports Company of SA will today meet the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union and the Transport & General Workers' Union in a bid to avert the threatened strike by the two unions.

Fawu, Rainbow seek strike resolution

RAVIN MAHARAJ

Durban — The Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) and the management of Rainbow Chicken, the troubled broiler producer, would meet in Durban today to seek a resolution of a 10-day-old wage dispute which had turned violent, both parties said yesterday.

Yannick Lakhnati, Rainbow's chief executive, said he could not believe the "blatant breach of strike rules and disrespect for property and people" in the light of several violent incidents at

~~PROPERTY~~
Rainbow's operations in Rustenburg and Hammarsdale

He said these incidents meant the company would incur unnecessary additional expenses. Rainbow has reported massive attributable losses in the past two years.

Lakhnati and Thompson Ramalala, Fawu's national negotiator, said more than 13 workers had been injured since the start of the strike last week.

Lakhnati said in Rustenburg buses carrying casual labour had been stoned, the homes of supervisors had been petrol-bombed,

and workers had been shot. Property in Hammarsdale had also been damaged. Police investigations were under way and several dockets had been opened.

"This is an unacceptable position. We are trying to do our level best for workers," he said.

Ramalala said the company's security guards had shot workers. The matter has been referred to Fawu's lawyers.

Fawu has rejected Rainbow's offer of a minimum wage package of R1 972,08 for factory workers, and R1 778,18 at farms.

Claims of violence as employers and strikers hold talks

Protest action by Cosatu coming up

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

MOUNTING tension and rising incidents of violence at petroleum refineries in KwaZulu-Natal and on the East Rand were discussed at protracted talks between the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) and the National Petroleum Employers Association continued, industry sources said yesterday.

There had been incidents of shootings, blockades and bomb threats directed at staff members and company installations during the strike by workers, according to NPEA spokesman Lutz Krantz.

Three fuel tanker truck drivers were hospitalised after shots were fired at them while transporting fuel in Umgababa, near Malvern, on Wednesday night. One fuel tanker was bullet-riddled after an attack by gunmen.

In another incident, the stoning of a liquid petroleum gas tanker in Alrode, near Alberton, by mobs resulted in a near disaster, Krantz said.

A bomb blast severely damaged a disused worksite in Chamdor, Krugersdorp.

Notices have been placed on delivery trucks warning of bombs on the vehicles, he claimed, also charging that incidents of violence in picket lines had increasingly targeted truck drivers.

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE Congress of the SA Trade Unions will intensify protest campaigns to highlight unemployment, retrenchments, factory closures and its rejection of privatisation of public enterprises by staging a series of peaceful demonstrations nationwide in September.

Cosatu deputy general-secretary Zwelinzima Yavi said the planned protest actions, including lunchtime pickets to begin on September 12, will culminate in marches throughout the country on September 23.

Yavi said another campaign targeting the SA Reserve Bank and commercial banks to highlight high interest rates and the exploitation of consumers by the banks will be held in October.

"Our intention is to build a broad coalition of these formations on a scale similar to the coalition against VAT in the early 1990s.

"Cosatu regions and local offices are engaging the unemployed structures to seek participation in the campaign for job creation in preparation for the presidential job summit," he said.

The federation's concerns were to create new employment both in the short-term and long-term, improve the quality of existing jobs, promote job security and stem job losses.

Taking into account the changing pattern of employment creation and massive job losses, the labour proposal is for large-scale national "intervention of the Marshall-plan-type" which other societies have embarked upon to deal with social crises on a similar scale.

"This is the vision which underpins the strategy contained in the reconstruction and development plan," Yavi added.

On demutualisation and decisions taken by two major financial mutual companies, Sanlam and Old Mutual, Yavi reaffirmed Cosatu's opposition, saying the programme of mass action was geared at stopping this process.

Major channstore Stuttafords yesterday locked out its employees following an ultimatum to force them to accede to management's final wage offer and its proposals for new conditions of employment.

South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) spokesman Pitso Tshukudu described the company's action as a pre-emptive strategy to counter today's planned march by workers to the head office to protest against management intransigence in the wage dispute.

Saccawu is demanding a R280 a month increase, while the company is offering R140 a month.

Sowetan 21/8/98



Locked-out workers picket Stuttafords

ST (CM) 23/8/81 (52) (20)

WORKERS picketed Stuttafords branches in Tygerberg and Claremont yesterday in protest against a lockout imposed on union members, JANET HEARD reports.

The lockout, which affects Stuttafords nationwide, is the first in the retail sector under the new Labour Relations Act.

Stuttafords imposed the lockout on Thursday following a dispute over pay increases with the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union and the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union. The company has called on staff to work an extra Saturday each month and has offered a monthly raise of R140. Workers want R260 more if they agree to the extra hours.

Sactwu's retail bargaining co-ordinator, Richard Kawie, said the union would apply on Tuesday for an interdict against the lockout. The lockout affects nine stores countrywide and 700 workers, 160 of whom are in the Western Cape.

NEW

Pretoria soap workers slip up on strike

(192)
ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — Chemical Workers' Industrial Union (CWIU) members at Specialty Formulas, the Pretoria-based glycerine soap maker, had been found guilty of embarking on unprotected strike action, Brendan Sayers, the chairman of a disciplinary hearing, said last week.

Sayers, a National Employers' Forum official, said 39 employees at Specialty Formulas, acquired recently by Beige Holdings, the listed pharmaceutical and cosmetics company, had embarked on a work stoppage on August 11 after giving seven days' written notice of intention to go on a sympathy strike.

Specialty Formulas questioned the grounds for a sympathy strike, maintaining they were unaware of who the primary employer was and the nature of the dispute between the primary employer and the union.

Sayers said the union presented no evidence of the relationship between the primary employer and secondary strike, and the strikers were therefore guilty of having embarked on unprotected strike action.

CT (MR) 24/8/98

Sympathy strike threat shocks bosses

Pearl Sebolao and René Grawitzky

THE National Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Naamsa) is considering asking government to intervene in the planned strike by 220 000 National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members in sympathy with motor industry strikers.

Numsa said at the weekend it would pull out members in all its sectors in support of the strike in the motor sector, due to start on September 1. The

sector includes filling stations, panel-beating and spares shops, car dealers and component manufacturers.

Naamsa said it was shocked at Numsa's decision to target sectors which had no control over negotiations in the motor sector.

Naamsa would consider approaching government to discuss the issue, as such a strike would lead to job losses and undermine investor confidence.

Employers have offered a 4,5% increase on minimum levels

BO 25/8/98

(152)

Most employers accept terms of wage deal ranging from 8% to 10%

Mediation wins the day

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union yesterday called on all its members to return to work after the terms of a wage deal ranging from 8 percent to 10 percent and proposed by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration had been accepted by employers in five of the seven sectors.

The remaining two sectors are the petroleum and industrial chemical sectors.

More than 47 000 union workers were on a national strike during the past three weeks to press for better conditions of employment and a wage increase of 10,5 percent, which was later moderated to 10 percent across the board.

The strike was characterised by reports of widespread violence and destruction of property, especially during the second week, and led to the

CT (OR) 25/8/98 (162)
National Petroleum Employers' Association accusing the union of forcing the parties "to negotiate under rules of thuggery"

The parties settled at 10,5 percent last year, which led many analysts to cite that as an obstacle to a settlement as the previous year's figure was traditionally taken as a benchmark.

At one point, both employers and the union rejected suggestions by the labour department that the chemical industry be regarded as an essential services sector after the strike began to hit consumers.

The earlier settlement by the smaller South African Chemical Workers' Union at a maximum range of 8 percent means a single company will find itself paying different wages

to workers of the same grade depending on which union represents them.

Fanie Ernst, the employers' chief co-ordinator, said although some companies in the outstanding sectors had rejected the commission's proposals, "mop up operations" were continuing towards a final settlement.

Ernst said he was hopeful that "this whole thing would be settled this week".

The deadline for a final settlement might be extended to tomorrow to accommodate outstanding sectors.

But Nelson Mthombeni, a union spokesman, said that "an agreement in principle" had already been reached with the petroleum and industrial chemical sectors and that the union expected to report back for work today.

Deadline for final settlement may be drawn out to cater for outstanding sectors

Ameo questions legality of new strike

ROY COKAYNE AND
FRANK NXUMALO

Pretoria — The Automobile Manufacturing Employers' Organisation (Ameo), which represents the seven local vehicle manufacturers, was investigating the legality of the threatened secondary strike by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), Brian Smith, Ameo's chairman, said yesterday

"The strike will be an absolute disaster for the motor manufacturing industry, coming on top of our own six-day strike, and will result in major consequences for the industry in terms of jobs and exports," Smith said.

"We feel we can bring no influence to bear on negotiations between the South African Motor Industry Employers' As-

sociation (Samiea) and Numsa " Numsa called the strike from September 1 after the breakdown of wage talks with Samiea.

The Steel and Engineering Industry Federation of South Africa (Seifsa) said yesterday it too was considering its options

While it thought the planned national strike in the steel and car industry by more than 220 000 Numsa workers was "generally a protected strike", it had advised its membership to examine whether it was "reasonable"

David Carsons, Seifsa's industrial relations director, said this meant members had to examine their relations with the motor component sector to determine whether there was a need to challenge the Numsa action

Dumisa Ntuli, Numsa's spokesman, said the union was

expecting "a flood of court interdicts" following the procedural notification.

Smith said. "While a secondary strike can be permitted in terms of the Labour Relations Act, it is absolutely ridiculous because we don't believe we can exert any pressure on Samiea, who have over 18 000 individual members"

Mark Roberts, the chapter three representative in Samiea, said it had complied with the issue that was in dispute with Numsa. It had been negotiating with Numsa on actual wages at plant level and there was recognition and a willingness from Numsa and the chapter to negotiate on actual wages at national level from next year

But he said this was subject to the terms of such a dispensation being worked out between the two.

CT (HR) 28/8/98

(192)

Thousands of SAA staff threaten strike action after wage talks fail

Pearl Sebolao and René Grawitzky

SA Airways (SAA), scheduled for partial privatisation by May, faces disruptions to its domestic and international flights tomorrow as thousands of ground staff, cabin crew and technical maintenance staff embark on strike action after wage negotiations ended in a dispute.

The SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarthwu) notified the company of possible strike action, while airport union Salstaff will begin various forms of protest action which still have to be announced.

Sarthwu threatened that if the SAA dispute was not resolved it would call out its members in the Airports Company and Apron Service on a sympathy strike.

SAA Ceo Coleman Andrews expressed concern that the strike would affect efforts to make the airline a viable organisation. Industry sources warned that the strike might not necessarily have an effect on the privatisation process under way, but that it could indirectly affect investor perceptions.

The sources said the strike was sparked by the fact that pilots were awarded a 17% increase in terms of an arbitration ruling. Management threatened to take this on review but later dropped the matter.

It is believed that the increase for 650 pilots cost the company R53m. Remaining SAA staff have been offered a 7.5% increase while the unions demanding 12%.

Salstaff said that it was initially prepared to accept 7.5% as management had motivated that the company could not afford more and would adjust wages if the financial position improved.

However, the union changed its position after pilots were awarded their increase.

Sarthwu general secretary Andre Venter said the strike "comes at a bad time" as the airline cannot afford it.

However, workers needed to demonstrate their frustrations and the 17% wage increase awarded to pilots during arbitration.

He said workers had been further slighted by Andrews' issue of a joint communiqué with the pilots "implying that they together can solve the problems of the airline".

"This sent a message to our members that they were not as important and the airline does not need them," Venter said.

Another industry source said the dispute could have been further exacerbated by the fact that SAA executives were not certain what they should be doing, as their positions were coming up for review in September. That is why there was a certain amount of hesitancy in taking decisions.

In addition, Andrews had got involved midway through the negotiations.

The Airports Company said it had not received any notices from Sarthwu about impending sympathy action.

However, wage negotiations were continuing and the parties would meet in the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration today.

(198) 27/8/98



Strike disruption looms for SAA

CT (BR) 27/8/98 (152)

FRANK NXUMALO
AND THABO LSHILO

Johannesburg — South African Airways (SAA) faces disruptions on its domestic and international schedules tomorrow as more than 9 000 South African Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu) workers and other industry unions go on strike.

The company said yesterday "all categories except pilots" would take part in the strike.

The news came as Zukile Nomvete, the former executive director of Transnet in charge of the airline, announced he had left the parastatal. He said his services were ended on August 14.

Thamú Didiza, the spokesman for Transnet, refused to divulge reasons, citing a secrecy clause that precluded Transnet and Nomvete from disclosing details.

Didiza said staff would be informed, but denied any sinister motives for not immediately releasing the information.



RESIGNED Zukile Nomvete

Tshidiso Moshao, Sarhwu's assistant general secretary, said the union had declared a dispute and decided on a strike after the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration had failed to reconcile the parties.

Moshao said Sarhwu was demanding wage increases of 12 percent across the board against a company offer of 7,5 percent to 10,5 percent.

Coleman Andrews, SAA's chief executive, said the strike "could hamper the ailing airline's fight to regain profitability".

He said 11 000 jobs were at stake if SAA failed.

"I have explained to the unions that SAA will cease to exist if we do not stop the financial losses the airline has suffered. These have amounted to more than R1 billion over a period of five years."

Andrews refuted union claims that he had granted pilots a 17 percent pay rise.

"The truth is that an independent arbitrator awarded pilots an 8,17 percent increase for 1997 and 1998; this decision was binding on the company," he said.

He said SAA passengers would suffer minimum inconvenience as "SAA flights would still operate as normal".

A company spokesman said this was because SAA believed it had "enough non-unionised workers" to minimise

Ameo in court bid to halt strike

(152) (152)

ROY COKAYNE

ET (BE) 29/8/98

Pretoria — The Automobile Manufacturing Employers' Organisation (Ameo) would apply to the labour court on Monday for an interdict to prevent the sympathy strike by the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), Brian Smith, the chairman of Ameo, said yesterday.

Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for Numsa, said the union would "definitely defend the application for an interdict" against Numsa.

Smith said Ameo's urgent application followed Numsa's failure to withdraw its notice of a secondary strike by yesterday morning, as demanded by the vehicle manufacturers.

"Ameo contends that the secondary strike threatened by Numsa is unreasonable and unlawful in terms of the Labour Relations Act," he said.

Numsa notified Ameo on Friday that the union planned to embark on a secondary strike from September 1 this year.

Ntuli said Numsa's defence was based on the fact that it wanted Ameo to prove there was no customer relationship with the motor sector.

"Some motor sector companies supply components to the auto sector," he said.

"Ameo also wrote a letter to Numsa stating that in terms of the Labour Relations Act, Numsa was not supposed to issue notice of a secondary strike prior to the commencement of the primary strike. Ameo must also prove that."

He said there had been no negotiations with the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea)

Workers to return

MOST of the striking petrol workers are due to return to work today after an agreement was reached between the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union and the National Petroleum Employers' Association, the NPEA said yesterday.

Southeast 27/8/98
The agreement did not include Caltex, as the company and the CWIU were still in dispute.

According to the agreement reached between the union and other employers, CWIU members would receive an 8,5 percent increase on basic salaries retrospective from July 1 this year. Added to that they would get a further 0,5 percent increase on their basic salary as on June 30 this year.

The minimum monthly wage would be R2 000.

The strike by 47 000 CWIU members in the chemical industry started on August 3. Members in all the other sectors of the industry, except for the industrial chemicals sector, returned to work earlier this week after reaching agreements with their employers. — Sapa.

SAVA strike off - and NAM delegates cleared for landing

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Durban - A threatened strike by South African Airways staff here and at six other major airports has been called off after unions reached an agreement with management over a wage issue - a last-minute

reprieve for the huge conference of the Non-Aligned Movement opening here tomorrow.

Had the strike gone ahead, it would have affected the arrival of international delegates. Meanwhile Durban's infrastructure is being stretched to the limit as

the international spotlight falls on the city, which will host about 5 000 visitors - including heads of states and foreign ministers.

The summit is being billed as one of the most important yet as the divide between Third World countries and the West widens.

But taking on one of the biggest conferences the African continent has hosted has inevitably brought administrative hurdles with it.

Delegates and journalists queued for several hours for accreditation to the summit yesterday, owing to a delay caused by computer problems..

And hurdles yet to come include demonstrations planned by several groups, including the Pan Africanist Congress, Grey Street traders and supporters of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka - and the fact that cell-phone links will be stretched to the limit.

See page 12

ARB 28/8/98 (152)



'SAA strike will not affect NAM summit'

Reneé Grawitzky

GOVERNMENT said last night it was determined that the threatened strike by SA Airways staff would not affect the Nonaligned Movement summit, regardless of the outcome of negotiations between labour and management, which continued late into the night.

At the time of going to press the SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu), Salstaff and SAA management were locked in negotiations, with uncertainty over whether the strike would go ahead.

SAA believed disruptions to passengers would be minimal, as worker

BD 28/8/98 (152)
demonstrations, rather than full-blown industrial action, were expected.

Sarhwu denied that it was using the summit to put pressure on management to settle. "The strike was coincidental to the summit being held," negotiator Evan Abrahamse said.

The strike centres on a joint labour demand of 12%, while the company has offered 7,5%. The unions acknowledged that the strike would come at a bad time, but said workers were frustrated because pilots had received a 17% wage increase over two years.

Farouk Chothia reports Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad as saying Labour Minister Shepherd Mdlalana

was involved in talks with the unions to try to avert the strike.

Pahad said government was hopeful the dispute would be resolved amicably and that the unions realised the summit was in the national interest.

The threatened strike at SAA coincides with a strike by Air Chef employees, the caterers to most airlines operating out of SA airports.

The wage strike, which started last week, turned violent yesterday when two nonstrikers were injured.

The SA Clothing, Commercial and Allied Workers' Union claimed 52 airlines had their food service supplies disrupted. The company denied this.

Strike chaos on SAA's flight schedule

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — Chaos is expected to hit South African Airways' (SAA) domestic and international schedules today as more than 9 000 ground staff, cabin crew and maintenance workers down tools over wage demands.

The department of foreign affairs was concerned the strike, by members of the South African Railway and Harbours' Union (Sarhwu) and the Aviation Industry Workers' Unit SAA (AIWU SAA), might have a negative effect on the transportation of delegates to the Non Aligned Summit scheduled to start tomorrow in Durban.

"This summit is a matter of national interest, and we are doing everything possible to make it a success," Aziz Pahad, the deputy minister of foreign affairs, said yesterday "Through

the ministry of labour, there are ongoing negotiations with the unions involved. We are hopeful that solutions will be found."

Victor Nosa, an SAA spokesman, said "The situation hasn't changed. We are expecting a strike tomorrow (today). Management is still offering between 7,5 percent and 10,5 percent, the unions are still demanding 12 percent."

"We are going on the strike at 12 noon tomorrow," Sarhwu spokesman Evan Abrahamse said. Cabin crew on international flights would also go on strike at 12 noon, he said.

He said Sarhwu was also having dispute meetings at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration with the Airports Company of South Africa over wage demands.

The commission talks will continue today after the parties failed to reach agreement yester-

day. However the Airports Company has settled separately with Nehawu and T&GWU at an effective 9 percent across the board. The agreement is expected to be signed today.

"The overwhelming outcry from our members stems from the recurring injustice by SAA management in that they continue handsomely rewarding the pilots and flight engineers in their bargaining units while our members have to be satisfied with the crumbs that fall off the table," said Andre Venter, AIWU SAA general secretary of labour relations.

Venter said that Coleman Andrews, the SAA chief executive, had awarded pilots a 17 percent salary increase, an allegation was denied by Andrews.

"The truth is that an independent arbitrator awarded pilots an 8,17 percent increase for 1997 and 1998, this decision was binding on the company," Andrews said.

ET(BE)28/8/98(152)

Slump spawns labour unrest

MHG 28/8 - 3/9/98
(152)
Ferial Haffajee

Strike action in South Africa is on the increase — but it is fuelled less by party political tension and more by the shrinking economy

“This is not Cosatu [the Congress of South African Trade Unions] sending warnings to the [African National Congress/South African Communist Party/Cosatu] alliance. But the strikes are political if you use a broader notion of politics,” says labour writer Karl von Holdt.

Rising inflation and high interest rates are taking their toll and workers faced with growing numbers of unemployed dependants are protecting their corner.

After two years of remarkable decline, strikes are again on the increase. They jumped by 20% in the first six months of 1998 — compared with same period last year — and could end the year even higher.

Part of the reason for seemingly ubiquitous strike activity is that it is slap in the middle of strike season. But disputes this year have been characterised by greater militance than previous years.

There has been arson at Eskom, clashes at petrol suppliers, teacher strikes and rhetoric less conciliatory than that of the honeymoon years following the election in 1994.

The conflicts come in the shipstream of tension earlier this year between Cosatu and the ANC over economic policy.

“Strikes are being fuelled by anger over living and working conditions. There is an accumulated exasperation and impatience among workers,” says Professor Tom Lodge of the University of the Witwatersrand.

“Workers are seen as an elite simply because they have a job. In fact, they are bearing the brunt of growing unemployment,” says Deanne Collins, the editor of the *SA Labour Bulletin*. Every miner supports about 10 dependants in rural areas, although urban workers have fewer to feed.

The economy is still shedding jobs. In the vital metal and engineering sector 5 000 jobs



On the up and up: After two years of remarkable decline, strikes are again on the increase. PHOTOGRAPH: SIDDIQUE DAVIDS

have been cut this year, miners are still being retrenched and tariff cuts in other industries raise the spectre of further losses.

In this atmosphere, pay demands in more secure sectors of the economy are likely to increase and wage disputes in turn trigger four in five strikes.

In another development this week, Cosatu's two biggest affiliates — metalworkers and miners — gave notice of their intention to go on solidarity strikes.

It is the first time since the passage of the Labour Relations Act that workers will exercise their right to strike in sympathy with colleagues in related sectors.

It is unlikely that strike statistics will ever match the figures notched up in the 1980s,

when worker militance was fired up by political struggles.

Institutions like the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration as well as laws like the Labour Relations Act have enshrined conflict resolution and labour rights.

A trend toward centralised bargaining forums could also cut strike activity in the medium term. But posturing at new centralised forums in the security and chemical industries this year led to strike action.

“Industrial action will focus on industrial issues,” says Von Holdt, adding that workers are likely to begin pushing against racial gaps in wages and jobs where managers and supervisors are still largely white.

NUM calls strike to back motor workers

Reneé Grawitzky (4/23) (152)

THE National Union of Metalworkers (NUM) announced that employers in metal and engineering, vehicle and tyre manufacturing will be subjected to a 24-hour sympathy strike tomorrow.

The union has called out its members in these sectors in sympathy with thousands of their counterparts in the motor sector who will begin an "indefinite" wage strike tomorrow.

The decision to embark on a one-day sympathy strike was taken at a union national executive committee meeting late last week and follows threats by employers in metal, engineering and vehicle manufacturing to take legal action. The Automobile Manufacturing Employers Organisation (Ameo) applied for an interdict on Friday with the ruling being handed down today.

The national strike in the motor sector will affect petrol attendants, panel beating shops and auto-component manufacturers.

The dispute centres around a union demand that employers agree to negotiate increases based on the actual rates in the motor industry bargaining council main

agreement, rather than the minimum rates. This has been a long-standing union demand.

The SA Motor Employers Association said it was practically impossible to negotiate actual rates for more than 18 000 employers country-wide. Despite this they remained open to continue negotiations.

To heighten its campaign, the union placed a full-page advertisement in the largest weekend newspaper explaining the nature of the dispute, which also involves the Motor Industry Employees' Union of SA and the Motor Industry Staff Association.

The unions said wages paid in the retail motor industry were below the poverty datum line, with a minimum wage of R559 a month.

NUM strike

DD 31/8/98
Meanwhile, a week-long strike by the National Union of Mineworkers at Alexkor, a state-owned diamond mine in the Northern Cape, continues today.

The strike centres on a number of demands relating to government's role in the restructuring process and the daily operation of the mine.

Numsa strike tests new labour laws

(172) (189) (192)
FRANK NXUMALO

ET (NR) 31/8/98 LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — More than 220 000 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) are due to down tools tomorrow morning in a countrywide combined sympathy and primary strike against the car and steel industries

Marchers will assemble at designated points in Johannesburg, Pietersburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Durban and Witbank at about 10am.

The union has already settled with the Steel and Engineering Industry Federation of South Africa and the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo)

However, it is targeting these associations in a sympathy strike for allegedly colluding with the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea), the target of the primary strike.

This will be the first time under the new Labour Relations Act that workers in one industry exercise their right to embark on a solidarity strike in support of aggrieved comrades in another industry

"We believe that the national secondary strike is going to be the first of its kind under the new Labour Relations Act 1995," said Dumisa Ntuli, the Numsa spokesman

"It shall also be a test of the act to allow workers in one trade union to strike in sympathy and solidarity with members in other oppressed companies and sectors"

Employers' organisations, including Ameo, will challenge the legality of the strike today in the Johannesburg Labour Court. Ameo has said the strike would be a disaster for the industry, with major consequences for jobs and billion-rand export contracts. It said it had no influence over the Samiea talks and questioned whether Numsa's decision to target other sectors was "reasonable"

Numsa said "The employer organisation will seek to convince the Labour Court to adopt a conservative approach, that a secondary notice cannot be given until a primary strike has actually begun.

"Ameo will also attempt to convince the court that the sympathy strike in the auto sector would not have a significant impact upon the motor employers."

The union said its legal department had indicated that "Ameo will not succeed in drawing the court into technicalities with the intention of unreasonably limiting the constitutional right to strike"

The union accused Samiea of "tabling a miserable minimum wage offer of 4,5 percent and of rejecting all Numsa demands"

Ntuli said "Numsa is demanding that all wage increases should be on a guaranteed inflation rate increase. All wage increases ranging from 12 percent to 18 percent, depending on the grade, should be on the actual rates of pay"

Employers warn Numsa they will lock out workers

Reneé Grawitzky

MOTOR employers have gone on the offensive as the strike in the industry enters its second week, notifying the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) of their intention to lock out striking workers from today.

This would constitute the first national lockout in terms of the Labour Relations Act. **BD 7/9/98**

In response, Numsa has threatened to call on members in the vehicle manufacturing, metal and tyre sectors to embark on another sympathy strike on September 22.

Numsa members in these sectors took part in sporadic sympathy strike action on September 1 even though vehicle and tyre manufacturers applied for a court interdict to halt the action.

The applications for an interdict were rejected because of the failure of employers to give Numsa sufficient notice of their intention to apply for an interdict. As a result the Labour Court failed to hear the merits of the case.

The threat of further strikes follows the release of figures showing that car sales dropped last month to their lowest monthly level this year.

An Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation spokesman said employers would await official notification of the sympathy strike, as required by the Labour Relations Act, before deciding whether to pursue the original interdict application.

Meanwhile, a number of motor industry employers have applied for interdicts because of alleged intimidation. The union claimed there had been a high level of police interference and harassment. The parties have subsequently agreed on picketing rules.

Numsa said the threat by the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) to lock out workers was "an attempt to reduce the militance of workers and try to break them".

Samiea negotiator Vic Fourie said in the same way Numsa had taken up its right to strike, employers were using their right to lock out. It did not mean all employers would follow this route, he said.

SAA strike ends, but further labour action could follow

Reneé Grawitzky, Pearl Sebalo and Dustin Chick

THE week-old strike at SA Airways was finally resolved on Friday when the airline signed a wage agreement with the SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union.

The parties agreed on a 10% split increase, with 5% backdated to June and the remaining 5% increase implemented in December this year. Workers would also get a 13th cheque based on the 10% increase.

At the same time, talks at the Airports Company of SA (Acsa) resume this morning. Union spokesman Evan

Abrahamse said he hoped for a settlement as soon as possible, but the outcome depended on what was agreed to at the bargaining table.

He said unions were demanding a 12% increase to be implemented as from September 1, and were discussing the "possibility" of implementing a two-year wage agreement. Although the union position still remained at 12%, they were looking towards a settlement, Abrahamse said. It is believed that the two parties differ over 1%.

However, SAA could still be faced by a secondary strike action by SA Railways and Harbours Workers' Union members in support of workers at Acsa

Rift between farmers grows

Louise Cook

THE threatening split between the SA Agricultural Union (SAAU) and the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU) has spilled over into the Northern Province — the TAU's last remaining stronghold.

Farmers there say they are "awaiting the natural death of the TAU" before setting up their own union.

At the TAU's congress last week, the union attacked the SAAU for being African National Congress-orientated and selling out the TAU.

Two of the four provinces the TAU represents — North West and Mpumalanga — have set up separate unions in the past three years. A group of Gauteng farmers is due to set up a Gauteng union on Wednesday. Bertie van Zyl, a former Northern Province TAU member, said TAU support in the province had dwindled con-

siderably. Many former members preferred to farm without any union affiliation. They would join another union if it were free of politics and had a strong provincial focus. The Northern Province's Letaba district said it had disaffiliated from the TAU.

In Gauteng, former TAU regional chairman Alf Becker, who is starting up a new union, said he distanced himself "on behalf of a string of farmers in the region" from statements at the congress. TAU president Gert Ehlers dismissed his claims, saying the union retained majority support in Gauteng.

The SAAU has refused to comment on last week's TAU congress. It is to decide next month on its position on the TAU's decision to break away from the SAAU if it does not change its affiliation to make the TAU the sole af-

Comment: page 11

if the union fails to settle. Acsa said management and other staff would continue to work in areas operated by striking workers to ensure airports were disrupted as little as possible.

Meanwhile, SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) and Federated Retail and Allied Workers members disrupted operations at a number of Edgars stores on Friday. Pickets were held at a number of stores with claims that workers defied a Labour Court interdict by preventing customers' access to the premises.

In addition, there were sporadic reports of assaults on customers.

This action is in line with a decision taken by the unions at the end of July to embark on sporadic action against the company. Such action began in early August and has caused disruption and financial losses which could further exacerbate the company's already tenuous financial position.

The two-week old strike by Saccawu members at Stuttafords continues with attempts by the union to get the company back to the bargaining table.

The company instituted a lockout after negotiations deadlocked with the union demanding R200 across the board. Stuttafords' final offer was R140, plus extended working hours.

Union tunes in to change

Robyn Chalmers

THE Pan-African Telecommunications Union (Patu) will be restructured and a new union established by the end of next year to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing telecoms sector in Africa, it was decided at the recent conference in Lusaka. Patu has 44 members on the continent.

A document was drawn up indicating that the restructuring was driven by developments, including globalisation, privatisation and regulation trends and the convergence of the telecommunications, broadcasting and the information sectors.

A number of African countries have gone the privatisation route. Guinea led the way with the sale of 60% of its telecommunications utility in 1996 to Telekom Malaysia for \$45m. Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, SA and Senegal have also partially privatised their utilities.

The document said there was a need to increase the number of telephones in Africa and to facilitate access to telecommunications services.

Conditions had to be created that would attract investment for the development of infrastructure and for Africa to adapt to the rapid technological changes under way.

The conference approved a restructuring implementation team for the new Patu.

Income generating activities proved included exhibitions, seminars, on-line services via a dedicated website and publications.

Transport strike unresolved

ARG 7/9/98

Johannesburg - Talks between the Airports Company of SA and the SA Railway and Harbour Workers' Union resumed today in a bid to resolve a six-day-old strike.

About 3 000 Sarhwa members countrywide went on strike last Wednesday after Acsa offered a 10 percent wage increase against the 12 percent demand of the union.

Airports company spokeswoman Nicky Rose-Innes today said manage-

~~(SAA)~~ (ISA)
ment was optimistic that a settlement would be reached with the union in the next two days.

"We believe 10 percent is more than fair. Other companies, like SAA, have offered between six and eight-and-a-half percent," she said. Management's offer includes transport, a housing subsidy and 13th cheque

She said contingency plans were put into place immediately to ensure passengers were not inconvenienced.
- Sapa

SA NEWS DIGEST

□ LABOUR

OT (MR) 7/9/98

Trade unions lock horns with Edgars over wage freeze (152)

The South African Commercial and Catering Workers' Union (Saccawu) and the Federal Council of Retail and Allied Workers (Fedcrow) on Friday threatened to embark on a full-blown strike unless the Edgars Group of stores lifted a wage freeze for the 1998-99 financial year. Hundreds of Saccawu members picketed Edgars stores throughout Johannesburg on Friday. Edgars reportedly posted a 28 percent loss for the financial year ending in March.

But the unions said they had hard evidence that the group had made a R417 million profit in the last financial year. Saccawu is demanding a R240 monthly increase across the board. Nigel Unwin, the human resources director of Edgars, said the wage freeze increases applied to every group employee, including top management. — Frank Nxumalo, Johannesburg



IN SOLIDARITY A Numsa member protests in central Johannesburg. The union says that members will strike if motor workers' actual wages are not increased.

PHOTO: JOHN WOODROOF

ET(MR) 7/9/98

Numsa names day for second sympathy strike

(152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — About 220 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) would embark on a national grasshopper or second sympathy strike on September 22 if there was no breakthrough in the motor components industry dispute, the union said last week.

The strike would affect workers in the auto assembly, metal, tyre and rubber sectors. Numsa said the sympathy action would be "in solidarity with the oppressed motor workers", which included staff at petrol stations, panel beaters, spare parts vendors and big component-producing companies.

About 60 000 workers in this sector have been on a national strike since Tuesday, the first strike in the sector in 50 years.

The union said its real dispute was with the South African Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea). The dispute was not about differences in wage increase percentages but about the "principle agreement to pay increases on actuals and not minimums".

Hosea Morapedi, the union motor sector co-ordinator, said compared with the car and manufacturing industries, Samiea had been "backward" by refusing to grant increases on

actual wages.

"The increases granted on minimums have not kept pace with inflation," Morapedi said. "Workers have been getting poorer and poorer; their purchasing power has declined."

"Employers in the metal, automotive and tyre (industries) grant their increases on actuals. Workers cannot accept wage roadblocks when the industry is making huge profits (and workers) are more than prepared to sacrifice their wages for long-term benefit."

Numsa also lashed out at Samiea for threatening to lock out its members if they continued with the strike this morning.

The union said the threatened lock-out would be an attempt to "reduce the militancy of workers" and to try to break them.

"We feel that such a skop-endonder style of management will not assist in resolving the current deadlock, but will exacerbate the situation further and make workers more angry," Morapedi said.

"Numsa is ready for this challenge because all it means is that workers will still be on strike."

Vic Fourie, the Samiea spokesman, said although strike action was never good for the country, it was "a legal remedy available to trade unions".

He said "We will just handle it like any strike."

More violence in motor industry strike claimed

Reneé Grawitzky
and Sibonelo Radebe

THE motor industry strike entered its second week yesterday amid claims by employers and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) of various acts of intimidation and violence.

There was uncertainty over the extent to which employers had instituted lockouts, while the union claimed that a number of small establishments had indicated their willingness to settle on increases in the region of 15%.

SA Motor Industry Employers' Association spokesman Vic Fourie said incidents of violence and intimidation had increased countrywide. However, employers would not seek an interdict at this

stage, he said.

In Gauteng there were reports of armed striking workers attempting to intimidate non-striking workers.

Numsa motor sector co-ordinator Hosea Morapedi said employers, in some instances, had taken up arms and threatened strikers with guns and sjamboks.

Morapedi said employers were the "last people to say the strike is getting out of hand as they are fuelling the flames" by threatening to implement a lockout and employing replacement labour.

Fourie said it was difficult to evaluate the extent to which employers had instituted lockouts. The notice was merely a "tool in the hands of employers who wished to make use of it", he said.

Morapedi said while employers had

(152) (152) BD 8/9/98
the right to lock out, that right was insignificant in this case as workers were already on strike and on the streets.

Meanwhile, a survey of the major motor retail companies has revealed that the effect of the strike has been limited.

McCarthy Human Resource manager Niel Bosman said the company had not been affected as it paid far above the current disputed minimum wage level.

Imperial Motor Holdings said it had experienced mixed worker reactions, with some branches being affected.

Imperial's Pretoria parts manager Sid Nagdee said about 15% of the workforce was on strike but that the business was operating normally.

Both parties said negotiations would resume later this week.

Disruptive strike ended

Secretary 9/9/98
(162)
By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A FINAL agreement to end a disruptive strike has been reached between the Airports Company of South Africa (Acsa) and the South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union (Sarhwu), management and union officials announced yesterday.

In a joint statement Acsa and Sarhwu described the settlement as progressive and conclusive. It would improve staff pay as a result of a perfor-

mance-based remuneration structure. The agreement demonstrated the sound relationship between shareholder interests and labour.

Acsa general manager of marketing Ms Chamaine Lodewyk said the performance-measurement system would be developed by both parties. Both parties agreed to a 10 percent increase and a substantial move to narrow the wage gap.

The housing assistance scheme has been adjusted to minimise the hardships of families after the recent dramatic mortgage rates hike.

Meanwhile, a five-day industrial action by SA Transnet Allied Workers Union has been settled, SAA chief executive officer Andrew Coleman said.

He said Satawu members had agreed to the company's two-year wage offer.

● About 5 000 Edgars Stores employees have embarked on partial work stoppage to demand wage talks with management, spokesmen for the Federation Council of Retail and Allied Workers Union and the SA Clothing and Catering Allied Workers Union said yesterday.

Motor bosses and Numsa to explore strike resolution

Pearl Sebolao and Sibonelo Radebe

MOTOR industry employers will meet the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) today to explore whether a compromise can be reached to resolve the 10-day wage strike in the motor sector

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said that if there was no breakthrough in the discussions with the SA Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea), workers would intensify picketing at key establishments owned by Samiea officials.

The union would also continue canvassing companies to agree on wage increases based on actual rates of pay instead of minimums. A flood of companies had already signed petitions stating that they were prepared to allow industry negotiators to agree on actual rates of pay, Ntuli said.

Samiea spokesman Vic Fourie denied that a substantial number of its members had signed petitions saying the surveys conducted by Numsa were not credible. Samiea had, however, cautioned its members not to respond to the surveys by Numsa.

Samiea was not prepared to negotiate on actual increases, since the decision to negotiate on minimums was

supported by its membership.

Picketing Samiea officials' businesses would not change the employers' position, he said.

Meanwhile, retailers Bee Gees and Smart Centre have instituted a lock-out against SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) members who embarked on a wage strike last week.

Saccawu spokesman Pitso Tshukudu alleged yesterday that the two retailers, who have merged to form the Retail Apparel Group, were intimidating workers into signing forms denying them the right to strike and had threatened them with dismissals.

Workers had demanded a wage increase of R240 a month while management had offered R200.

Management, however, said its wage offer represented a 10% increase which exceeded inflation and compared favourably with other settlements in the retail sector.

The strike by Saccawu members at Stuttafords was finally resolved yesterday.

Management and the union agreed on a wage increase of R140 across the board, effective from this month. They also agreed on a 40-hour week with one additional Saturday a month.

(152) (152)
BD 10/9/98

'Strike affects business'

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE "cash-strapped" Edgars retail group has been hit by nationwide demonstrations involving 5 000 employees since August, culminating in brief work stoppages, group communications manager Mr Nigel Anwin said yesterday

"During protest actions customers were often barred and intimidated from shopping by jeering demonstrators, which adversely affected business operations," he said.

Anwin was responding to South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) and Federal Council of Retailers and Allied Workers Union (Fedcaw)

allegations that the group had pleaded poverty and failed to offer any wage increases to its employees while it had posted a reasonable profit for the financial year

At least 2 000 employees had been retrenched this year in a bid to turn the financial situation around. The unions had also been invited to inspect the audited financial statements, but refused and chose not to believe the company's predicament, Anwin said

Union officials have walked out of the talks several times, he said, adding that management was disappointed by the immaturity shown by union representatives.

Fedcaw spokesman Nat Kettlele charged that the company was not prepared to allocate

money for workers' increases, while it spent more than R300 million in refurbishing some of its stores

Saccawu spokesman Pitso Tshukudu said the wage freeze would have further negative effect on employees' salaries and increases in interest rates would impact severely on their spending power

● The employee lockout at Stuttafords chain store has been resolved after Saccawu agreed to a R140 a month increase and 40-hour working week with one extra Saturday shift a month. Tshukudu said workers resumed their duties yesterday

Striking Saccawu members at Smarts Centre and Bee Gees were locked out after a wage dispute.

11/9/98

(102)

Car manufacturing plants forced to close

Reneé Grawitzky

VOIKSWAGEN, Delta, Samcor and Nissan have been forced to close their plants because of component shortages caused by the motor industry strike, which has affected production at some of the key components manufacturers.

Sources said the closures could place a strain on companies, such as Volkswagen, which have multibillion-rand export orders to fulfil. Volkswagen could not be reached for comment. Concerns about how the contracts

would be affected were initially raised during the week-long vehicle manufacturing wage strike last month.

Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) chairman Brian Smith said National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members in the car plants were being heavily affected by the strike as they were being sent home without pay.

Some companies, such as Mercedes-Benz of SA, have continued production by importing a "small number of critical parts". Mercedes said this would

not affect vehicle prices as the company would absorb the costs.

The effect of the strike on the manufacturing sector was discussed during an Ameo meeting last night.

Ameo has informed the main component suppliers hit by the strike that if they cannot resolve their problems, manufacturers will be forced to source components elsewhere, including from overseas suppliers. A source said employees were not being prescriptive, but at the same time could not produce if component supply was erratic.

Ameo also discussed Numsa's threat of another sympathy strike on September 22. Employers said the threat was "purely academic" because plants would in any event not be operating on that day if the primary strike continued.

The union called members in vehicle manufacturing and metal sectors out on a sympathy strike in support of the primary strike in the motor industry on September 1. The strike had a limited effect in these sectors.

The Ameo meeting concluded with

the resumption of talks between the union and the SA Motor Industries Employers' Association (Samiea).

Pearl Seholo reports that Numsa said it was disappointed with the outcome of the meeting and accused Samiea of misleading its members.

The union made a number of proposals, which Samiea agreed to take back to its members. The strike centres on a union demand that increases be based on actual, and not minimum, rates of pay. Parties have agreed to meet again next Wednesday.

to component shortages

(152)

bd 11/9/98

Vital car parts strike halts assembly lines

~~PHOTO~~ (152)
HENRI DU PLESSIS
MOTORING EDITOR

ARL 11/9/98

Production has stopped on a number of car assembly lines as manufacturers wait for parts from the strike-disrupted component industry.

Delta Motor Corporation was forced to close its plant in Port Elizabeth and send workers home when the supply of vital parts like car seats was cut by the strike action.

A Delta spokesman said the corporation would review the situation on Monday.

South African Motor Corporation (Samcor), Volkswagen and Nissan are also reported to be affected.

A Toyota spokesman said they were having supply problems, but had been able to continue production.

Manufacturers, who use a "just in time" supply system for efficiency, may be hit hard if the strike continues for much longer, say industry sources.

The system allows the industry to wait until the moment components are needed before ordering them from the independent manufacturers.

Strike by workers hits hard on motor industry

THE strike in the motor industry was having a major impact on the seven South African motor manufacturing plants, the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo) said yesterday

Some plants had been closed for most of the week while others had to send workers home after abridged production periods because of a critical shortage of components.

Moreover, said Ameo chairman Mr Brian Smith yesterday, some manufacturers were importing parts from abroad and could be forced to make this a permanent arrangement, with dire consequences for workers in the industry

"Although the strike in the industry does not have wide support, it appears that the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) has targeted

certain key component suppliers. This is having a major impact on the motor manufacturers," said Smith.

"It appears that Numsa believes the seven motor manufacturers can apply pressure on the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) to meet Numsa's demands"

It was impossible for Ameo to influence the motor industry negotiations or the more than 18 000 employers who were a party to the negotiations, he said

The strike by more than 60 000 workers started last week after Samiea offered a 4,3 percent pay increase. Numsa, the Motor Industry Employees' Union and the Motor Industry Staff Association, are demanding a national increase of between 12 and 18 percent. - Sapa

11/9/98
Howe 11/9/98

(162)



Car production grinds to a halt as crippling strike takes its toll

ARG 12/9/98

(158)

Johannesburg – A devastating strike by about 60 000 motor industry workers has forced three of South Africa's seven car-makers to halt production amid a shortage of vehicle parts, officials said.

The workers, members of the National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa), are employed at about 18 000 South African spares shops, panelbeating outlets, component-making firms, petrol stations and car dealerships.

They have been on strike since September 1, demanding wage increases of 12-18%, against employers' offers of about 4,5%.

Among car-makers hit by the 11-day old action are Delta Motor Corp, in which General Motors has a controlling interest, and Nissan SA, in which Japan's Nissan

Motor Company holds a 50% stake. Delta said yesterday it had temporarily shut its two South African car assembly plants because of a lack of critical components.

"We will be able to reassess the situation only (next week), to establish whether the supply of critical components is sufficient to warrant recommencement of vehicle production," Delta spokesman Mark Derry said.

He said Delta was now considering sourcing some of the parts, including seats, from abroad.

Mr Derry said Delta was losing production of more than 200 units, valued at R2-million, a day. Delta assembles Isuzu bakkies, and Opel Astras and Corsas.

The strike also shut South

African Motor Corporation (Samcor), which assembles Fords and Mazdas.

Meanwhile, Nissan said it expected its plant near Pretoria – which employs 4 200 workers – to resume production by Tuesday if wage talks succeeded.

Volkswagen SA and Toyota SA said they had not been severely affected by the latest component shortage.

Volkswagen has secured a R5-billion order to supply 68 000 vehicles to Britain over the next 18 months.

Mercedes Benz SA's subsidiary Daimler Benz, which also assembles Hondas, said it had slightly scaled down its production schedules while the strike continued unresolved. – Reuters

Critical shortage

of car parts

(152)
ST(BT) 13/9/98

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

By DON ROBERTSON

THE strike by National Union of Metal Workers of SA (Numsa) in the retail motor and component industries has left the motor manufacturing sector facing a shortage of critical parts.

Car makers are now threatening to import parts, which could result in huge job losses in the component industry

Some of the seven manufacturing plants have been closed for a week, while others are having to cut short the working day as they are unable to meet daily production schedules

The strike by Numsa members working for the 18 000 employers represented by the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samea) enters its third week tomorrow, with the union demanding increases in actual wages of 12%-18%, while Samea is offering increases of 4.5% on minimum wages

'Members of Fawu at Rothmans not on a go-slow'

(152) Reneé Grawitzky (198)

30 14/9/98
THE Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) has denied allegations that its members at Rothmans International's Heidelberg plant had embarked on a go-slow and committed acts of sabotage by mixing different cigarette brands to pressurise management to meet demands.

Management has refused to comment, but confirmed that parties have been engaged in wage negotiations since June and were meeting today.

Fawu said the situation at the plant was tense and the relationship with management had broken down. Workers were disillusioned and demoralised as negotiations had dragged on from June while they have been expecting increases from July.

Management was attempting to intimidate and provoke workers, it said. Ten workers had allegedly been dismissed for "minor issues".

The dispute takes place amid heightened tension around the Tobacco Products Amendment Bill. Rothmans said that there was no link between the dispute and the fact that the union was campaigning against the bill.

At the outset of negotiations the union was demanding a 10% increase and a 15% housing allowance.

Workers in the tobacco industry are among the highest paid in the country.

The bill will bring an end to the advertising and promotion of tobacco products, prohibit their free distribution, limit smoking in public places and allow for the regulation of tobacco products' nicotine and tar-levels.

Numsa proposes package to end motor-sector strike

Pearl Sebolao
and René Grawitzky

DD 14/9/98
THE National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) would consider suspending the motor sector strike — which enters its third week — if employers agreed a package proposal tabled to break the impasse, Numsa spokesman Hosea Morapedi said at the weekend.

At the same time, vehicle manufacturers braced themselves for another week of irregular supplies of auto-components which had forced the closure of some plants while others had to send their employees home early.

Volkswagen denied earlier reports that its plant was forced to close. The company also denied reports that the strike would negatively affect a multi-billion rand export contract.

The Delta Motor Corporation, which was forced to close down its Kempston Road and Struandale plants because of a shortage of certain components last week, would decide today whether the supply of critical components was sufficient for vehicle production to resume.

The proposal tabled by Numsa to bring an end to the motor strike was

made at a meeting with the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) late last week.

It required employers to give an undertaking that from next year wage negotiations would be based on actual rates of pay instead of the minimum.

The proposal also called for parties to speed up the establishment of an industry policy forum to discuss the issue of actual wage increases, industry restructuring and transformation.

Numsa would then convert its wage demands — which ranged from 12% to 18% on actual rates of pay — for 1998 to be on minimum rates, Morapedi said. Samiea was given till Wednesday to sell the proposal to its members.

Samiea has in turn recommended that the Industry Policy Forum be set up and that it begins debating the unions' demand of actual increases. Samiea also proposed the appointment of a mediator between the parties. This was rejected by Numsa.

Numsa meanwhile said it would intensify the strike by 60 000 motor sector workers. It would also target key establishments where senior Samiea officials had businesses. The sympathy strike at car manufacturing plants on September 22 would go ahead.

Refuse workers back on the job

STAFF REPORTER ARG 15/9/98

Thousands of homes in the South Peninsula did not have their rubbish removed during an illegal day-long strike by refuse removal staff

The strike, which lasted part of the working day, meant that yesterday's removals could not be completed. This had placed the service a day behind

(158) (978)
Waste management spokesman Mohamed Kriel said staff were back on the job today and the refuse removal schedule should be back to normal by early next week.

Mr Kriel said the strike was over a Metro-wide dispute involving union organisational rights.

The South Peninsula had been made a victim of this dispute, he said.

Numsa gives word today on new strike

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) will announce this morning its decision on the nature of a second national "grasshopper" or sympathy strike by its 220 000 members planned for September 22

Numsa's first sympathy strike, which set a precedent under the new Labour Relations Act, took place on September 1

Dumisa Ntuli, the union's spokesman, said the decision would be based on an assessment of the impact of the two-week-old primary strike by 50 000 Numsa workers in the motor components industry.

This action has led to erratic production and the temporary closures of manufacturing plants by Samcor, Delta, Nissan and Volkswagen.

Reuters reported Mercedes-Benz had begun importing vehicle components by air to compensate for the shortage created by the strike, Annelise van der Laan, spokesman for Mercedes, said yesterday

The South African Motor



'TAKE US SERIOUSLY' Over 5 000 Numsa workers from Gauteng marched to deliver a memorandum to the Alberton offices of the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association yesterday

PHOTO: SEIWYN TAIT

Corporation (Samcor), which assembles Ford and Mazda vehicles, and Delta, which makes Isuzu pickup trucks, and Opel Astras and Corsa models, had not ruled out the option if the strike was prolonged.

Volkswagen and Toyota said they were not experiencing problems with parts supplies.

Ntuli said the union's impact study would also take into consideration the behaviour and attitude of the police during the

prolonged industrial action.

He said Numsa had written a letter to the minister of safety and security to complain about the harassment and arrest of workers on the protected strike

The union's motor sector includes spares shops, car dealers, component manufacturers, petrol stations, car service workshops and component manufacturing companies

Ntuli said over 5 000 workers from the union's Gauteng region

had marched yesterday to the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association offices in Alberton. They handed over a memorandum of demands including wage increases ranging from 12 to 18 percent on minimum and actual rates of pay

"We employees in the motor industry wish to express our great dismay and disappointment at the manner in which you conduct wage negotiations," the memorandum said.

Strike negotiators look to '99 wages

FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE

(152) ET(MR) 16/9/98

Johannesburg — Today's negotiations to end the two-week-old motor component industry strike were likely to focus on drawing up guidelines for next year's negotiations on actual rates of pay, management and union leaders said yesterday

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) warned employers that the strike by its 50 000 members in the sector would be strengthened with a second sympathy, or "grasshopper", strike by its 220 000 members if it did not get a written agreement on actual rates of pay for next year

Mbuyiselo Ngwenda, the

general secretary of Numsa, said the union's national executive had decided to prolong the strike if in-principle agreements were not clinched on actuals and "substantial increases on minimums in the lower grades"

Numsa said it would like to see a unitary bargaining council for the industry that took in the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea)

Vic Fourie, the chief executive of Samiea, said meaningful progress would probably be made at today's meeting, but progress depended on the trade unions not casting their package deal "in concrete"

He said there had not been any meeting between Samiea and the National Association of

Automobile Manufacturers of SA or the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Association

He said Samiea's resistance to negotiations on actuals was not cast in concrete and it was prepared to discuss Numsa's wage negotiations suggestion with unions at the Industry Policy Forum, but it would be impossible to determine the outcome of those discussions this year

Fourie said a lot had been made of Samiea's opening offer of 4 percent on minimum prescribed wages and Numsa needed to "engage us in negotiations"

Motor manufacturers said there had been an improvement at some plants following the disruption of production at many plants last week

□ LABOUR

Gallagher Estate accused of racism

Gallagher Estate management was accused of racism yesterday for allegedly ordering its security personnel to set police dogs on toyi-toying black workers. The workers were demanding their severance pay by the Federal Commercial and Retail Workers Union (FEDCRWU). (152)

Duncan Mamogome, the union spokesman, said security, cleaning, theatre, banqueting and switchboard operations had been totally outsourced, leaving a total of 115 workers without work. Mamogome said workers were toyi-toying because they had not received the retrenchment packages they had been promised by management. (17/9/98)

Mamogome said although the union understood that the company was restructuring, not a single white worker had been affected. A management spokesman said "there was no truth" in the allegations and refused to comment any further. — Frank Nxumalo, Johannesburg

Municipal protest action suspended

Reneé Grawitzky

THE Congress of SA Trade Unions has suspended its protest action against the privatisation of municipal services, planned for Tuesday, after sufficient progress was made during bilateral meetings with Provincial Affairs minister Valli Moosa this week.

The federation's executive meeting this week also adopted a range of resolutions on next month's presidential job summit and the accountability of federation officials entering Parliament.

The SA Municipal and Allied Workers Union said while progress had been made in talks with Moosa, it did not believe that the whole anti-privatisation campaign should be put on hold. The meeting with Moosa on Saturday was called after labour and government failed in the National Economic Development and Labour Council to resolve their differences on the issue of privatisation of municipal services.

The federation said the minister and the munic-

18/9/98 (193) (193)
Municipal union had agreed on the establishment of a local government sectoral committee based on the National Framework Agreement to discuss local government restructuring

The parties also agreed that the regulatory framework must be completed as soon as possible

Government and labour would meet again today

Meeting fails to break strike

Reneé Grawitzky

05/18/98

(152)

(152)

A MARATHON meeting between the National Union of Metal Workers of SA and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association failed on Wednesday night to end the impasse over the three-week motor strike.

The union said it was disappointed that the association did not respond to its proposals for an agreement on wages for next year, industry transformation, and substantial increases on minimum wages for lower-grade workers this year.

Another meeting will be held on Sunday.

New unit to crack down on Cape gangs

David Greybe

CAPE TOWN — Government announced the establishment yesterday of a "gang-buster" unit in the Western Cape, made up of 30 top prosecutors, police investigators, lawyers, tax collectors and chartered accountants.

The "investigating directorate on organised crime and public safety" is the first major anticrime initiative of the new national director of public prosecutions, Bulelani Ngcuka.

Justice Minister Dullah Omar told a media briefing the unit would remain outside the normal chain of command to ensure it remained "untainted by the stigma" attached to other police units working on gang-related activity in the Western Cape.

It would be led by Western Cape deputy attorney-general advocate Percy Sonn. Omar said Sonn had monitored gang activity in the province for

the past year and had visited the US to study responses to illicit drug trafficking and gang violence there.

Omar said the team would muster all legal resources at its disposal to hit the gangs "where it hurts most" — their financial transactions.

Individual high-profile gangsters would be targeted "in a sustained manner. Every breach of the law, no matter how minor, will be followed up."

Ngcuka said: "The time has come to adopt extraordinary measures." He said he and national police commissioner George Fivaz, who was also at the briefing, "accept that the buck stops with us". Fivaz said the unit was an appropriate response to the ever-increasing global "sophistication of crime. If we do not react in kind we will not break its back."

Omar said tax collectors seconded from the SA revenue service, together with chartered accountants made

available by Business Against Crime, would focus on the financial transactions of gangs. "The asset seizure provisions of the Drug Trafficking Act and the Proceeds of Crime Act will be extensively employed to cripple the gangs financially," he said.

Deputy Justice Minister Joe Matthews pointed to the imprisonment of notorious US gangster Al Capone in 1931 for tax evasion as an example of how the unit would operate.

Omar said cases would be "fast-tracked" through the courts. A source said that cases would be prosecution-driven to ensure success. Sloppy police work which had previously resulted in gangsters walking free would end.

The unit's work would be monitored at a national level by a "control board" comprising the national police commissioner, the commissioner of the revenue service and the director-general of the National Intelligence Agency.

Eskom to sue union for damages to office

Reneé Grawitzky

ESKOM is to sue the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) for R8m in compensation and loss of earnings resulting from damage to its head office in Johannesburg caused when striking workers went on a rampage in July and burned the building down.

The union met Public Enterprises Minister Stella Sigcau earlier this week to discuss its concerns over Eskom's plans.

Union sources said Eskom's plans could damage relationships between the two parties and were seen as an attempt to destroy the union.

It is believed the union is being sued

for R4m in damages and an additional R4m for lost profit and income.

At the time of the incident, Sigcau and Minerals and Energy Minister Penuell Maduna warned that government would not tolerate anarchy and criminal acts. They said the union should take responsibility for the actions of their members. "Gone are the days when people can trash property and get away with it," Sigcau said.

Union sources said that during yesterday's meeting Sigcau requested another meeting today to discuss the possible appointment of two deputy CEOs at Eskom, a move which has led to tension within the organisation.

Eskom management confirmed that

it would meet Sigcau before she met organised labour.

Speculation has surrounded these appointments, which were supposed to have been announced some time ago. Union sources said the speculation had resulted in a power struggle between contenders. At the same time, the appointments had raised racial tensions, with white employees claiming white candidates were being sidelined.

There are said to be two internal candidates — Bongani Khumalo, Eskom's human resource director, and Dolly Mokgatle, who heads the corporate affairs division.

Eskom had also approached a number of outside candidates.

Key Market Movements

Numsa agrees to more talks

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

ncy in resolving the three-week-old strike, he said

IN a final bid to resolve the current strike by 50 000 workers in the motor industry the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) has agreed to hold further talks on Sunday

He charged that employers had shown a lack of commitment to genuine negotiations

Samiea chief executive Mr Vic Fourie maintained that the industry was "too diverse" and some employers could not pay actual rates After a series of meetings, the association pleaded for further adjournment until next Sunday

The decision comes after abortive attempts last Wednesday to resolve the situation

Numsa sector coordinator Mr Hosea Morapedi said yesterday the employers again failed to respond to Numsa's set of proposals around an agreement in principle on actual rate of pay increases for next year

A solidarity strike scheduled for next week by the entire 220 000-strong membership of Numsa will continue on Tuesday if the weekend talks fail to find a resolution

The union is extremely disappointed with the South African Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea) negotiators for not showing a sense of urge-

The strike was not about the differences in percentages between employers' offers and unions' demands, but the method of granting increases, Morapedi said

(107) (192) (152)

18/10/98
MORAPEDI

21.10.98



Striking petrol attendants kidnap 'scabs'

(15a) ARG 19/9/98

JOSEPH ARANES

Trouble flared in the Strand for a second day when striking petrol attendants rounded up casual and non-striking workers and carted them off in waiting minibus taxis.

The workers started their "kidnapping" spree on Thursday night and continued until yesterday when police intervened.

The police and the traffic department closed roads to prevent taxis and other cars from driving around the town intimidating petrol station owners, their workers and customers.

Police told workers that their actions were illegal and if they continued, they would all be arrested.

Most of the striking workers are members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) and have been on strike since September 1 demanding an 18% wage increase for petrol attendants and a 12% increase for mechanics and panelbeaters.



DEFIANT MOOD: police block striking Numsa workers who tried to disrupt service station operations in the Strand Picture: LEON MÜLLER

Employers are offering 4.5%. The union says the lowest paid petrol attendants earn R129 a week.

Petrol stations owners gathered to discuss ways of dealing with the situation. Spokesman for the group Leon de Waal-Louw said they would use video footage taken from close circuit television in their forecourts, as evidence

against the workers.

"You can see them bundling the non-striking workers into the taxis at gun-point. Their behaviour is completely unacceptable. We have spoken to the police and the provincial Minister for Community Safety," said Mr De Waal-Louw. Numsa spokesman Melford Yakobi said unions members were

not involved in any illegal action. "This strike is legal as required by the Labour Relations Act. Petrol attendants earn far less than most people in this country. They get a basic wage of R129 a week. Of this money tax has not yet been deducted.

"We are not going to retreat because wages in this sector are still a national disgrace and the conditions of these workers have not changed," said Mr Yakobi.

Meetings have been held between employers and the union but none has managed to break the deadlock. Another meeting will be held tomorrow.

Jan Schoeman of the Motor Industries Federation said the workers' actions could not be tolerated and they would apply to the Labour Court for an urgent interdict to restrain the workers from kidnapping and assaulting casual staff.

See picture, page 2

Pay increase method still the sticking point in strike

EMPLOYERS and trade union representatives will meet again today in a bid to end the three-week strike in the motor industry, which has affected 18 300 businesses including filling stations, panel beaters and components manufacturers.

However, both parties remained adamant on Friday they would not compromise over the key issue in the dispute, which is the union demand to negotiate wage increases on actual rates of pay rather than prescribed industry minimums.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) also threatened to raise the stakes in the strike by continuing sympathy strikes by its 220 000 members.

At present, wage talks between the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) and Numsa are conducted over minimum rates, while most employees are paid far above these. In practice, this translates into increases either not being granted or being granted at employers' discretion.

Numsa negotiator Hosea Morapedi said the method of granting increases was the main point of contention.

"It is the key issue and central to the strike. We want to make it a

(17a) (17a)
A meeting today on the motor industry dispute will try to resolve how wages are negotiated, writes CAROL PATON

ST (PT) 20/9/98

point that in future everybody gets a wage increase," said Morapedi.

Samiea negotiator Vic Fourie said employers could not concede to the union demand because of the large and diverse number of employers in the industry.

"It becomes impossible to negotiate on actual wages. Employers are spread throughout the country and vary from those who have 100 employees to those with only one. We believe you cannot create one wage model," said Fourie.

Fourie said most establishments had not been detrimentally affected by the strike. "We are making use of scab labour and have used students, family and friends. There are very few establishments that have had to close. The loss cannot be calculated. It may be insignificant," he said.

However, component manufacturers bore greater costs as some vehicle manufacturers had begun to import parts, although Fourie said, not on an extensive scale.

Greater pressure on the components sector could lead to a compromise deal today, where the employers agree to negotiate wages on actual rates of pay.

However, Numsa is determined to win substantial gains across the board, having in previous years postponed strike action.

"People who have joined the union expect gains. This time we have complied with all the technicalities for a protected strike and it's do or die," said Morapedi.

Wages in the industry are low. Morapedi said prescribed minimums were R129 a week and the average pay of petrol attendants about R250 a week.

He accused employers of dragging their feet in resolving the dispute. "We were very disappointed by the pace of the employers in these negotiations. On Wednesday they once again asked for more time — even though the same issues have been on the table since the start of the dispute."

Motor industry strike set to continue

Pearl Sebolao

BB 2/19/98 (152) (152)

THE motor industry strike, which enters its fourth week today, was set to continue indefinitely after wage talks between the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and employers did not yield any results.

The parties failed to reach agreement after five hours of negotiations last night.

Numsa spokesman Hosea Morapedi said the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samea) rejected proposals made by the union last week in order to break the impasse.

Morapedi said the main sticking point was the issue of granting the

workers increases based on actual rates instead of minimum wages.

He said there was no way Numsa would back down on the strike if employers did not agree to the framework — which included an "in principle agreement" on actual rates of pay for the year ahead.

Samea also rejected proposals for an adjustment of the minimum wage for petrol pump attendants to R5-an-hour, he said.

Meanwhile, the second sympathy strike by Numsa members in vehicle manufacturing and engineering industries go ahead tomorrow. More than 170 000 workers were expected to participate in the strike.

Striking council staff on march

LINDSAY BARNES
STAFF REPORTER

2/18 (152)

ARLT 21/9/98

Thousands of municipal workers marched to the provincial government offices in Wale Street today to ask local government MEC Patrick McKenzie to intervene in an 18-month wrangle with the Cape Metropolitan Council.

Officials from the South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu) handed a memorandum to provincial government officials at the Provincial Legislature in Wale Street, as well as council officials from the Cape Metropolitan Council and Cape Town City Council.

They asked for intervention in the impasse between the union and their employers.

Thousands of municipal employees from all Cape Town's six municipalities as well as the CMC, downed tools today in support of the union's one-day strike. Among those who did not take part were people in "essential" posts such as ambulance workers, firemen and traffic officers.

The union called the strike to protest against the "unilateral withdrawal of Samwu's organisational rights" after unsuccessful attempts to resolve the dispute.

Union spokesman Majidie Abrahams said the dispute followed months of talks about what constitutes a union constituency and how the union should deploy its full-time shop stewards.

In terms of the Labour Relations Act, a full-time shop steward can be employed for every 1 000 signed up members.

Mr Abrahams said since the restructuring of the local government they had been having problems with the Cape Metropolitan Council and some of the six municipalities about the deployment of shop stewards.

"In the Oostenberg Municipality, for example, where we have fewer than 1 000 workers, only because of the size of the municipality, the local government refuses to allow us to employ one of our shop stewards. This we find completely unacceptable as they want to determine how we should constitute ourselves."

The issue is to be referred to the Labour Court late this afternoon.

Breakdown in wage talks

THE strike by thousands of motor industry workers will continue this week after talks yesterday between employers and the union failed to yield a settlement, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA said

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said no further negotiations between the union and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samea) were planned

The breakdown of the talks yesterday after nearly five hours follows the failed negotiations last week when Numsa vowed to intensify the action if a settlement was not reached soon in the wage dispute

Ntuli said in addition to the ongoing

strike by up to 60 000 motor industry workers, a second one-day sympathy strike by other Numsa members would go ahead tomorrow

This would involve up to 170 000 Numsa members working in the car and tyre manufacturing, steel, and engineering industries. Other sympathy strikes may follow

Last week Samea raised its initial offer of a 4,5 percent increase on minimum wages to between 8 and 10 percent

Numsa is demanding a 12 to 18 percent increase, but said the main sticking point was still the issue of how increases were granted

Ntuli said Samea did not respond

positively yesterday to Numsa's proposals on basing increases on actual wages earned for a minimum wage of R5-an-hour for petrol attendants, and to close the wage differentials

Samea had "a fixed mandate" to give increases on minimum wages only. It refused to sign an in-principle agreement to pay increases on actual wages and to agree to implement the pay system next year, he said

Samea spokesman Vic Fourie was not immediately available for comment

Motor industry workers have been on strike since September 1, affecting petrol stations, panelbeating shops, spare parts firms and car component manufacturers - *Sapa*

NUMSA 11/10/88

(152)

(152)

GRASSHOPPER ACTION More than 220 000 workers will go out in sympathy tomorrow

Numsa strike talks deadlocked

CT (108) 1/19/98 (15A)

FRANK NXUMALO AND ROY COKAYNE

Johannesburg — The national "grasshopper" or second sympathy strike by more than 220 000 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) and other motor industry trade unions will take place tomorrow after the unions and the South African Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea) deadlocked again yesterday.

"We didn't come to an agreement," said Vic Fourie, the Samiea spokesman.

"The trade unions wanted a guarantee on increases and negotiations on actual wages. Employers believe that negotiations on actual wages should be at enterprise level and not at central level. That is the fundamental difference between the two parties."

Numsa said the meeting was "a mockery." The union accused employers of talking "totally different and removed" from the issues that were discussed at the last meeting on Wednesday.

"We have deadlocked," said Hosea Morapedi, the Numsa motor sector co-ordinator.

"Yesterday's meeting failed to arrive at a solution in a way that



DEAD END Trying to break the impasse yesterday were (from left) Vic Fourie of Samiea; Mike Louw, the vice-president of the Motor Industry Bargaining Council (partly obscured); Johan du Plessis of the Motor Industry Staff Association; Jaycee Greyling of the Motor Industry Employers Union of South Africa and Hosea Morapedi of Numsa

PHOTO ANDI KATZ

would solve the current dispute. The employers are still where we were (on Wednesday)."

Numsa's package of proposals included an agreement in principle on actual rates of pay

that would be effective from next year, guaranteed wage increases for all employees earning above the current industry minimum wages, a principled agreement on actuals and the establishment

of an industry policy forum. Meanwhile, Nissan South Africa warned that its vehicle assembly plant in Rosslyn near Pretoria would be closed today. Production at many motor

manufacturing plants around the country — including Mercedes-Benz SA, VW SA, Toyota, Delta and Samcor — was expected to either come to a halt or continue erratically.

The Automobile Manufacturers' Employers' Organisation, which represents the seven local manufacturing plants, said it would not apply for an interdict against Numsa.

Annelise van der Laan, the corporate relations manager for Mercedes-Benz SA, said her company had started flying in key components.

VWSA said it had lost more than 100 units over the past two weeks. It said this loss would have a negative impact on sales figures at the end of this month because shortages in product inevitably occurred with the most popular model lines.

Roger Houghton, the general manager public affairs for Toyota South Africa, said its assembly plant was working normally but production was below target because of the short supply of components.

Mark Derry said Delta was scheduled to produce again today, but it was not expecting much production tomorrow because of the secondary strike



'NOT ALL WORKERS BELONG TO NUMSA'

Petrol station owners fear strikers' attacks

(192) PF 21/9/98

AS THE wage dispute between Numsa and employers continues, working petrol attendants have become the target of attacks by striking colleagues. **GASANT ABARDER** reports.

PETROL attendants on duty around the Cape Peninsula have become the targets of their striking colleagues and petrol station owners fear violent attacks on their employees will continue this week.

Members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) have been striking since September 1 for an 18% wage increase for petrol attendants and a 12% increase for mechanics and panelbeaters. Employers are offering 4,5%.

A mob of more than 150 Numsa members attacked Salt River petrol attendant Johan Mouton, 23, of Bothasig on Thursday afternoon after they had attended a meeting at their offices nearby.

"I was filling up a car when I noticed the men approaching the forecourt," Mouton said. "The customer paid with a card and one of the men demanded it from me. That's when the trouble started."

Mouton said the group began beating him over the head and neck with a petrol pump and a watering can and ripped his shirt off. However, they did not use their sticks and sjamboks.

The men then tried to drain petrol from the pumps, but these were locked.

The attack did not deter Mouton from going to work — an hour early — at the petrol station on the Salt River Circle yesterday.

"We don't mind the strike, but they must not intimidate people who want to work," said Mogamat Jassiem, 30, manager of the 24-hour store at the station and who saw the attack.

The owner of a Wynberg petrol station, who did not wish to be named for fear of reprisals, said

armed Numsa members had swooped on to his station's forecourt and severely beaten three petrol attendants with sjamboks last Tuesday morning.

"I find it strange that Numsa could allow their members to employ these methods which they fought so strongly against in the apartheid days," he said.

"My workers are members of an independent union."

The owner said that only half of his staff members were on duty and that those at work were tense. "It is difficult to trade under these conditions," he said.

In Voortrekker Road, Maitland, petrol attendants

were threatened on their forecourts last week. The owner of one petrol station said some of his workers had not arrived for work because they were afraid of being attacked.

"I have no problem with Numsa's striking, but its members have to understand that not all workers belong to their union," he said. "They are being intolerant."

The Maitland owner said he had heard that at a petrol station in Observatory, a petrol attendant who was not taking part in the strike had been the victim of a racial attack.

In the Strand, striking petrol attendants abducted casual and non-striking workers on Thursday and Friday before police intervened.

Police and traffic officials blocked off roads to prevent the striking petrol attendants from entering petrol stations.

A spokesperson for the Strand police station said the situation, although tense, was quiet and that there had been no incidents of violence since Friday.

She said that private security guards were on duty at petrol stations in the Strand.

Sjambok attacks also occurred at petrol stations in Mulzenberg.

"It is difficult to counter the attacks because they are taking place sporadically across the Peninsula," Western Cape police spokesperson Vivienne Phillips said.

She said the Public Order Policing Unit was deployed on routes like Voortrekker Road where the attacks had taken place.

No incidents had been reported since Friday, she said. She urged owners of petrol stations to report all threats and attacks.

Numsa officials were not available for comment.

"We don't mind the strike, but they must not intimidate people who want to work."

Strike revs up as car industry talks sputter

THE strike by thousands of motor industry workers would continue this week as talks between employers and the union had failed to yield a settlement, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) said yesterday.

Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli said no further negotiations between the union and the SA Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea) were planned.

The talks broke down after nearly five hours yesterday.

They followed failed negotiations last week, when Numsa vowed to intensify the action if a settlement in the wage dispute was not reached soon.

Ntuli said that in addition to the strike by up to 600 000 motor industry workers, a second one-day sympathy strike by other Numsa members would go ahead tomorrow.

This would involve up to 170 000 Numsa members working in the car, tyre, steel and engineering industries.

Ntuli said other sympathy strikes could follow.

Last week, Samiea raised its initial offer of a 4,5% increase on minimum wages to between 8% and 10%.

Numsa is demanding a 12% to 18% increase, but says the main sticking point is how the increases will be applied.

Ntuli said Samiea had not responded positively yesterday to Numsa's proposals for the increases to be applied to actual wages earned, for a minimum wage of R5 an hour for petrol attendants and for the wage differentials to be closed.

Samiea had "a fixed mandate" to give increases on minimum wages only.

It refused to sign an in principle agreement to pay increases on actual wages and to agree to implement the pay system next year, Ntuli said.

Samiea spokesperson Vic Fourie was not available for comment.

Motor industry workers have been on strike since September 1.

The strike has affected petrol stations, panelbeating workshops, spare parts firms and manufacturers of car components.

The country's seven car manufacturers have been seriously affected by the lack of supplies of car components. They may also be affected by this week's sympathy strike — Sapa.

Intervention sought in 22-day-old car industry dispute

Numsa calls on CCMA to intervene in motor strike

ET(MA) 22/9/98 (1/5A) (1/5A)

**FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE**

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) had called on the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to intervene in the 22-day-old motor industry national strike by 50 000 of its members, Hosea Morapedi, the union's motor sector co-ordinator, said yesterday

The 220 000 Numsa members will down tools today in a second sympathy strike with their colleagues in the motor components sector

The first sympathy strike by Numsa, which set a precedent under the new Labour Relations Act, took place on September 1

Delta Motor and Samcor have decided to close their assembly plants today, but other local manufacturers will keep their plants open for production despite the planned secondary strike

Doc Seiler, the executive director of human resources at Samcor, said there was dissatisfaction among its engine plant

workforce about the decision because employees would rather be working than having to take time off.

Seiler said the plants would reopen for production on Wednesday

Ed Emmett, the corporate communications manager for Delta Motor, said Delta's Kempston Road and Struan-dale assembly plants in Port Elizabeth would be closed today because of the lack of critical components as a result of the ongoing industrial action in the motor retail sector

Emmett said the plants would re-open on Wednesday but would be closed for the public holiday on Thursday

"Production is planned to resume on Friday but this will depend on the availability of components, which is being assessed on a day-to-day basis," Emmett said.

Matt Gennrich, the general manager of public affairs for Volkswagen SA, said its plant in Uitenhage would be open today

Gennrich said the company would "try to run production as far as we can"

He added "This is dependent

on what tomorrow brings"

The CCMA will intervene in terms of section 150 of the new Labour Relations Act, which means it can only propose mutually acceptable terms but cannot impose these as a solution on any of the parties to the dispute.

Numsa accused the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) of failing to reciprocate its proposals on a signed agreement on actual rates of pay, which would be effective next year; guaranteed personal increases for members already earning above industry minimum wages, implementation of a policy forum to deal with the industry's transformation and a minimum rate of R5 an hour for petrol attendants.

The union said that it believed the intervention of the CCMA would end the "ostrich approach of employers".

Morapedi said "The point of contention is about the proposed framework and the method of granting increases in the industry

"Our real battle with Samiea is on the principle agreement to pay increases on actuals"





ON STRIKE: About 2 000 striking SA Municipal Workers' Union members marched to the provincial administration offices in Wale Street yesterday and handed a memorandum to Cape Metropolitan Council chief executive officer Stewart Fisher

PICTURE. MUJAHID SAFODIEN

Tygerberg hit hard by stoppage

DAN SIMON

SEVERAL thousand municipal workers did not turn up for work on the first day of an SA Municipal Workers' Union-led strike in the Cape Metropolitan region yesterday, with the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) and six local authorities reporting some disruption to service delivery

About 2 000 striking workers later converged on the provincial administration offices in Wale Street where they listened to speeches and where a memorandum was handed over to a representative of Local Government MEC Patrick McKenzie. They then marched to the offices of the CMC and the Cape Town City Council.

Worst hit by the strike was the City of Tygerberg, the only municipality to experience strike action in its essential services despite an urgent temporary Labour Court interdict prohibiting strike action by essential services workers.

Details of the full extent of service disruptions, including refuse removal and bulk water supply at Tygerberg and the other municipi-

palities, were not available by late yesterday.

Samwu on Friday announced its intention to lead the 18 000-strong Cape Metro branch of the union on strike in response to what it says was the "unilateral withdrawal" of Samwu's organisational rights.

But Weclogo, a body made up of the CMC and six local authorities, on Sunday obtained a temporary interdict restraining essential services workers from taking part in the strike. Non-essential services workers are not bound by the provisions of the interdict.

The strike essentially revolves around the number of full-time union shop stewards that should be deployed in the workforce.

Weclogo and Samwu are deadlocked in negotiating the region's quota of full-time shop stewards, with Weclogo saying the number should be set at 18 (at an annual cost of R1,8 million to levy payers) while the Samwu proposes 31, at a cost of R3,1m to levy payers.

Under the Labour Relations Act, a full-time shop steward can be employed for every 1 000 signed-up members.

Natie Engelbrecht, legal adviser and organiser for Weclogo, said the CMC and the six local authorities would find it "extremely expensive" to maintain the large wage bill for 18 full-time shop stewards, who each earned more than R100 000 a year.

Despite full-time shop stewards in local authority structures, there were also some 520 ordinary shop

stewards in the CMC and the six substructures, he said.

Engelbrecht said the CMC and local authorities had been negotiating for more than two years for a "new dispensation" with less full-time shop steward numbers. He said that full-time shop stewards in the CMC area enjoyed a "better deal" than those in other cities.

22/9/98

(152)

Union asks for help in 'injecting sense of urgency into talks'

Pearl Sebglad

152
20 22/9/98

THE Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration has been asked to intervene in the 22-day-old motor industry strike following the breakdown of wage talks at the weekend.

National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said the union approached the commission yesterday in a bid "to instil a sense of urgency" into the talks with the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea).

He said Numsa would wait for the commission's intervention to take its course before taking a decision on whether to withdraw the compromise proposal, which was rejected by the employers on Sunday, in favour of its initial demand for increases ranging from 12% to 18%.

The proposal included an "in principle agreement" on actual rates of pay for next year and the speedy establishment of an industry policy forum. Numsa in turn would settle for increases in minimums for this year.

The employers' negotiating team was to meet last night to consider whether to agree to the involvement of a third party in the talks.

CEO Vic Fourie said Samiea would meet Numsa today for informal discussions "to search for possible areas where a compromise can be reached".

Meanwhile, the second sympathy strike by more than 170 000 Numsa members in vehicle manufacturing and engineering industries will be intensified today.

There will be marches and rallies around the country

Numsa sympathy strike today

JOHANNESBURG. More than 220 000 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and other motor industry trade unions will take part in a national sympathy strike today.

The action follows the failure of talks held on Sunday to resolve the dispute between 50 000 motor workers and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea)

Motor industry workers have been on strike since September 1. The walkout has affected petrol stations, panelbeating shops, spare parts firms and car component manufacturers.

(152) (173)
Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli said the union wants the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to intervene in the 21-day strike to force the employers to "negotiate in good faith".

He said the main sticking point is the issue of granting workers increases based on actual rates of pay rather than minimum wages. Samiea says it cannot agree to negotiate increases on actual wages, and adds minimum levels should be negotiated at a central level, with actual wages a matter to be decided locally.— Sapa

PT 22/9/98

Seifsa claims union had little backing in sympathy strike for motor workers

Numsa claims huge support

FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) said yesterday there had been overwhelming backing for its sympathy strike by more than 220 000 members in support of colleagues in the motor industry sector

About 50 000 Numsa motor sector workers have been on strike since the beginning of this month

Three of the four main tyre makers were paralysed yesterday, with at least 3 300 workers absent from work in support of the motor sector's wage dispute

The vehicle sector was also affected. Two vehicle assembly plants were closed and a third had no production. Production was disrupted at two more plants

Numsa accused officials of the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association of failing to "approach the whole negotiation this year with maximum wit and maturity"

The parties are scheduled to meet again on Friday

"We hope that the stubborn employers will learn a great deal from the secondary strike not to adopt the same paternalistic attitude in the future round of negotiations," said Dumisa Ntuli, Numsa's spokesman.

"The 100 percent support displayed the commitment of workers to improve the buying power of motor workers"

However, the Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of South Africa (Seifsa), from whom the majority of workers on the sympathy strike were drawn, said it appeared the secondary strike had had "very little support among Numsa membership in the metal and engineering industry"

"The results of a Seifsa



VOCAL SUPPORT Strikers give voice to their feelings at Germiston yesterday

PHOTO JOHN WOODROOF

survey indicate a very small number of companies in Mpumalanga and Gauteng were affected by (yesterday's) action," Seifsa said

"Apart from a small number of companies in the Port Elizabeth area, none of the companies surveyed in the Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Eastern Cape were affected."

Numsa accused the police of "brutally assaulting" its members "in cahoots with employers" It said at least 40 strikers

were arrested

"The majority of those assaulted were deliberately provoked by employers to act violently," the union said "Numsa believes the police must be taken on a course on how to conduct themselves during legal strikes"

Toyota South Africa and Nissan South Africa both reported production as normal. But Toyota said production was slow because of a shortage of key component supplies

Mike London, the public

relations manager at tyre maker Goodyear, said two shifts at the Port Elizabeth plants had failed to report for work

London said assuming the third shift, which was due to start work at 11pm last night also failed to report for work, the strike would have involved about 1 200 workers at Goodyear

Mike Hankinson, the chief executive of tyre maker Dunlop Africa, said some of its plants were working at 100 percent and others were not working at all, but the impact of the secondary strike had been "negligible"

Richard Carter, the general manager communications and public affairs at BMW South Africa, said only about 50 percent of its workforce had reported for work yesterday and no production was possible.

Carter said BMW had not been affected by key component shortages, and prior to yesterday its plant had been operating at scheduled capacity

"BMW SA, as a result of a R1 billion injection of cash and technology by BMW AG, is moving on to a major export footing. We have been encouraged by the government, ministers and MIDP (motor industry development programme) to do that

"But the trade unions, which are separate from our workforce, with whom our relationship is the best in industry, are at odds with government policy and certainly not supportive of major companies moving into primary exports contracts abroad

"If this is the environment in which major companies have to try to enter export markets abroad, those attempts are going to fail, together with the concomitant benefits that go with it, such as job creation and foreign exchange earnings," Carter said

Strike forces motor assembly plants to close

Pearl Sebolao

M 20/9/98

MOTOR manufacturers bore the brunt yesterday of the one-day sympathy strike by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), as absenteeism forced the closure of several motor assembly plants which were already crippled by component shortages caused by the primary strike in the motor retail industry.

The Delta Motor Corporation and Samcor were forced to close their plants for the day, while Mercedes-Benz SA operated at 30% capacity. The high level of absenteeism forced the closure of production lines at the Volkswagen SA assembly plant in Uitenhage, but the plant itself was not closed.

It was difficult to quantify the effect of the strike as most manufacturers were already suffering severe losses because of the shortage of critical components caused by

the primary strike in the motor sector, said Toyota group human resources director Harry Gazendam.

Gazendam warned that the industry could only survive the strike "if a solution was found in the short term, but if it carries on indefinitely there would be permanent damage to the whole industry".

SA Motor Industry Employers' Association CEO Vic Fourie said the parties "managed to identify a common ground which might lead to a settlement" yesterday.

They also agreed to invite the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration to mediate. A meeting was scheduled for Friday.

Meanwhile, Impala Platinum (Implats) ended its lockout action against the National Union of Mineworkers at its Springs-based refinery after the union threatened to seek a court interdict against the mine for

an illegal lockout, the union said yesterday.

The mine instituted a lockout against 400 union members on Monday after the union warned it would strike over stalled wage negotiations.

Union spokesman Lekhotla Mabea said that Impala allowed workers to return to the plant after receiving a letter from the union's attorneys indicating that the lockout was illegal.

However, Implats spokesman Geoff Skelton said the lockout was withdrawn because the union had indicated in its attorney's letter that it would comply with the mine's conditions that the union withdrew the strike notice and that workers returned to work.

The parties have been in negotiations for several months. The union is demanding a 9,9% wage increase and management has offered 8%.

First strike in 50 years battering all in motor industry

Star 23/9/98 (152)

CHRISTINE NESBITT

Smaller businesses in danger of closing as industrial action drags on: workers near desperation zone, bosses face huge losses

By Eddie Javiva

Far from the negotiating chambers where union leaders and motor industry executives are thrashing out a deal, workers and employers are counting their financial losses as the strike by more than 60 000 workers enters its fourth week.

Motor industry workers - affecting petrol stations, panelbeating shops, spare part firms and car component manufacturers - have been on strike since September 1.

Numsa's package of proposals include an agreement in principle on actual rates of pay for the year ahead and guarantees wage increases for all employees earning above the current industry minimum.

The South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) does not want to negotiate increases on actual wages and maintains that minimum levels should be negotiated at a central chamber, with actual wages a matter to be dealt with at plant or enterprise level between employers and employees.

Numsa now wants the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) to intervene because "the involvement of a third party will instil a sense of urgency on the part of employers to negotiate in good faith."

Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli said "Obviously our members are losing their wages, but the majority are determined to fight for better wages. This is the first strike in the industry in 50 years. Workers have been paid increases that are unsatisfactory. We want to change the bargaining structure, and we hope to settle this week."

Panelbeaters and fitment centres around Johannesburg were concerned this week that their businesses would be forced to close if the strike continues.

Dollers Panelbeaters director Eddie Deeb said although he had enough parts to repair cars, he feared the worst if the strike continued for more weeks.

"We are coping at the moment, but things might change if the industrial action goes on for much longer. Other panelbeaters are al-



ready suffering as the parts have dried up. The strike affects the economy and I have no doubt that people will lose their jobs."

AIM Panelbeaters owner Fazel Hamed said the strike affected customers because their cars would not be ready on time. "The strike is beginning to bite and small panelbeaters could well be forced to shut down."

The Supa Quick centre in Randburg employs seven regular workers, and is now forced to use casual labour to fit tyres and batteries.

The casuals cannot fit shocks or do wheel alignment. Before the strike, the centre turned over about R10 000 per day, but the figure had dropped to about R2 500. Salespersons Shane Rajah and

Gary Kockott had to administer the centre and assist in manual labour during the early days of the strike.

Kockott said the company had lost many of its customers because of the strike. "The strike was initially scheduled for one day and the workers only worked four days and then they were called out.

Looking bleak... Shane Rajah is uncertain of his future as the strike enters its fourth week.

"We didn't make contingency plans and we were caught napping. We had to do the administrative work and change tyres. We are feeling the pinch and the sooner the strike is ended the better," he said.

Rajah said workers visited the centre daily and were eager to return to work.

"Obviously they have families to feed and are not taking money home. We are making very little while these workers earn nothing. We don't know what will happen to us if the strike continues," he added.

For one worker in the industry, Peter More (not his real name), the strike has begun to take a heavy toll.

More said his three children questioned his reluctance to return to work and his wife wanted to know when the strike would end.

"It was difficult to explain the situation to my family," he recalled. "I felt they were drifting away from me because there was no food on the table. I had to borrow money from friends to support my family."

New openness in motor strike

ROY COKAYNE

(152) SA 24/9/98

Pretoria — The SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) would co-operate with any action that could lead to the settlement of the motor sector strike, including the involvement of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), said Vic Fourie, the chief executive of Samiea, yesterday

However, Fourie said Samiea and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) had agreed during their informal meeting on Tuesday that the timing was not yet right for the CCMA to become involved

Fourie said Samiea and

Numsa would possibly look at involving the CCMA next week if the wage negotiation dispute had still not been resolved.

He said another informal meeting with Numsa would be held on Friday

Fourie said Samiea and Numsa had ignored mandates at these informal meetings, endeavouring instead to identify possible common ground and ways of resolving the dispute

He said certain common areas had been identified at Tuesday's meeting which both Samiea and Numsa had to take back to their structures for a mandate.

"The pursuance of these issues has the potential of allowing

us to have a reasonable chance of resolving the dispute. But I cannot say at this stage that we are going to be successful," he said

Fourie was not prepared to provide any details about the offers and compromises by Samiea and Numsa, stating that they were "too sensitive at this time"

The motor sector strike is now in its fourth week. Numsa has been demanding wage negotiations on actual rates of pay rather than minimum pay levels

Samiea has resisted wage negotiations on actual wages at central level, maintaining that actual wages should be negotiated at plant level because of the diversity of the industry

Motor sector employers, union to resume talks

Dustin Chick

BD 25/9/98
TALKS to resolve the four-week-old wage dispute between the SA Motor Industries Employers' Association and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) are expected to continue this morning, with the association "cautiously optimistic" about a potential breakthrough

Yesterday, association CE Vic Fourie said today's discussions would pick up from informal talks which took place on Tuesday where a "possible area of settlement" may have been found. He said the informal talks were a bid to move away from "rigid mandates" and identify areas for possible settlements.

Fourie would not disclose details of the possible agreement because of the sensitivity of the matter

He said workers would be entering their fourth

(152) *(122)*
week without pay and there would be pressure on the union to settle.

Fourie said the financial cost to employers was "negligible" because they had been able to hire temporary labour.

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said the union hoped for a settlement "soon"

However, Ntuli said it was difficult to predict when the dispute would be resolved.

On Wednesday motor manufacturers bore the brunt of a one-day sympathy strike by about 220 000 Numsa members, as absenteeism forced the closure of several motor assembly plants already crippled by component shortages caused by the primary strike in the motor retail industry.

Numsa's demands are a framework on principle rates of pay, to be implemented next year; a minimum wage of R5/hour for petrol attendants, personal guarantees for all workers of an increase above the minimum wage and the introduction of an industry policy forum as a tool for the transformation and restructuring of the industry.

Car makers fly overseas as strike takes its toll

(192) (192)
ANDRÉ JURGENS

ST 27/9/98

MERCEDES-Benz has taken to the skies — literally — in a bid to offset the crippling effects of a four-week strike in the motor industry

The luxury car manufacturer, based in East London, is flying vital parts in from overseas suppliers because it cannot get them locally.

"We've been operating under trying circumstances for two weeks and have not met 50 per cent of our production target," said spokesman Wilfred Porth

The strike is inflicting a heavy toll on the Eastern Cape's already fragile economy. The province is home to four of South Africa's biggest vehicle and engine manufacturing plants and production has at times slowed to a trickle because of the critical shortage of parts

About 60 000 workers employed countrywide by vehicle parts manufacturers, panel beaters, distributors and spares outlets are taking part in the strike

"The region's economy hinges on the auto indus-

try — we can ill afford the effects of a long strike," said Alfred da Costa, head of Port Elizabeth's regional chamber of commerce and industry.

He said up to 70 per cent of the region's smaller businesses were somehow linked to the vehicle-manufacturing trade.

"Investor confidence is based largely on the smooth running of the motor industry.

"We have a history of militant workforces and the strike is creating the perception that the region cannot deliver the goods," he said.

Harry Gazenbam, a spokesman for the organisation representing the seven major car makers in the country, the Automobile Manufacturers' Association, said: "Forcing manufacturers to look overseas means cutting their reliance on local suppliers, leading to job losses in that sector."

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, which was unavailable for comment, is demanding a pay increase of between 12 and 18 per cent, while the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association is offering 8 to 10 per cent.

Edgars clarifies basis for suing union for R746 000

BD 28/9/98

(152)

Dustin Chick

EDGARS yesterday denied weekend reports that it was suing the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) for R700m for loss of income as a result of an illegal strike by the union.

However the company said it was suing the union for R746 000 for losses incurred due to the running of a second shift at its distribution centre, after Saccawu members went on an illegal strike in an attempt to force the company to drop its wage freeze, Edgars human resources director Nigel Unwin said at the weekend.

The second shift has been in place for the past month

More than 10 000 company employees belonging to Saccawu are expected to embark on national strike action this morning in protest against the implementation of a wage freeze for the current financial year.

Unwin said the freeze was implemented in April because of a 28% drop in profit for the period to March and was accepted by all employees except those belonging to Saccawu. He said

1 500 people had been retrenched for the company to cut costs and improve its finances.

The union had not taken up an offer to appoint its own auditors to check the figures supplied by the company and had instead accused the company of lying, Unwin said.

Saccawu assistant general secretary Herbert Mkhize announced at the weekend that the union would go on strike to put pressure on the company to lift the wage freeze.

Mkhize said that the action was precipitated by Edgars's "arrogance and intransigence" shown towards the bargaining process

The union said its intention to table a proposed 15% to 20% wage increase was shot down by the introduction of the wage freeze. The union had explored all avenues, including go-slows, picketing and mediation by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, Mkhize said.

Meanwhile, the Food and Allied Workers' Union said at the weekend that its members at Dairy Belle would embark on an "indefinite" strike following a deadlock in wage talks.

Edgars workers to go on strike

Sowetan 28/9/98

(1/2)

(2/2)

EMPLOYEES of the Edgars group of companies are set to go on a nationwide strike today to pressure their management to lift a proposed wage freeze for the 1998-99 financial year

South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) assistant general secretary Herbert Mkhize said the industrial action was precipitated by the "arrogance and intransigence" of the company towards the bargaining process

The Edgars group has proposed the wage freeze, citing a fall in profits of 28 percent and the current economic hardships

Saccawu said its intention to table a wage proposal of between 15 and 20 percent was torpedoed by the proposed freeze

"Edgars has always been difficult to negotiate with and this stance has come as no surprise to us if the profits have fallen by 28 percent then what has happened to the other 72 percent?"

"We are not dealing with a company that is in the red here," Mkhize told a media briefing in Johannesburg on Saturday

He said a typical example of the company's intransigence was the R733 000 lawsuit it had slapped on the union on Friday evening - for loss of earnings

He said the union had explored all avenues at its disposal, including go-slows, picketing and mediation by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, but to no avail

Mkhize said that, despite the lawsuit, his

members were going ahead with the strike today

"We suspect there is a conspiracy by captains of the retail sector - using Edgars as a guinea pig - to hold back the advances made in the Labour Relations Act and we are contemplating the possibility of a sympathy strike as a union should the current efforts fail" - Sapa

Conciliation bid in motor sector strike

(152)

~~SA~~ ~~SA~~

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

AN ATTEMPT will be made today to end the five-week-long strike in the motor industry by 50 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa

The union and the employers' organisation will meet in an attempt at conciliation under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA)

Numsa coordinator Mr Hosea Morapedi said yesterday the union and the South African Motor Industry and Employers Association (Samiea) had agreed to refer their long-standing dispute to the CCMA after having failed repeatedly to come to a settlement

A series of unsuccessful mediation forums had been initiated by Numsa, he added

Meanwhile, in an incident related to the ongoing strike, about five people were reportedly injured in attacks by rampaging mobs over the weekend

Morapedi could give no details about the attacks or whether they were

directed at scab labourers or striking Numsa members. He referred further enquiries to the union's legal officer, who could not be contacted

The union had originally demanded 12 to 18 percent on actual rate of payment and Samiea's counter-offer was a minimum of 4,5 percent, which was raised in the last talks to eight percent

Harry Gazendon of the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation said the strike had had a negative impact on the country's seven major car manufacturing assembly plants

Import car parts

The strike has affected motor dealers, component manufacturers, including Dorbyl and other engineering companies, spare parts dealers, and filling stations. The Mercedes-Benz assembly plant in East London has had to import car parts from overseas suppliers

Morapedi said employers had rejected the union proposal to make guaranteed concessions for those employees who would not benefit from the minimum wage increase offered by the employers

SOWETAN 28/9/98



New talks on strike planned

(152) (152)
Pearl Sebolae

FRESH attempts to resolve the long-standing motor industry wage strike by about 50 000 National Union of metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members will be made today, when the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration hosts a meeting between employers and employees

The talks between Numsa and the SA Motor Industries Employers' Association were initially scheduled to take place yesterday

However, the meeting had to be postponed to today after the employers indicated that they were not ready, Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said

The association warned that retrenchments were likely to take place when the dispute was resolved

Association CE Vic Fourie said the motor industry employed an excessive number of workers

He welcomed the intervention of the commission in the dispute.

He said Numsa and the association had, at a previous meeting, agreed on all issues except guaranteed increases for all workers, irrespective of how much they earned

Labour Minister Shepherd Mdladlana also said he would be available to meet with both parties over the five-week-old strike, if either party requested a meeting.

Mdladlana's office said he had so far not been asked to intervene, as reported in the media over the weekend. However, he was monitoring the dispute, and had been briefed by the commission and the labour department

BD 29/9/98

Strikers force store closures

(152)

THE nationwide wage strike by members of the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union forced the Edgars group to close some of its branches and subsidiaries yesterday

Edgars human resources director Nigel Unwin said the group closed its store in central Johannesburg, as well as the Cuthberts and Jet stores in Eloff Street

Sowetan 29/9/98
"We have closed down our distribution centres in Johannesburg and Durban. We have also closed our mailing operation, Edmail," Unwin said

The group said, only a handful of workers had participated in the strike - a claim denied by Saccawu

The union and management also made conflicting statements on violence accompanying the strike.

Said Unwin "About 300 out of the 8 000 workforce are on strike

"The other 94 percent have reported for work, and in most of the provinces it is business as usual

"There is no strike in KwaZulu-Natal, the Cape area, Northern Province and in North West. There is a little bit of it in the Free State, Witbank and Gauteng," he said

"The major problem we have had thus far is of striking workers attacking customers and staff who have ignored the strike. One of the strikers attacked a customer and was arrested"

Saccawu assistant general-secretary Herbert Mkhize claimed Unwin's statements were inaccurate

"About 3 000 workers took to the streets today. Shops were shut down and the strike is set to continue until management is prepared to come to the table with genuine proposals," Mkhize said

The workers are demanding that management lift a wage freeze for the 1998/99 financial year

Citing a 28 percent drop in profits in the last financial year, the Edgars group said it would not grant any increases - Sapa

Violence erupts as Edgars strikers protest

(172) SNEW 29/9/98

Several stores shut in standoff over wage freeze

STAFF REPORTER AND SAPA

Police fired rubber bullets at striking workers outside Edgars' headquarters in Johannesburg yesterday when protesters began to throw stones at them on the first day of a wage-related strike called at branches throughout the country.

Police said one man was arrested for public violence and then also charged with armed robbery when he tried to grab a policeman's firearm.

The strike forced the clothing group to close some of its branches and subsidiaries yesterday, including its flagship store in central Johannesburg, where workers were toyi-toying and carrying sticks and stones.

Sixty strikers were arrested at the Cresta branch, said Piet Manjela, a shop steward coordinator in the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu). He said the landlord called police after complaints from other tenants.

Strikers were also arrested

at the Kempton Park branch, although there was confusion about the numbers involved.

One union official said 25 people were arrested, another said 55, but local police spokesperson Ina Middel said only seven people were arrested and were expected to be charged with intimidation, failure to comply with a court order and refusal to give their names to the police.

The workers went on strike to demand that Edgars lift a wage freeze announced for the 1998/1999 financial year after posting a 28% drop in profits in the last financial year. Workers said the remaining 72% profit was sufficient to warrant an above-inflation wage increase.

The group's subsidiaries include Jet, Cuthberts and ABC. Some branches of Cuthberts and Jet were also closed yesterday, including those in Eloff Street in central Johannesburg.

Edgars group human resources director Nigel Unwin said only 300 of the 8 000-strong workforce was on strike: "The

other 94% have reported for work - and in most parts of the country it is business as usual.

"The major problem we have had is of striking workers attacking customers and staff who have ignored the strike; one of the strikers attacked a customer and was arrested," he said.

Unwin said the group had obtained a court order a few weeks ago against the unions, barring them from harassing customers or workers who refused to join the strike.

The Edgars group had also begun a R733 000 suit against the unions for loss of earnings at the group's distribution centre, he said.

Saccawu assistant general secretary Herbert Mkhize said Unwin's estimate of those on strike was inaccurate.

"About 3 000 workers took to the street today. Unwin forgot to add another zero to his 300 estimate. Shops were shut down and the strike is set to continue until management is prepared to come to the table with genuine proposals," Mkhize said.

Minister offers to help end dispute

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

EFFORTS to resolve the long-standing dispute between the motor retail sector and 50 000 striking National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members gained impetus yesterday when Labour Minister Mr Shepherd Mdladlana offered to intervene

Mdladlana said he had been monitoring the dispute involving the SA Motor Industries Employers' Association and Numsa after a briefing by the Commission of Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) and his ministry. The strike is now entering its fifth week.

Numsa general secretary Mr Mbuyiselo Ngwenda contacted Mdladlana's office last week "but did not indicate the purpose of his request", the ministry said. It said the minister had no objection to meeting the union and the employers to hear their views.

Meanwhile, yesterday's conciliation meeting convened by the CCMA was rescheduled for

today because some of the members of the employers' body could not attend, Numsa spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said.

He said the union was concerned about the strike degenerating into violence and claimed scab labourers had attacked Numsa members.

The union was gathering substantial evidence that some employers were involved in the attacks. About 200 Numsa members were arrested in Springs and Mpumalanga for participating in the illegal demonstrations.

Key points of disagreement in the talks centred around the union's proposal for a guaranteed concession on personal increases for those workers earning beyond the minimum wage offer. The union had demanded an increase of between 12 and 18 percent, while the employers offered 4,5 percent, which went up to eight percent in the last round of negotiations.

● A week-old strike by about 8 000 members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) at 27 depots of Clover Dairies countrywide continued yesterday, according to Fawu chief nego-

tiator Mr Lizo Mzendane.

The union had demanded R300 a month across-the-board increase or eight percent. The management made two offers of R190 a month or a seven percent increase and another one of R260 a month on condition that the union accepted the latest offer until 2000.

In another wage deadlock involving Fawu and DairyBelle, workers embarked on a national strike. The union demanded eight percent while the company offered increases ranging between three and seven percent.

● There has been confusion among striking Edgars workers after the Federal Council of Retailers and Allied Workers Union (Fedcaw) told its members to go back to work.

The workers went on strike with members of the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union. Fedcaw spokesman Mr Jimmy Rapholo accused Saccawu of dictating terms to it.

Fifty-two of its members were arrested in Kempton Park yesterday, Saccawu assistant general secretary Mr Hebert Mkhize said.

Sevletan 29/9/98



Saccawu and Edgars still at odds

(152)

FRANK NXUMALO

CT (AR) 30/9/98

AS OUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) said yesterday it believed Edgars' financial situation and strategic plans did not justify a wage freeze for the period 1998 to 1999.

Edgars said it had incurred a loss of 28 percent in earnings and a 10 percent loss in market share. It had been forced to retrench 1 500 workers since February as a result of its financial difficulties.

Nigel Unwin, the Edgars spokesman, accused the unions of turning down the company's offer of having its books inspected by union auditors.

Unwin said as a public company, Edgars' financial situation was a matter of public knowledge and that "the only people who think we are deceiving them are Saccawu and Fedcrwu (Federated Commercial and Retail Workers' Union)".

Saccawu said Edgars was going for offshore investment, had set aside R3 billion for a stores renovation project and had "overstocked" from R980 million last year to R1,18 billion this year.

Edgars could therefore not be "in the red at all", the union said.

Lee Modiga, the Saccawu national negotiations co-ordinator, said although Edgars had incurred a fall in profit margins, directors had been paid dividends for the financial year just ended.

Unwin said shareholders, not company directors, had been paid dividends. He confirmed the group had "overstocked" but that was written off as lost money.

He said it was "necessary" to have stores renovations because "if you don't renovate, you lose market share". He denied the group was going offshore.

He said Edgars was not in a position to grant wage increases as retrenchments would escalate.

Strike costs stores R2-m

(152)

(152)

Lowetian 30/9/98

THE Johannesburg central branches of the Edgars group of companies lost more than R1,5 million in profits and damages on the first day of a national strike by employees

Edgars group human resources director Mr Nigel Unwin said between R500 000 and R750 000 was lost on the first day to the company in profits for all CBD branches

He said it was not yet possible to quantify total losses

"The losses pertain to those shops that we closed down. The rest are trading, although at a lower level," he said

"We can only compare them to the figures attained the same time last year"

Intimidation

A further R700 000 was lost as a result of damages to Jet stores in the city centre, he said

"It was relatively quiet today but there have been reports of intimidation in Pretoria, Benoni and Durban"

Unwin said Edgars had been forced to close its West Street branch in Durban because of intimidation

Earlier yesterday the company said the strikers had started to go slow, picketing and blockading on August 14

The group had incurred up to R2 million in lost profits and an additional shift at the Johannesburg distribution centre, since then

The group last Friday instituted a R733 500 claim against the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union for the additional costs of running the distribution centre - incurred because of the "unprotected" industrial action - Sapa



Edgars outlets close as wage strike spreads

Pearl Sebolao

DD 20/9/98 (157)

THE two-day strike by the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) at Edgars Stores intensified yesterday, with more outlets closing as it spread to other parts of the country.

The fashion retailer's human resources director Nigel Unwin said the group's central Johannesburg branches suffered losses and damages amounting to R700 000 in profit when several stores were closed on the first day of the strike on Monday.

The figures for the financial losses arising out of yesterday's "temporary closure" of stores in Durban and Pretoria as a result of a high level of intimidation by strikers were not available, Unwin said.

He said Edgars outlets in the Johannesburg central business district — which includes Sales House, Jet, Cuthberts and Edgars — opened for business in the morning, but were later closed when intimidation by union members picketing in front of the stores got worse.

The union confirmed that workers in all the nine provinces had joined in the strike.

It denied allegations that its members were involved in any acts of intimidation.

Saccawu went on a full-blown national strike on Monday to protest against a wage freeze for this financial year.

The union wants wage increases which range from 15% to 20%, while Edgars says it cannot afford the increases because of a 28% drop in profit.

The union has been involved in sporadic industrial action against the company since early August, resulting in disruptions and financial losses which could exacerbate the company's already tenuous financial position.

Edgars retrenched more than 1 000 workers earlier this year following the group's poor performance last year.

The group has also brought a R733 000 lawsuit against the union for the loss of earnings stemming from these actions.

Meanwhile, 32 union members who were arrested at the Cresta branch in Johannesburg on Monday appeared at the Randburg Magistrates Court yesterday. They were charged with violating a strike-rule court order.

The police have also opened a case of attempted robbery against a union member who tried to disarm a policeman in Edgardale on Monday.

Edgars also indicated that it would bring an application against Saccawu for violating the order on picketing and strike rules which was issued by the Labour Courts three weeks ago.

This was despite "a number of cases" that Edgars had opened against individual employees who were involved in intimidation and criminal behaviour, Unwin said.

Edgars says it has lost R1,5m on first day of CBD strike

The Johannesburg central branches of the Edgars group of companies lost more than R1,5-million in profit and damages on the first day of a national strike which began on Monday.

Human resources director Nigel Unwin said yesterday between R500 000 and R750 000 were lost on the first day to the company in profit for all CBD branches. He said it was not yet possible to quantify total losses.

"The losses pertain to those shops that we closed down. The rest of the stores were trading,

although at a lower level."

A further R700 000 was lost as a result of damages to Jet stores in the city centre, he said.

"It was relatively quiet today but there have been reports of intimidation in Pretoria, Benoni and Durban."

Edgars was forced to close its West Street branch in Durban because of intimidation. The company said yesterday strikers began go-slows, picketing and blockades on August 14.

The group said yesterday that it had incurred up to R2-mil-

lion in lost profit and an additional shift at the Johannesburg distribution centre since then.

Last Friday it instituted a R733 500 claim against the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union for the additional costs of running the distribution centre, incurred because of the "unprotected" industrial action.

Labour action started when Edgars, citing a 28% drop in profit in the last financial year, refused to grant wage increases.

The mood seemed less con-

frontational yesterday compared with Monday, when four people were injured by rubber bullets in a tussle with police in Johannesburg. Yesterday strikers sang, danced and posed for photographs.

There was also a larger police presence at flashpoints.

Twenty-five strikers were said to have been arrested at Cresta, Randburg, on Monday for violating a court order barring them from intimidating shoppers and workers who refuse to join the action. - Sapa

(152) KAW 30/9/98



Bosses and striking union talk late into the night

Pearl Sebolao
and Reneé Grawitzky

(152)
TALKS between the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association to resolve the five-week motor industry strike continued last night

There was optimism that the parties would reach a settlement during this round of talks, Numsa

spokesman Dumisa Ntuh said yesterday Ntuh said there was only one issue remaining that needed to be resolved. The employers' association and the union reached agreement at a previous meeting on all issues except the union's demand for guaranteed increases for all workers, irrespective of how much they earned.

The parties met in Johannesburg under the auspices of the

30 30/9/98
Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and talks were expected to go on until the early hours today.

Meanwhile, the SA Police Service was unable to say whether four workers had been killed during the five-week old strike, as Numsa had been told.

Sapa reports that Ntuh said the strike was costing about R150m a day.

Strikes worry foreign investors, warns SA envoy

GILNE SAWYER

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Bonn - A top South African diplomat has warned that prolonged strikes, especially in the motor industry where there is significant German investment, are causing concern. But he said the change in government here was unlikely to disrupt

the development of trade and aid between the two countries.

Zolile Magugu, first secretary at the South African Embassy here, urged labour and business to settle their differences.

Foreign firms were not obliged to invest in South Africa, he said.

Trade unions with investment arms should talk to political leader-

ship to ensure no alarm signals were sent to the international community.

But the change of government in Germany to a likely Social Democrat (SPD)/Greens coalition, meant South Africa had little to fear.

Mr Magugu said "The German elections have proven that before you enter a new millennium you need new thinking and new blood."

There were no vast differences between the foreign policy of the SPD and that of the outgoing coalition, led by Helmut Kohl.

Germany is one of South Africa's most important trading partners.

Trade is about R8-billion a year, and about 60 000 people in South Africa are employed by more than 300 German firms.

Asked whether the change of government would help progress in EU-SA trade talks, Mr Magugu noted that the election result meant that most European governments now had social democrat leaders.

"We cannot lobby Germany alone France, the United Kingdom, Italy and all the other EU countries are important to reach," he said.

ARU 30/9/98
158

200 000 strike claim – but car production ‘normal’

(152) (92) ARG 1/9/98

Johannesburg – More than 200 000 motor vehicle workers have gone on strike today, the National Union of Metal Workers of SA has claimed.

But this has been denied by the Automobile Manufacturers' Employers' Organisation, which says production is normal today.

Union members in the motor vehicle industry had ignored Numsa's call for secondary strike action, Ameo said.

Production had begun as usual at all seven vehicle plants today, said Ameo chairman Brian Smith.

He said Ameo had advised Numsa that should the union plan further secondary strike action beyond the one-day action planned for today, it would be required to give renewal notice of seven days,

as required by the Labour Relations Act.

Meanwhile, Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said 90% of motor vehicle industry workers were staging a 24-hour strike, in support of wage demands by about 60 000 workers in motor spares shops, car dealerships, component makers, service workshops and filling stations.

Meanwhile 3 000 SA Airways ground workers have walked out on an indefinite strike after rejecting an 8,5% wage offer.

The striking members of the SA Railways and Harbours Workers' Union, who want a 12% increase, comprise about a third of the airline's unionised staff. But all flights were reportedly running as scheduled. – Staff Reporter and Reuters

Sarhwu surprises SAA management with strike

Pearl Sebolao

THE SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu) went on strike at SA Airways (SAA) yesterday, despite indications by the union last week that it would accept the company's wage proposal.

SAA accused Sarhwu of unilaterally calling out its members on strike after assuring the company that no industrial action would take place without management being informed well in advance.

"The first notification management had of this action was ... some 20 minutes before the strike action commenced," the company said.

More than 2 000 Sarhwu members downed tools after rejecting the two-year wage agreement which was signed by an-

other SAA union, Salstaff, on Friday.

The agreement stipulates that workers will receive an 8,5% pensionable increase and a productivity bonus of 2,5% in 1998/99. They will receive an extra bonus of R150 a month as an incentive for maintaining 95% efficiency at their stations.

For 1999/2000, SAA and the union agreed on a 6,5% pensionable increase with a potential 4,5% productivity bonus as well as the R150 a month bonus.

Sarhwu spokesman Ewan Abrahamse said the union had not yet made any plans to meet SAA to resolve the dispute. The union was meeting management to negotiate picketing rules and to discuss the lockout instituted by SAA when workers began the strike.

He said workers, who include cabin

crews, check-in and technical support staff, would continue the strike today.

Sarhwu indicated that it would also go on strike against the Airports Company if the dispute was not resolved.

The Airports Company has reached a tentative agreement with the Transport & General Workers' Union and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union.

Abrahamse said a dispute certificate was issued yesterday by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Airports Company workers would strike before the end of the week.

Airports Company spokesman Charmaine Lodewyk said she hoped the scheduled meeting with Sarhwu tomorrow would avoid any industrial action.

She said the company expected to finalise the settlement reached with the two other unions soon.

Meanwhile, the strike by Air Chels employees was resolved after management and the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union agreed on a settlement at the weekend.

Details of the settlement were not disclosed because of a confidentiality clause in the agreement.

Sapa reports SAA CEO Coleman Andrews said yesterday that flights were not affected by the nationwide strike.

"Everything is on schedule and running normally. So far today more than 80 flights have departed and there has not been a single delay caused by industrial action," he said.

Andrews said more than 8 400 SAA staff not on strike were keeping the airline flying with minimum inconvenience to passengers.

"The employees — technical, personnel, pilots, cabin attendants, ground staff, sales and administrative personnel — are giving 100% effort to ensure that things continue to run smoothly."

He said this included 2 400 Salstaff members who signed a wage agreement with SAA on Friday.

Sarhwu said more than 1 000 of its members employed by Apron Services, which provides services for SAA, would take part in a sympathy strike.

Andrews said he hoped to resume discussions on the wage dispute with their unions quickly.

Sarhwu protest fails to disrupt SAA flights, says airline

BD 2/9/98
Pearl Sebola

(152)

SA AIRWAYS' operations were running normally and flights were on schedule despite a strike by more than 2 000 SA Railway and Harbour Workers' Union (Sarhwu) members that started on Monday, an SAA spokesman said yesterday.

Leon Els said a contingency plan was in place to minimise inconvenience to passengers. He would not disclose details.

SAA said on Monday that workers who were not on strike — these included Salstaff members who accepted a wage settlement last week — were "giving 100% to ensure things continued to run smoothly".

Sarhwu, and two other unions with which it has merged to form the SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union, went on strike after rejecting the two-year wage agreement that makes provision for an 8,5% increase, a productivity increase of 2,5% and an extra bonus of R150 a month as an incentive for maintaining 95% efficiency in 1998.

The agreement says also workers will receive a 6,5% increase plus a potential 4,5% productivity bonus and the R150 a month bonus next year.

Sarhwu spokesman Evan Abrahamse said the strike would continue today. No meeting had been arranged to resolve the dispute.

However, the union and SAA had resolved at a meeting last night to keep each other abreast of any new developments.

He would not be drawn on why Sarhwu had notified SAA management about the strike only minutes before it was due to start.

Abrahamse confirmed that notices of a sympathy strike had been served on Apron Services and the Airports Company of SA (Acsa). No date had been set yet for the start of the secondary strike action.

At the same time, last-minute talks have been scheduled to resolve the wage dispute between Sarhwu and Apron Services.

The parties would meet at the CCMA today.

Meanwhile, the strike by the National Union of Mineworkers at Goldfields Security Limited was suspended after agreement with management that there would be no retrenchments until negotiations on the issue had been exhausted.

The parties agreed to meet on September 15.

Effect of motor sector strike not serious — employers

Reneé Grawitzky

BD 2/9/98

(152)

(152)

(152)

(152)

MOTOR industry employers claimed it was "business as usual" yesterday as thousands of National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members embarked on a wage strike to force employers to agree to negotiate on actual rather than minimum rates of pay.

At the same time, it seemed there was a mixed response to the one-day sympathy strike by workers in metal and engineering, ve-

hide and tyre-making sectors.

Production at Volkswagen, Nissan and Mercedes Benz was affected by the strike while a number of tyre and auto component manufacturers were affected.

Brian Smith, chairman of the Automobile Manufacturing Employers' Organisation, said work at Volkswagen's plant in the Eastern Cape started normally, but a large group of workers stopped working after shop stewards advised them workers at all other

plants were not at work.

An industry source said sections of the plants at Nissan and Mercedes Benz were also affected.

The minimal disruption to the vehicle manufacturing sector follows a failed bid earlier this week by the employers' organisation to interdict the union. The Labour Court rejected the attempt after finding that employers had not complied with the Labour Relations Act, which requires them to give the union sufficient notice of

their intention to apply for an interdict. The same ruling was given to the tyre manufacturers.

The union said the limited action in the vehicle manufacturing sector was caused by confusion over whether the interdict had been granted or not.

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said, though, that thousands of workers in the motor sector heeded the strike call. This was shown by the large numbers present at nationwide marches

yesterday, the union said.

The motor industry strike involves petrol attendants, panel beaters and workers in spare parts shops and auto component manufacturers.

SA Motor Industry Employers Association (Sammea) spokesman Vic Fourie said employers did not believe the effect of the strike had been dramatic at this stage. But employers would continue watching developments. Fourie said a countrywide sur-

vey of filling stations had found that it was "business as usual".

More than 7 000 workers marched on Sammea's offices in Randburg where a memorandum was handed over to the association to highlight union demands. The dispute centres on a union demand, repeated in the past, that Sammea agree to negotiate increases based on actual rates of pay. Numsa is demanding increases ranging between 12% and 18% while employers are offering 4,5%

Numsa considers more sympathy strikes

(158) (198) CT(MR) 3/9/98

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) said yesterday that its national executive committee (NEC) would meet today to assess the progress of the national strike in the motor components sector that entered its second day yesterday

The union said the NEC would consider calling a sympathy strike in other sectors it organises and warned that it should not be seen as a "once-off" event

But Brian Smith, the chairman of the Automobile Manufacturers Employers' Organisation (Ameo), said yesterday it would apply for an interdict to prevent further secondary strikes

Ameo had advised Numsa that if it planned further secondary strikes beyond the one-day action on Tuesday this week, it was required in terms of the Labour Relations Act to give a renewal notice of seven days.

To date Ameo had not received any renewal notice from Numsa, he said, adding that Ameo failed in its interdict bid against the sympathy strike this

week on a technicality

Hosea Morapedi, the union motor sector co-ordinator, said: "In the last NEC, a suggestion for grasshopper strikes was made." The union proposed that if there was no breakthrough in the dispute, it would "call for a series of .. solidarity strikes by Numsa members in metal, auto-assembly, tyre and rubber sectors of the union"

SAA feels pinch as unions go on full-blown strike

sowetan 3/9/98 (152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani

HOPES of settling the wage dispute between South African Airways and three trade unions were dashed yesterday when the unions embarked on a full-blown strike that has affected the airline's domestic flight operations

South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union (Sarhwu) spokesman Johnson Gamede said about 3 000 members downed tools after a weekend meeting rejected the management's two-year package of an 8,5 percent increase, effective from June, and 6,5 percent for next year

The unions had demanded 12 percent. Instead, management threatened to retrench 400 workers

The striking employees include cabin crew attendants, ticket reservations, cargo, transportation, personnel

and technical staff from Sarhwu, the Black Transnet Union (Blatu) and Transnet and the Allied Trade Union (Tatu)

Union members argued that the airline had spent about R4 million on the house of its chief executive

Gamede also charged that the management put the lives of passengers at risk by engaging scab labourers in operations that required technically trained staff

Agreement was reached in principle between SAA management, and negotiating teams from South African Staff and Footplate Association (Salstaff), Sarhwu, Blatu and Tatu last Friday. As a result Salstaff had withdrawn its previously filed notice of industrial action

SAA chief executive Coleman Andrews said more than 8 400 staff members not participating in the strike

kept the airline flying with minimum inconvenience to passengers

The strike action by the unions is a complete reversal of the position it had stated to management moments earlier

"In the light of the airline's financial situation we consider our offer to be fair and reasonable. Given the deepening recession, it is dangerous for the unions to embark on a strike," said Andrews

Meanwhile, the national strike by about 60 000 motor industry workers entered its second day yesterday with the unions assessing the success of the country's first sympathy strike in support of the workers' wage claim

The workers, represented by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA, the Motor Industry Employees' Union and the Motor Industry Staff Association, are demanding a wage increase of between 12 and 18 percent

Setting the record straight on motor industry strike

By 2/9/98

SINCE the announcement that motor industry workers were going on strike, there has been confusion among the public about what the strike is all about.

This confusion has not been helped by the distortions in media reports and the lies being spread by the employers' organisation — the SA Motor Industry Employers Association (Sammea).

The first confusion is that the workers who are on strike are the same workers who were on strike a few weeks ago. This confusion has fuelled the accusations of irresponsibility. How can the union after a costly strike last month, take the same workers out on a work stoppage?

Since the establishment in 1987 of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), we have tried to educate the media about sectors in which the union organises, but to no avail.

For bargaining purposes Numsa distinguishes between the auto industry and the motor industry. By auto industry, we are referring to the sector that assembles cars — Mercedes Benz, Volkswagen, Delta, Nissan, Saab, Ford, BMW and Toyota. It is this sector that was on strike at the beginning of August. They have since settled and signed a groundbreaking three-year agreement with employers. They are currently not on strike.

The sector that is on strike is the motor industry. These are petrol stations, car repair workshops, car dealers, motor parts manufacturers and spare parts shops. This sector has not seen an industry-wide strike since the establishment of a bargaining council in 1992.

The second issue that needs to be clarified is that the strike in the motor industry is not a dispute between Numsa and the motor industry employers. Other unions in the industry — the Motor Industry Staff Association and the Motor Industry Employees Union — are also involved. These are unions that historically represented clerical and white workers.

Thirdly, the motor industry workers are being accused of being selfish by going on strike. It has become a common feature to argue that workers who go on strike are selfish and irresponsible. It is always argued that these workers should compare themselves with the unemployed.

As a response to this argument it is important to look at the conditions of motor industry workers.

□ A cashier or petrol attendant in a garage shop or garage earns a minimum of R746 a month, or R34,47 a day. In small towns, these workers earn only R25,83 a day — a few cents more than those who work on water projects in their own com-

The strike in the motor industry is surrounded by confusion in the public mind and distortions of fact, claims National Union of Metalworkers of SA's information officer, Dumisa Ntuli, who gives his view



On the march Numsa members take to Johannesburg streets in their tens of thousands to demand wage increases earlier this year

munities, for their own communities in the Northern Province.

□ A clerical worker in the motor industry with three years' experience earns a minimum wage of R1 489,80 a month.

These rates are below the poverty datum line of R1 600 — a conservative amount set by university research institutes at which they estimate a small household can survive on per month.

Fourthly, a perception has been created that the strike is about the differences in proposals for wage increases. The strike in the motor industry is not about differences between the employers' offer of 4,5% and what is claimed to be Numsa's demand of between 12% and 18%. These were the parties opening positions. The point of contention between the

unions and Sammea is about the method of granting increases. For years now, the unions have been fighting with employers to grant increases on what workers are actually earning instead of on the minimum rates set by the bargaining council.

Thus is what is called the battle between "actuals" and "minimums". What has happened over the years, is that a gap has developed between the minimum rates set by the bargaining council, and what employers are statutorily supposed to pay, and what workers in the motor industry actually earn.

The majority of workers in the motor industry earn more than the rates set by the bargaining council. What this means is that when there is an agreement on wages in the sector, the increase is ap-

plied on the minimums set by the bargaining council and not on what workers actually earn.

In terms of this arrangement employers are not obliged to give workers an increase as long as they pay more than the minimums set by the bargaining council. This has led to a situation where many employees have not received an increase for the past three years.

The unions are demanding that increases be on "actuals" and not only on bargaining council minimum rates.

What is the point of negotiating an increase when this increase remains on paper and does not translate into increases in the wage packets of the motor industry's workers? The insistence by motor employers to

grant increases on minimums and not on actuals threatens centralised bargaining which has been in existence in the motor industry for 45 years and which is encouraged by the new Labour Relations Act.

The approach by the employers also leads to greater conflict at plant level. Workers will not take a situation of no increases or of a percentage lower than what they have heard is the settlement at a bargaining council level, lying down.

Fifthly, the employers' organisation has been arguing that by demanding increases on actuals, the unions are putting the whole industry in economic jeopardy. They say the industry is too diverse to increase actuals as it covers big and small employers, family-owned businesses, big manufacturing concerns and small service industries.

This is not only a distortion but an obfuscation of what exists in the bargaining processes within the industry.

The bargaining council has clear emphatic procedures. These are on the basis of the labour act. Any employer who cannot pay the required rates has the right to appeal to an independent exemptions committee and ask to be relieved from the provisions of the agreement.

Employers have offered motor workers an increase of 4,5% on the minimum rates in the industry. The latest inflation rate for July this year is 6,6% and economists predict that it will rise still further before the end of year. This offer of 4,5% will make workers poorer than before.

In fact, since 1992, the increases employers have granted on the minimum rates have not kept pace with inflation — workers in the motor industry have been getting poorer and poorer. Their purchasing power has been declining. It is not just employers who grow the economy, it is also those workers who purchase goods.

Today, Numsa's national executive committee is having a meeting to assess the strike. It will seriously consider making another call for solidarity strikes by other sectors organised by the union. The solidarity action taken by Numsa members in other sectors should not be seen as a "once-off" event.

At the executive committee's meeting last week, the suggestion for grasshopper strikes was made. Regions of Numsa proposed that because there was no breakthrough in the motor industry dispute, the union should call for a series of one-day but interspersed solidarity strikes by Numsa members in the union's metal, car assembling, tyre and rubber sectors. Whether this happens again depends on motor industry employers' response

Airport, motor industry union members clash with police

~~(192)~~ (152)
Renee Grawitzky,
Pearl Sebolao and Percy Mthimkhulu

BD 319/98
ATTEMPTS to intensify the strike by thousands of motor industry workers and those at the Airports Company yesterday turned violent following clashes with the police

More than 60 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) were arrested in Mpumalanga for an illegal march while police confirmed that a senior SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhwu) official was arrested at Johannesburg International Airport

The strike action at the Airports Company of SA began after last-ditch wage talks between management and Sarhwu ended in deadlock. Management said it was prepared for the strike and contingency plans, including management teams maintaining essential services including shopfloor work and security checks in airports, had been put in place to minimise its effect.

In the motor industry strike, SA Motor Industry Employers Association (Samiea) spokesman Vic Fourie said intimidation increased when workers picketed outside petrol stations and

panelbeating shops. Police used tear-gas in some instances to remove workers involved in "illegal" sit-ins.

The union believed the strike was intensifying while employers downplayed its effect and said there was minimal disruption. Fourie said there were definitely not 60 000 workers on strike as alleged by the union. The parties meet today to draft picketing rules.

Meanwhile, SAA said more than 1 000 SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union members defied their union and returned to work after signing declarations accepting management's wage offer.

The airline also said a number of workers had resigned from Satawu — which consists of a merger between Sarhwu and two other SAA unions.

The union did not deny that some of its members had accepted the offer, which was agreed to by Salstaff last week.

Sarhwu general secretary Derrick Simoko alleged that some striking workers were coerced into accepting the settlement and said their return to work did not weaken Satawu's bargaining position.

Setting the record straight: Page 12

City airport picketed

as strikers locked out

SHARKEY ISAACS

TRANSPORT REPORTER

ARC 3/19/98

(152) (152)

SA Airways security staff

enforced a lockout of more than 1 000 striking workers at airport terminals around the country on the third day of their action.

At Cape Town International Airport yesterday, members of the SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union met officials to work out rules for a placard demonstration outside the domestic terminals

About 100 demonstrators took part after pledging to restrict the picket to a space between the two terminals and agreeing not to intimidate non-striking workers.

They were also prohibited from entering parking areas. The strike is in support of a 12% wage increase demand SAA has offered 8,5%

SAA spokesman Leon Els said the airline was exercising its right to lock out striking workers

Airline operations around the country had not been affected and all flights were on schedule, he said. Staff not on strike were working hard to ensure there was no disruption

Union shop steward David Lock-

man said SAA had used a devious strategy in asking individual workers to sign declarations accepting the company's wage offer and pledging not to take part in further demonstrations on the issue.

A register had been kept of striking workers and no one had signed the declaration and returned to work.

SAA claimed it had reached an agreement in principle on wage structures for the next two years with the union last Friday and that the union had promised it would not go on a strike without informing management in advance.

SAA said it was informed of the intended strike only 20 minutes in advance

Meanwhile, more than 1 000 airport apron service members of the SA Railways and Harbours Workers' Union are expected to strike in support of the transport workers soon.

Secretary-general Derrick Simoko said the striking unions hoped to meet management to resolve the dispute.

"We are trying our level best to break the impasse"



Foot patrol: striking SAA workers demonstrate at Cape Town International Airport yesterday in support of a 12% wage increase

LEON MULLER



Union and Acsa still in wage talks

ET (MR) 4/9/98 (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The South African Railways and Harbour Workers' Union and the Airports Company of South Africa (Acsa) were still locked in wage negotiations by late yesterday

An estimated 5 000 workers allied to the union are on a national strike to press for a 12 percent wage increase across the board. This is against a company offer of 10 percent.

Charmane Lodewyk, an Acsa spokesman, said apart from Johannesburg Airport, where workers scuffled briefly with the police after abandoning designated picketing areas, the strike was generally peaceful in other parts of the country

She said the company had contingency plans in place so "services, operations and everything

has been running smoothly"

Lodewyk said the company was committed to a settlement with the union

"We will keep striving to find a solution to this problem."

Meanwhile, about 100 members of the Unemployed Masses of South Africa marched to the labour department's Pretoria head office to hand over a memorandum on the forthcoming presidential jobs summit. The summit is scheduled for October 30.

The department said the government was gravely concerned about the high levels of unemployment.

"An interdepartmental process was started to prepare a strategy to address the problem ... The government produced a framework entitled Creating Jobs, Fighting Poverty. It was published for public comment on July 3," the department said

Numsa to decide if it

will continue strike

By René Grawitzky, Pearl Sebolao and Percy Mthimkhulu

THE National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) is expected to announce today whether the four-day-old motor industry wage strike will end or continue.

The union's national executive committee met yesterday to assess the effect of the strike.

Early indications are that the strike will continue.

The union met the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samies) yesterday to draft picketing and strike rules as incidents of intimidation rose.

Employers reported a number of incidents of intimidation and violence while the union said some employers were attempting to put pressure on their employees not to participate in the strike by implying that the strike was illegal.

Numsa said Samies had agreed to warn its members not to make misleading statements.

Meanwhile, police kept a watchful eye yesterday over striking Airports Company of SA (Acsa) employees demonstrating outside Johannesburg International Airport in support of their wage demands.

There was a minor incident when striking SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union (Sarhuw) members moved towards the front terminal building, violating picketing rules that management and the

union had agreed on. Police intervened and order was restored, Acsa spokesman Charmaine Lodewyk said.

No problems were experienced at the Durban and Cape Town airports.

Wage negotiations to resolve the strike went on till late last night and the Acsa was positive about the outcome.

Lodewyk said Acsa would continue to try to resolve the strike, the first in the company's five-year history. The company was also optimistic that the Transport & General Workers' Union and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, also involved in wage negotiations, would accept an agreement brokered earlier in the week.

The SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union, which includes Sarhuw and two other unions, met with SA Airways until late last night to resolve the five-day-old wage strike.

Meanwhile, the strike and corresponding lock-out of members of the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union at Stuttafords continues.

Earlier this week, the union applied for an urgent interdict to prevent the company from using replacement labour. It was unsuccessful as it was unable to prove the number of replacement workers employed and give their names. The company has refused to comment on the wage dispute.



Members of the SA Railway and Harbours Workers' Union toying outside the Airports Company office block at Johannesburg International Airport yesterday.

Picture ROBERT BOTHA

NO-ONE really knows how the trouble started at Gugulestzwe Primary School in Daveyton on Gauteng's East Rand. What is known is that for many children there have been no classes since January when some of their teachers walked out after they began fighting among themselves.

The principal who dares lock herself in her office in fear of the teachers seems powerless to do anything about the matter and the Gauteng department of education, despite an investigation, has still not got to the bottom of the problem.

A parent on the school governing body, Bizza Zadzane, said the problems at the school started early this year, when teachers protested against a teacher whom they alleged, was instigating pupils to throw eggs and tomatoes at them.

Parents told the teacher to stay home but when 15 of her colleagues also did so in support of her, parents decided that she should return to school.

Another version is that problems started after Hazel Khumalo was appointed principal and not the teacher allegedly involved in the egg and tomato incident, splitting the 26 teachers into two factions.

One teacher, who did not want to be named, said on Friday: "All 10 of the grade 1, 2 and 3 teachers have been teaching their classes through all this, but the subject teachers from Grades 4 to 7 have been playing hide and seek. Some are always having meetings, but about four or five have been teaching."

Khumalo did not want to comment on the problems at the school, but said she is not going anywhere until the problems are resolved, otherwise people will say I am running from the problems."

But while the fighting continues it is the children who are suffering. The mother of a Grade 5 pupil, Nomawethu Mhlungu, said her child's books were still blank. "They never wrote their mid-year exams. If I had money I would've taken my son out of the township. If the problem was tackled when it started, it wouldn't have escalated to this. The de-

Hundreds of children at a Gauteng primary school have had no lessons since January. Teachers sit in the sun while pupils climb through classroom windows or run about aimlessly outside. VICTOR KHUPISO and CORNIA PRETORIUS report

Where it's the teachers who are at play

Kids forgotten as some staff take all-day break

(19a) ST 6/19/98



partment must come to our rescue.

This week, the school was in the grip of confusion and anxiety: the principal locked herself in her office, some teachers taught and others did not, and the 728 pupils did not know what was happening. One of a group of Grade 7 pupils said: "The teachers are teaching us, but we didn't write our mid-year exams."

Another said there was no teaching. A teacher who has been teaching said it was discouraging when some taught and others basked in the sun. "Pupils sometimes do nothing for the whole day because we are demotivated."

The teachers who have allegedly not been teaching did not want to comment. One said: "There has been an investigation. We are waiting for the report."

However, the education department's investigation has not produced results. Conflicting recommendations about the causes and the solutions at the school

were made, and a second investigation into Gugulestzwe will now begin.

Dr Brahm Fleisch, district director of the department, said the office was monitoring the situation as closely as possible, but the one official who had to go out to the 120 schools in the district could not be at Gugulestzwe every day. "It is clear that human relations at the school are frail, but in our assessment teaching and learning are happening

there. We haven't had any report from the principal stating the contrary."

He said that after parents came to see district officials an investigator was sent to the school for an initial investigation. But there was not enough evidence to suspend anyone while a full investigation was being launched. Three investigators made conflicting recommendations about the problems at the school, which was why a second investigation would start soon, he said.

Gauteng MEC for education Mary Metcalfe received the report on the first investigation on Friday but she has not studied it yet. She said relations at schools often became strained due to competition for more senior positions.

"One could provide management training to such a school, but in the end it is individuals competing." She admitted it had been taking too long to solve

the problems at the school.

Now parents have threatened to take the matter into their own hands warning they will remove the teacher they say has caused all the problems. Zadzane said: "If the department doesn't intervene they'll find the teacher outside the gate soon. I challenge anyone from the department who says there's normal schooling to come during school hours and see the chaos for themselves."

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS - Pupils at Gugulestzwe Primary School, where chaos has ruled since some teachers downed chalk in January after a dispute

Picture: BRETT ELOFF

Sacob concerned at wave of strikes

Pearl Sebolao

(157)

THE strike by SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) members at Edgars Stores entered its third day yesterday, amid allegations of intimidation and provocation by Saccawu and Edgars

At the same time, the SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) expressed concern at the wave of strikes sweeping the country and said this was deterring foreign investment, Sapa reported

Sacob president Humphrey Khoza said yesterday business was worried about the duration of the strikes, and their tendency to become violent. He was speaking ahead of the chamber's annual convention in Durban which begins on October 11

The strike by Edgars employ-

ees has been characterised by acts of intimidation and arrests, with unions and employers pointing accusing fingers at each other

Fashion retailer Edgars, which suffered a R2m loss in turnover due to the partial closure of some outlets for three consecutive days, said intimidation had got worse

At least 10 Saccawu members "bullying customers with sjamboks" were arrested at an Edgars branch in Rustenburg. There were other incidents of intimidation at other outlets, Edgars human resources director Nigel Unwin said

Saccawu has alleged that management is using devious tactics to provoke union members so as to get them arrested. The union said this would not dissuade it from continuing with the strike

Meanwhile, Impala Platinum Refineries (Implats) denied access

to members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) to its Springs-based complex yesterday for the second time in as many weeks. The NUM members were due to "officially" begin industrial action against the refineries in the afternoon, but when they reported for duty at the complex in the morning they were refused entry, NUM shop steward Lekhotla Mabea said

The union's demands include a 9,99% basic wage increase, while Implats has offered 8%

At the time of going to press, Implats and the NUM were still discussing the issues

The Implats Refineries complex refines about a million ounces of platinum, 550 000oz of palladium, as well as other precious metals for the Implats mine in Rustenburg

Motor industry dispute headed to arbiter

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE dispute between strike-hit motor industry employers and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa), representing about 50 000 striking workers, will most likely go to arbitration after industry employers reportedly reneged on an agreement

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said yesterday the other alternative to end the protracted strike was for an independent arbitration to find out which "party is dragging its feet"

Talks deadlocked at the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration in Randburg yesterday

Another option was for Labour Minister Shepherd Mdladlana to intervene in his personal capacity to try and resolve the five-week-old deadlock, Ntuli added

Ntuli said employers had held back from their offer of a wage increase on actual rate of pay next year

Downed tools

The dispute, which has crippled the country's major motor vehicle manufacturers, involves employees at about 18 000 auto spares shops, panel beating outlets, component manufacturing firms, petrol stations and dealerships

The workers had downed tools at the beginning of the month, demanding wage increases of between 12 and 18 percent

The South African Motor Industry Employers Association chief executive Vic Fourie was not available for comment

The strike has led to a shortage of key automotive components around the country, forcing Mercedes Benz South Africa to import parts from overseas, executive director Christoph Kopke said

Kopke advised that both parties should negotiate until the strike was resolved

Vehicle manufacturers could lose export contracts worth billions of rands if the dispute dragged on unresolved, he said

BMW SA recently secured export orders for its right-hand drive 3-series vehicles to Britain. Volkswagen AG's local unit also secured a multi-billion rand order to supply 68 000 vehicles in the next 18 months to Great Britain

● A march by an expected 8 000 Numsa members will be held today at Brakpan Station Road to present a memorandum to the town's chief magistrate to demand an end to harassment of striking Numsa members by the police

● The SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) yesterday expressed concern at the wave of strikes bedeviling the industry, saying this was deterring foreign investment

Speaking at a news conference in Johannesburg, ahead of the chamber's annual convention in Durban from October 11 to 13, Sacob president Humphrey Khoza said business was also worried about the length of strikes and their tendency to turn violent.

Of further concern to the chamber was the fact that there was a pending general election, a situation that Sacob feared could result in political parties taking advantage of the situation, Khoza said

Sectoral bargaining in motor sector possible

CT(DR) 11/10/98 (152) (107)

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — Sectoral bargaining in the motor sector was possible from next year as a result of the wage dispute between the South African Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) and the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa).

Mark Roberts, the chapter three (component industry) representative for the negotiations, said. "There are certainly going to be some post-strike changes. What

component manufacturers need to change is that when we go into negotiations next year we negotiate a dispensation for ourselves in terms of our agreed rules with Numsa and the outcome is confined to our sector."

Roberts said component manufacturers who were members of Samiea were prepared to negotiate wage increases on actual pay levels subject to certain conditions, such as not being targeted for sympathy action "if others did not come to the party".

The strike in the motor sector, which includes component manufacturers, service stations, dealerships and parts retailers, this week entered its fifth week.

Numsa has demanded rises on actual pay levels while Samiea has a mandate to only negotiate minimum wage increases with actual wage increases negotiated at plant level because of the diversity of the industry.

Roberts said Numsa had acknowledged there was room for sectoral bargaining.

Outlaw sympathy action, Leon tells ANC

BD 2/10/98 (152)

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — The African National Congress should recognise the economic wreckage caused by strike action and outlaw sympathy and secondary strikes, Democratic Party (DP) leader Tony Leon said yesterday.

The wave of recent strike action, which had crippled key sectors of the economy, had demonstrated the high cost of such "legislative excesses" as allowing sympathy strikes, Leon said in an address at a business breakfast at the Roodepoort Country Club.

He cited the sympathy strike by 220 000 National Union of Metalworkers of SA members in the

car and tyre manufacturing, and steel and engineering industries. It had led to some vehicle-making plants' closure, and was estimated to be costing the industry more than R2m a day in lost revenue.

Leon said that by supporting sympathy strikes government gave greater protection to the right to strike than the US, the UK, Netherlands and many other countries in Africa. There were numerous other channels for settling labour disputes, and strike action should be the last resort.

"The only way to start fighting SA's unemployment crisis is to curb the excessive powers of trade unions, not to do as the government has done by bowing and

scraping to the demands of the unions, but to take a stand against its old tripartite alliance partner, Cosatu," Leon said.

He said the problem was twofold: a trade union movement that acted with little regard for property or human life, and a Labour Relations Act that not only protected legal strikes but allowed sympathy and secondary strikes.

The DP believed government should ban secondary strikes and picketing, require secret ballots of workers at their homes before strikes commence, hold unions liable for profit losses and for the actions of their members in cases of assault and vandalism, and ensure the safety of "scab" workers.

Motor strikers and employers reach first stage of agreement

BY CATHY POWERS

(1977) (1978)

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association reached an agreement in principle yesterday, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration said.

The commission's Themba Tshwete said the agreement would be taken back to the various constituents for ratification.

The agreement could mean the end of the strike which started on September 1, if members of Numsa and Samiea agree on the terms.

If Numsa members did not accept the agreement, Numsa spokesperson Dumisa Ntuli said, the union would look at other alternatives, such as independent arbitration or the intervention of Labour Minister Shepherd Mladlana, in a bid to resolve the wage dispute.

One of the central issues in the strike, affecting 50 000 workers in the panelbeating, car component and petrol sectors, was guaranteed wage increases irrespective of the amount workers earned, Ntuli said.

Numsa regional secretary Bheki Magagula said a few cases of employers intimidating striking workers had been reported.

According to SAPS Captain Lungelo Dlamini, police were called in to a Benrose, Gauteng, company after company owner Russell Malcolm drew a gun on stone-throwing Numsa workers.

Malcolm fired shots after being hit on the head by a brick.

Meanwhile, the nationwide strike by Edgars workers entered its fourth day yesterday with scuffles between police and strikers at the group's Kempton Park, Sandton City and Edgardale branches, Dlamini said.

Sapa reports the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union assistant secretary-general Herbert Mkhize hit out yesterday at white policemen whom he accused of complicity with the Edgars management.

"White policemen at the branch were literally pulling people through the protest lines telling them to 'ignore the lunatics'," Mkhize said.

CosatU objected to what it called scab labour.

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A PROVISIONAL deal brokered by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration is likely to end the five-week-old nationwide strike by 50 000 workers in the motor retail sector

National Union of Metalworkers of SA spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said a package of proposals had been provisionally agreed upon by the SA Motor Industries Employers Association and the union during a two-day conciliation in Randburg, Johannesburg

New deal likely to end motor strike by Monday

Both parties will take the proposals to their constituencies at the weekend; hopefully for adoption
It is expected that striking workers will resume normal duties on Monday,

The union is demanding wage increases ranging from 12 to 18 percent, while employers have offered 4,5 percent, which was later raised to 10 percent.

The nationwide strike by workers at Edgars entered its fourth day yesterday with scuffles occurring between police and strikers at the Kempton Park branch SA Commercial, Catering and

Allied Workers Union assistant general secretary Mr Herbert Mkhize, yesterday criticised "white policemen whom he accused of complicity with the Edgars management." "White policemen were literally pulling people through the protest lines telling them to ignore the lunatics," Mkhize said. "Our understanding is that the police were deployed to ensure no one violated the court order keeping picketers away from the shops - not to actively mobilise people to ignore the picketing"

The Kempton Park branch of the Edgars group has been a troublesome flashpoint since the strike began on Monday. Forty-five people were arrested at the branch on Monday for failing to abide by the court order. Between 20 and 30 others were arrested yesterday and were held in police cells

● Congress of South African Trade Unions general secretary Mr Mbazima Shilowa yesterday called on unions and employers involved in negotiations to embark on a settlement route with commitment and renewed vigour.

Addressing a media briefing in Johannesburg, Shilowa said violence that had bedevilled strikes could be avoided if employers moved from "the current intransigent mood to one committed to real negotiations". He also gave a hint that Cosatu affiliates would engage branches and regions in a campaign of solidarity actions to be taken in support of union members involved in strike action in various sectors

The employing of scab labour in industries affected by strikes has often inflamed an already volatile situation, he said.

Sowetan
2/10/98

ST(BT) 4/10/98

Unions heading for record year of strikes

(157)

MANDAYS lost to strikes look set to reach the highest level since 1994 this year following a wave of protracted public and private-sector strikes

The expected 2-million mandays lost is significantly higher than in 1997, when only 650 000 days were lost, and compares with the 1.7-million days lost in 1996.

Further protracted and intense strikes, which have characterised much of this year, could lead to the number of days lost far exceeding 2-million (About 1.6-million days were lost in 1995, 2.5-million in 1994, 2.4-million in 1993, 1-million in 1991 and 2.2-million in 1990).

Andrew Levy & Associates research consultant Jackie Kelly estimates that mandays lost during the first nine months of the year are heading towards 2-million, compared with 510 000 for the corresponding period last year and 1.35-million in 1996.

Although there are no final figures available for the third quarter (the report is due to be released this week), there has been a spate of strike activity

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

By THABO KOBOKOANE

during the quarter.

Most notable is the five-week-old motor industry strike by the National Union of Mineworkers, and strikes by the Chemical Workers' Industrial Union and SA Chemical Workers' Union.

Unions currently on strike include the National Union of Mineworkers at the Impala Refinery complex in Springs, the Food and Allied Workers' Union at Clover and the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union at Edgars.

Talks to end the three-day strike by NUM at Impala broke down on Friday after the union's rejection of Impala's latest offer.

Increased strike activity has led to Cosatu expressing concern about "long drawn-out" strikes, which make speedy settlement very difficult. In a statement, Cosatu called on its affiliate unions and employers to "embark on a settlement with vigour". Cosatu's concerns tie in with those of business, which said the strikes were deterring investment

IT USED to be fashionable to shop in the House of Edgars, where one was greeted by stylish cosmetic counters and the waft of designer perfumes. But behind the chrome and glass lies a host of problems which have left the national chain in crisis.

It has gone to war with its staff while battling with a 28 percent drop in profits

This week more than 1 200 staff members, among the best-dressed employees in the clothing business, went on strike, causing the embattled company to lose R1,5-million a day

More than 100 members of the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union have been arrested, and four employees were injured when rubber bullets were fired during a police clash with angry strikers on Monday at the company's flagship store in Johannesburg's city centre

Stores have been forced to close their doors to protect customers as violence erupted in Gauteng and Durban

About 33 workers from a branch at the Cresta mall, northern Johannesburg, were locked in a container for about five hours after a scuffle with police

One of them, pregnant Orelia Molefe, has worked for Edgars for seven and a half years.

She started as a security guard in the fitting rooms before becoming a sales assistant, earning a monthly salary of R1 400

This week she found herself thrown in prison in her fight for better wages

She and 23 other women were locked up in a cell, with no toilets, meant for eight people while union and family members struggled to raise their bail of R40 000

The landlords of shopping centres have gone to court for interdicts against striking workers, while Edgars has issued lock-out notices to the Federal Council of Retail and Allied Workers

By yesterday, the battle was still being fought on the pavements outside barricaded shop fronts — and further strike action is threatened.

The strike was triggered by a wage freeze announced by the SA Breweries-controlled chains of Edgars, Sales House and Jet following a 28 percent drop in profits in the year to March.

The decline in profits signals troubled times for the store where shoppers can find everything from underwear and bed linen to cosmetics and sports shoes

Last Christmas, stock rumoured to be worth R300-million went unsold

Business analysts agree that a host of problems have left Edgars in a crisis.

The company, which introduced credit 70 years ago, has been hit hard by rising interest rates. It also faces tough competition from value stores like Mr Price, which records annual sales of R20 000 per square metre of shop floor space compared with Edgars sales of R8 000/m², which is a measure of profitability

gone backwards. Customers are running away because of prices and a lack of fashionability"

He said value retailers and specialist stores had grabbed a considerable share of the chain's market. "There is nothing special about Edgars anymore."

Vianello said results were made worse by the poor performance of Sales House and Jet stores.

Jet has made a profit only once since 1993, while Sales House, a chain aimed at black market for classic fashion, experienced an eight percent drop in sales in the past financial year as customers

moved into a more modern world

Vianello said customers were moving away from what was seen as an outdated look.

The assistant general secretary of the SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union, Herbert Mkhize, said the union had demanded a 15 to 20 percent wage increase

While the union acknowledged Edgars' drop in profits of 28 percent, it wanted to negotiate on the remaining 72 percent.

"If they can't afford real wage increases, let's talk about wage adjustments. Give us 10 percent now and let's look at the other five percent if there are improvements in the company's results"

Mkhize accused Edgars management of colluding with the police. He said Cosatu branches would next week discuss taking solidarity action, and this could include blocking supplies to the chain

"If Edgars gets away with a wage freeze, it will set a bad precedent," he said

Nigel Unwin, the company's human resources director, said the violence had been caused by "thuggish people" who'd intimidated and abused staff and customers

He said workers had been arrested because they had defied police instructions. "I have no sympathy for them. We are extremely unhappy about what we have seen. It is nonsense to allege collusion with the police"

Unwin said industrial action at the company had begun in August and wage negotiations had reached a stalemate. "We have already retrenched 1 500 workers. Should we give increases or retrench more people?"

The group's financial director, Mark Bower, said. "People used to go to Edgars for quality. But now customers are strapped for cash and quality is not as important. Price is what drives people now"

He said sales had dropped from R8 835/m² in 1996 to R8 243/m² in 1998. The company was making changes and prices had been reduced to offer customers better value, he added

'People used to go to Edgars for quality. But now customers are strapped for cash and quality is not as important'



PREGNANT AND IMPRISONED: Striking shop assistant Orelia Molefe was thrown into jail. Picture: BRETT ELOFF

With a radical rethink needed, the clothing chain's management structure was revamped and about 1 500 people retrenched six months ago. It is hoped that the new group managing director, American Steve Ross, who took over two weeks ago, will be able to put the company back on track.

BOE Securities analyst Syd Vianello said the store had lost focus and sales had dropped dramatically since 1996

"Edgars styling and fashionability has

From Stylish perfume to rubber bullets

Striking workers clash with police as Edgars goes out of fashion

ST 4/10/98

Economists count cost to country as motor industry strike is called off

By CATHY POWERS

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa yesterday called off a five-week-long strike by motor industry workers, leaving incalculable losses and a poorer perception of South Africa as an exporter, economists said.

Although the export losses were unknown, Econometricist Tony Twine said they

were possibly more damaging than the value of retail sales lost because it led to the perception that South Africa was an unreliable supplier, thus battering a country already in its fifth month of a currency crisis.

At worst, the strike could have cost R150-million a day, based on the value of retail sales, Twine said.

SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samiea) spokes-

person Vic Fourie said it was impossible to calculate the monetary losses of the strike.

Few companies had been forced to close down and scab labour had been employed, he added.

Numsa announced the breakthrough yesterday after negotiations with the employers' association at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration last week

About 5000 Numsa members in the motor industry have been on strike since September 1.

One of the central issues was guaranteed wage increases irrespective of the amount workers earned.

Numsa and Samiea agreed that petrol attendants would get an immediate increase of 4.5% of the prescribed minimum wage.

Minerals and Energy Minister Penuell Maduna about poor profit margins in the petrol sector, petrol attendants could qualify for a further increase of up to 8.5%, Fourie said.

The strike by Edgars employees, who went on strike last Monday to protest against a decision by the group not to award salary increases in the 1998/99 financial year, looks set to continue.

Bar 5/10/98

(198)

Workers return as 5-week strike ends

(152) (150)
By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE five-week-long strike in the motor industry ended at the weekend after the majority of members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa endorsed a wage package offer from the employers.

Numsa announced yesterday that a final settlement in the strike by about 50 000 workers in the motor retail industry was reached after the proposed integrated package was ratified by eight of its nine regions.

The settlement package, aimed at overcoming "the legacy of apartheid wage differentials", was described by union officials as a historical achievement for the motor retail sector.

Numsa deputy general secretary

Peter Dantje said that based on the majority resolution, it was agreed that the protracted strike should be called off with immediate effect. Workers would resume work today.

South African Motor Industry Employers' Association spokesman Vic Fourie said this package had been proposed two weeks ago, and "I'm very happy that the union has finally agreed to it".

Smooth return to work

The union will have further discussions with the Samiea to ensure that the return to work proceeds smoothly without harassment or victimisation of vulnerable workers who had been on strike.

Both parties agreed in principle that future wage negotiations would be considered on actual rate of pay-

ments and not on minimum wages.

They agreed to a minimum of R5 an hour for petrol attendants and part-time workers, and a further eight to 10 percent wage increase on grades one to eight.

The immediate establishment of a policy forum to discuss transformation and the restructuring of the motor industry in order to deal with levels of bargaining, form, structure and affirmative action, was part of the long-awaited integrated package agreement.

The dispute, which severely crippled the country's motor manufacturing assembly plants, involved workers in more than 18 000 motor service spare shops, panelbeating shops, component manufacturing firms including Dorbyl, petrol service stations and motor dealerships.

Severan 5/10/98

Workers return as motor strike ends

Primarashni Pillay

(152)
ABOUT 50 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) will start returning to work today, bringing an end to a five-week strike that cost them more than R32m in salaries and caused the motor industry severe losses.

Numsa went on strike after failing to reach agreements with employers over its demand that wage negotiations be based on actual rates of pay instead of minimum stipulated rates

The union also demanded that workers be given an increase of between 12% to 18% on actual rates this year.

Numsa deputy general secretary Peter Dantjie said yesterday that both parties agreed in principle that in future years annual pay negotiations would be based on actual rates.

However, as a compromise it was agreed this year's pay rises be based on the minimum and range from 4,5% to 10%, with those workers on lower

Continued on Page 2

BD 5/10/98

Numsa

(152)
Continued from Page 1

BD 5/10/98
grades getting a higher increase.

The minimum rate for petrol attendants has been increased from R3,83 an hour to R5 an hour. This agreement will be phased in over the next 12 months. The union's executive members agreed the increase for petrol attendants was a definite improvement.

Other agreements reached included the formation of a policy forum to dis-

NRJ
cuss transformation and restructuring in the industry.

Dantjie appealed to employers not to intimidate or harass workers who were returning to work. He said the union had not been in a position to inform all its members about the strike's suspension and the return of workers would be phased in.

HA
The strike affected petrol pump attendants to panelbeaters and artisans. About 100 people were assaulted and three Numsa members killed when scuffles broke out between striking workers and replacement labour.

Striking car-sector workers return, but exporters 'lost face'

(152) ~~152~~

Losses may be R150-m a day

ARG 5/10/98

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg – Thousands of workers in the motor industry returned to work this morning after the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa called off its five-week strike.

Union spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said Numsa decided to call off the strike yesterday and would meet employers today to finalise the implementation of new agreements.

Mr Ntuli said the new agreement would mean petrol attendants who were the least paid in the industry – as little as R560 a month – would now get a minimum monthly salary of R880.

An economist said the strike had left incalculable losses and a poorer perception of South Africa as an exporter.

Although the export losses were unknown, Econometrix economist Tony Twine said they were possibly more damaging than the value of retail sales lost, because it led to the

perception that South Africa was an unreliable supplier, thus battering a country already in its fifth month of a currency crisis

At worst, the strike could have cost R150-million a day, based on the value of retail sales, said Mr Twine

SA Motor Industry Employers' Association (Samea) spokesman Vic Fourie said it was impossible to calculate the monetary losses of the strike.

Few companies had been forced to close down and scab labour had been employed, he added.

Numsa announced the breakthrough yesterday after negotiations with the employers' association at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration last week.

About 5 000 Numsa members in the motor industry have been on strike since September 1

One of the central issues was guaranteed wage increases, irrespective of the amount workers earned

Numsa and Samea agreed that petrol attendants would get an imme-

diated increase of 4,5% of the prescribed minimum wage.

Depending on talks with Minerals and Energy Minister Penuell Maduna about poor profit margins in the petrol sector, petrol attendants could qualify for a further increase of up to 8,5%, said Mr Fourie

The strike affected petrol stations, panelbeating shops, spare-parts firms and car component manufacturers

Numsa took the SA Police Service to task over its apparent taking sides with employers. Numsa said police had arrested about 1 000 of its members and assaulted about 300.

■ Sapa reports that about 14 000 Numsa members at Iscor's Vanderbijlpark plant downed tools today Mr Ntuli said the strike followed news that management members were to share an R8,4-million bonus

■ The strike by Edgars employees, who downed tools last Monday to protest against a decision by the group not to award salary increases in the 1998 '99 financial year, looks set to continue.



Violence, intimidation mark strikes across SA

SA (152)
 PPD 5/10/98

Industry/Co	Union	No's involved	Extent of violence
	Eleven unions including Transport and Workers Union	80 000 - 100 000	
	Chemical Workers' Industrial Union and SA Chemical Workers' Union	40 000	3-4 workers killed. Workers pulled off work and kidnapped. One employer assaulted.
Motor	National Union of Metalworkers of SA (NUMSA)	40 000 - 60 000	Truck driver shot dead during cover strike while another killed during the Dairy Belle strike
Clover SA/Dairy Belle	Food and Allied Workers Union	± 6 000	Truck driver shot dead during cover strike while another killed during the Dairy Belle strike
Edgars	SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union	many claims, 10 claims	Intimidation of staff and customers. A number of assaults and beatings of customers.

being shot in the face by unknown gunmen. Fawu said workers had been conducting themselves peacefully and "Fawu has never condoned violence during strikes".

The union confirmed it had received reports of the killing of a Dairy Belle worker but claimed it could not be linked to the strike as the shooting "did not happen in the vicinity of the workplace".

Meanwhile, the Edgars strike by SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union enters its second week with further reports of intimidation, violence and the arrest of striking workers.

The company said the week-long strike had been characterised by high levels of intimidation, with attacks on a number of truck drivers.

A number of violent incidents have also been reported during the 17-day old Clover SA strike by Fawu members

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after

On Thursday night, a truck driver lost control of his vehicle in Mayfair, Johannesburg, after



Comment: Page 13

Work time lost trebles as strikes increase — report

(152) 80 6/10/98

Pearl Sebolao

DAYS lost because of strike activity trebled to 1,85-million man days in the first three-quarters of this year, against 310 000 in the same period last year, according to a report released by industrial relations consultancy Andrew Levy & Associates

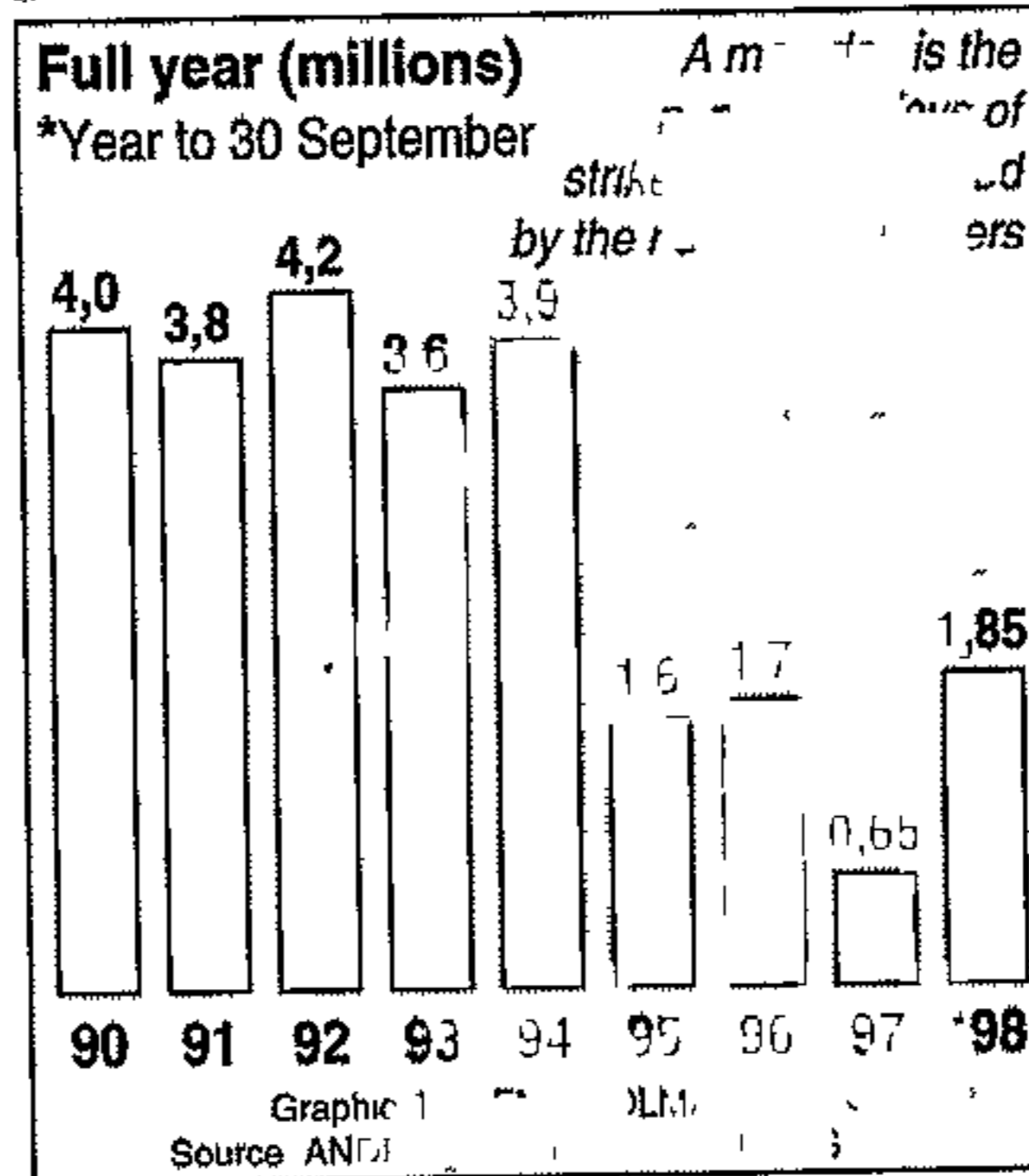
The figure, which has already surpassed last year's year-end figure of 650 000 man days lost by a huge margin, is also the highest for the first three-quarters of the year since 1994

The sharp rise in strike activity was attributed to protracted and intense centralised wage negotiations in the security, transport, chemical and motor sectors

According to Andrew Levy & Associates, strikes in these sectors, as well as the two sympathy strikes by members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA in support of the motor strike, accounted for 77,3% of strike activity during this period

The major strike trigger was

Man days lost in strike action



wages at 98,2% — the highest level in eight years — followed by grievances at 1,4% and retrenchments at 0,2%

The labour consultancy said industrial action was on a steady in-

crease. Some of the factors which could be contributing to this phenomenon were rising inflation which was expected to continue into next year, employers' increasing resistance to centralised bargaining, the upcoming general election, as well as the potential for disputes that may follow the passing of the Employment Equity Bill

The increase in strike action across all sectors at a time when employment levels had dropped and retrenchments were on the rise was particularly disturbing, Andrew Levy & Associates said

The consultancy also said the trade unions' aim to maximise earnings and employers' striving to minimise costs had led to a volatile climate which saw strikes marred by violence and intimidation

"The strikes reflect the heightened expectations and tensions existing in the workforce as the economic belt is tightened"

The consultancy, however, cautioned against ascribing too much political significance to events

Edgars invites union to meet

CT 6/10/98

(152)

EDGARS workers nationwide have been on strike for eight days, but the strike in the city has been quiet compared to the clashes and allegations of intimidation in Johannesburg

Pitso Tshukudu, national spokesperson for the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu), said three of its members were arrested by police outside the Johannesburg city centre Edgars on Saturday

He said two of its members were still in police custody by late yesterday and one had been released after being arrested for allegedly contravening picketing rules

Meanwhile, representatives of workers and management may meet for the first time today to try to resolve the impasse

The meeting was proposed by the Edgars Group management in a letter to the union yesterday.

Tshukudu said the union was still considering the invitation from Edgars to hold a meeting

"We will give management a response today to set a date for the meeting and to thrash out the details," he said

A second union, the Independent Federal Council of Retail Workers, (Fedcrow), gave notice of joining the nationwide Edgars strike over a wage freeze yesterday, said its spokesperson, Nat Ketlelo.

Ketlelo said his union gave management 48 hours' notice that its 2 500 members would join the strike started by Saccawu last Monday

However, by late yesterday, Fed-

crow had not yet been invited to the meeting

Edgars group human resources manager Nigel Unwin said all Edgars shops were open yesterday, but would close if trouble started

The nationwide strike follows an announcement of a wage freeze by the Edgars group after suffering a 28% fall in profits and having its long-term domestic currency rating downgraded from A+ to A by an international rating agency

Saccawu has proposed a 20% negotiable increase for its members employed at Edgars, Sales House, Jet Stores and their distributors, while Fedcrow is aiming for a R450 across-the-board increase and a minimum wage of R1 800 a month — Staff Reporter, Sapa

Strikes misconduct highlighted

ET (MR) 6/10/98

(1577)

RONNIE MORRIS

Cape Town — Misconduct during strikes was a becoming a concern for the labour courts, Justice John Myburgh, the labour court judge president, said at the South African Society for Labour Law conference in Stellenbosch last week.

Myburgh said the labour court had been inundated with urgent applications concerning misconduct associated with strikes

He said during the recent Chemical and Industrial Workers' Union strike in the Western Cape employers brought 25 urgent applications to interdict misconduct

"It is a matter of real concern to me that having passed this sophisticated legislation and created these new institutions at enormous costs, there should still be so much misconduct associated with protected strikes"

Professor Bob Hepple, of Cambridge University, said the Labour

Relations Act was attracting interest from all over the world "It is seen as a 'state of the art' model of collective labour law experimenting with some original solutions to problems which commonly beset industrialised economies"

But he said critics claimed the law had added new rigidities into the labour market which would make it more difficult for enterprises to adjust to the intense pressure of global competition This could scare off foreign investment

9

11

26

Almost 250 workers arrested in Edgars strike, says union

Themba Hlengani

ALMOST 250 members of the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union were arrested since the nationwide strike against Edgars shops started last week, union spokesman Pitso Tshukudu said yesterday

He said 20 workers were still in detention. This was disputed by police spokesman Martin Aylward who said only 80 workers were arrested between Monday and Friday last week.

By late yesterday, the union's lawyers were negotiating for the release of two members arrested on Saturday outside the Johannesburg city centre branch of Edgars on charges of intimidation. Most of those arrested last week were charged with intimidation and contravening picketing rules.

Tshukudu said the arrests were the result of collaboration between the police and traffic officers who were harassing union members. He said the situation was quiet yesterday despite reports that workers picketing outside the Johannesburg city centre shop asked customers not to enter.

The strike was prompted by Edgars' announcement of a wage freeze after a

28% fall in profit. The fall was followed by an announcement that Edgars' long-term domestic currency rating had been downgraded from A+ to A by an international rating agency

The union said about 7 500 workers were on strike at the Edgars group of shops, which includes Sales House, Jet and ABC. Tshukudu said the union had received a letter from Edgars' management requesting a meeting today. If the meeting goes ahead, it will be the first meeting of the two parties since the start of the dispute.

Another Edgars union, the Independent Federal Council of Retail Workers announced yesterday that it would join the strike action.

Dustin Chick reports that Edgars Group human resources director Nigel Unwin said it was regrettable that no end to the strike appeared to be near.

Demands by the union for increases of between 15% and 20% came at a time when the firm was undergoing extensive restructuring to ensure its long-term success. The process had already involved the retrenchment of 1 500 people with further retrenchments being avoided through the implementation of a wage freeze

RD 6/10/98

(152)



SA Motor Industry Employers' Association CE Vic Fourie, left, and National Union of Metalworkers of SA sector co-ordinator Hosea Morapedi were the main figures behind the five-week motor sector strike, which was resolved at the weekend
Pictures TREVOR SAMSON

Strike may be over, but the conflict lingers on

Pearl Sebolao

THESE are fears that the deal which ended the five-week motor industry strike could lead to more conflict as workers and employers offered different interpretations of its terms

In terms of the deal struck on Sunday between the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and the SA Motor Industry Employers' Association, future wage negotiations will be held on the basis of actual rather than minimum rates

The agreement made it clear also that

this would depend "upon the progress of the deliberations in the industry policy forum" to be set up to deal with the issue of rates

Numsa motor sector co-ordinator Hosea Morapedi said the deal meant that next year's negotiations would be on actual rates of pay, while employers' association CE Vic Fourie said the agreement did not mean that would be the case

An industry source expressed fears that this difference could lead to another strike during next year's wage negotiations.

According to Sunday's agreement, increases for petrol pump attendants were de-

ferred and would be determined outside the bargaining council.

Although the strike is over, the parties look set to engage in further battle.

Fourie said retrenchments were likely to take place, as employers, "who were forced to do with less labour", tried to cut costs

Numsa, on the other hand, seemed determined to proceed with civil actions against employers and the police for the arrests and harassment of its members during the strike

At least 10 cases had been identified, Morapedi said.

PD 6/10/98



Sacob explains strikes

Pearl Sebolao

(172) 007/10/98

THE disturbing phenomenon of heightened strike activity, which was threatening to reach pre-election levels, was a manifestation of the tough economic conditions facing the country, the SA Chamber of Business (Sacob) said yesterday.

Responding to a strike report released on Monday by industrial relations consultancy Andrew Levy & Associates, Sacob's labour affairs director Gerrie Bezuidenhout said workers were feeling the pinch in their pay packets while companies were feeling the pressure of global competition.

According to the Andrew Levy & Associates report, days lost due to strike activity had trebled to 1,85-million man days, compared with 510,000 in the same period last year.

Bezuidenhout said the strikes tended to drag on for long periods because of the low wage settlement levels, with employers finding it difficult to give higher increases because of the pressures they faced.

The chamber was concerned also about rising levels of intimidation and violence that accompanied these strikes, Bezuidenhout said.

These were damaging international perceptions about the country.

Labour director-general Siphos Pityana called on organised labour yesterday to take a firm stand against the violence that accompanied strikes.

He said government had put in place legislation that enabled people to pursue their rights within the law. "Government has taken an approach which decriminalises labour issues and the introduction of violence is adding a criminal element," he said.

Strikers may lose their jobs

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE Edgars group of companies has warned that further retrenchments cannot be avoided if the disruptive strike by thousands of its workers is not resolved soon (162)

Group human resources director Mr Nigel Unwin said yesterday that the restructuring process had entailed the retrenchment of more than 1 500 employees so far. Further retrenchments had been averted by the adoption of a wage freeze policy for all, and the current strike threatened the effectiveness of this strategy, thus "the jobs of thousands are in severe jeopardy"

He said realistic means of achieving the restructuring objectives without necessitating further large-scale retrenchments were in great danger as there was no sign of an end to the strike

Unwin said 20 out of more than 70 stores were affected by the strike. "The South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) has chosen an unfortunate and inappropriate time to make its demands while the group is not well placed to accede to these demands," he said.

The Federal Council of Retailers and Allied Workers Union (Fedcaw) yesterday threatened that its 2 500 members would go on strike in support of the Edgars strikers

Fedcaw spokesman Mr Nat Ketele said members from the Free State, Northern Province, Mpumalanga, North West and the Eastern Cape would embark on a strike to join Saccawu members

Saccawu is demanding increases ranging between 15 and 20 percent, while Fedcaw wants a R450 a month increase for their members

Meanwhile, a report by the South African Chamber of Business has revealed that an upsurge in strikes in the third quarter of this year had swelled the number of work days lost to 1,85 million man days in September

7/10/98
Sowetan



Man killed, woman shot as dairy strike talks bog down

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

The two-week strike by about 1 000 Dairybelle staff in the Western Cape has left one man dead, two seriously injured and wage talks in deadlock

While Mitchell's Plain police are investigating clashes between striking and non-striking workers, the company has hired armed security guards to escort its products to outlets across the Peninsula.

Last week, gunmen in a car opened fire on a dairy truck at the R300-Vanguard Drive intersection in Phillippi, killing employee Freddie Mortseo. Driver Hendrik Reed was wounded in the face and hand.

Early yesterday, a 30-year-old woman employee, whose name the firm is withholding, was shot in the shoulder by a gunman in a car which was overtaking a Dairybelle truck in Vanguard Drive. She was taken to Conradie Hospital. The truck driver escaped unharmed.

The dairy's human resources director, Braam Gerber, said the company had lost about R4-million as a result of the strike.

On Thursday and Friday, talks between Dairybelle and the Food and Allied Workers Union, facilitated by Independent Mediation Services, of ended in deadlock.

Strikers, all members of the union, are demanding an 8% across-the-board increase or a minimum wage of R1 600. Management is offering 6%

ARLT 7/10/98

~~PHOTO~~ (152)

Iscor men down tools ~~(152)~~ (152) over bonus

ARG 7/10/98

Johannesburg - Workers at Iscor's Vanderbijlpark plant downed tools today after management declined to meet their demand for a 30% bonus.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, the National Union of Mineworkers, the Mineworkers Union and an alliance of small unions are pressing their demand after revelations that senior Iscor managers are to share a R9-million bonus.

The unions threatened a strike if they did not get a share of the bonus.

Iscor spokeswoman Mitzi Schutte denied that workers had downed tools at Vanderbijlpark.

"There is no strike at Iscor. Union leaders are talking to management about the issue and whether or not there is a strike will depend on the outcome of the meeting," she said.

However, both Numsa and the MWU said production had come to a halt at the plant as from 6am today. The unions also said there were no negotiations taking place on the issue.

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said workers had demanded that the 30% bonus be reflected in their accounts by today. When this did not happen, workers downed tools.

The almost R9-million in management bonuses coincided with a severe retrenchment programme which could see 6 000 workers being axed at Iscor's Vanderbijlpark plant alone, Mr Ntuli said.

Iscor said that the bonus formed part of the company's remuneration policy for senior management. - Sapa

Strike in offing at Iscor

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A MAJOR showdown looms between Iscor management and trade unions representing 14 000 workers at the Vanderbijlpark steel plant following the rejection by management of demands by the unions for a 30 percent bonus

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA, the National Union of Mineworkers and an alliance of small unions have declared a dispute and issued a 48-hour notice to embark on a legal strike tomorrow, spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said yesterday. He said unions were pressing their demand following revelations that senior management had allo-

ated themselves bonuses amounting to about R9 million, but refused to offer a share of the bonus to workers

Iscor's communications manager Ms Mitzi Schutte has maintained that the payments formed part of the company's remuneration policy for senior management

Ntuli said Iscor management's decision to pay senior managers "inflated salaries in pursuit of excessive personal rewards, while they continued to slam our demands for reduction of apartheid wage gap differentials, is unacceptable"

The almost R9 million in management bonuses coincides with a severe retrenchment programme which could see 6 000 workers being axed at the Vanderbijlpark plant alone, he added

(197)

197



Lost days close to 1990 record

(199)

Sowetan 8/10/98

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

AN UPSURGE in strike action in the third quarter of this year has swelled the number of working days lost to 1,85 million in September, reflecting heightened tensions in the workforce as the economic belt tightens, a strike report has revealed

The report, compiled by Andrew Levy and Associates, further anticipated, based on current levels, that the year-end figure could be the highest ever, close to the 1990 level of 2,2 million

It showed the working days lost due to industrial action rose sharply from 310 000 from June to 1,85 million man days at the end of September overtaking the overall year-end figure for 1997 by a considerable margin

Labour law research consultant Ms Jackie Kelly intimated that centralised wage bargaining disputes in the security, transport, chemical and auto assembly and component sectors were largely responsible for the sharp rise – accounting for 77,3 percent

South African Chamber of Business labour economist Mr Harry Bezuidenhout

cited wage deadlocks and conditions of employment as common triggers for lengthy industrial action

Bezuidenhout said the length of a strike was a reflection of economic recession

Employers resisted higher wage increases and centralised bargaining due to economic depression. As a result of this, below inflation settlements were achieved after lengthy strikes, he said

For a number of reasons industrial action would continue to increase, Kelly warned, and these included rising inflationary pressures, expected to be steep next year

The huge potential for dispute would follow the Employment Equity Bill and the fact that employer resistance to centralised bargaining could be expected to increase next year, she said

It should be noted that the majority of the strikes that took place this year were procedural and a culmination of months of intense negotiation between parties concerned

The main triggers in terms of man-days lost were wages (98,2 percent), grievances (1,4 percent) and retrenchment (0,2 percent)

Strike at Dairy Belle remains violent

Reneé Grawitzky
and Pearl Sebolao

VIOLENCE continues to mar the two-week-old Dairy Belle strike, with another worker being shot earlier this week and the company being forced to hire security guards for all its trucks.

At the same time, the strike by hundreds of National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union members at the University of Western Cape entered its second week, with a number of academics joining the strike.

The strike revolves around wages, the retrenchment of 41 academics and indications of the possible retrenchment of nonacademic staff. The union is demanding a 12% increase while the university has offered a wage freeze this year and a 5% increase for the next financial year.

The union said the university had argued that it could not afford increases this year, but the union was not satisfied with the limited extent of financial disclosure.

Dairy Belle said yesterday the shooting of a female van assistant earlier this week had prompted the hiring of security guards for all its trucks to protect replacement workers.

The company said it had notified the Food and Allied Workers' Union of its intention to suspend the recognition agreement due to the union's failure to

adhere to picketing rules and a labour court interdict.

Negotiations were expected to continue between the union and Clover SA in an attempt to resolve a three-week-old strike.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) claimed yesterday that Hillside Aluminium Smelter intended bringing a R4,5m lawsuit against the union for loss of earnings incurred during last month's sympathy strike at the company's Richards Bay plant.

However, the company has denied knowledge of litigation, saying it is still in discussion with Numsa about the financial losses incurred.

The Edgars group has agreed to consider a proposal by the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union and the Federal Council of Retail Workers to bring in a third party to mediate in their dispute.

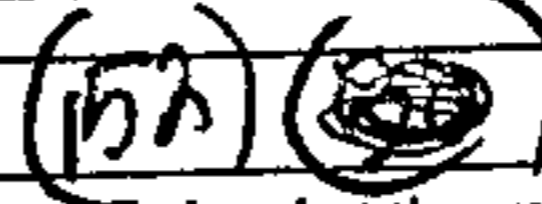
Thousands of workers at Iscor's Vanderbijl plant downed tools yesterday after it failed to accede to a demand for a 30% bonus payment. The action was suspended before noon after unions declared a formal dispute against the company.

The matter, sparked by the payment of a R8,9m bonus to senior management, will be referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

~~DAIRY~~
6D 8/10/98 (15A)

Edgars and unions opt for mediation

By Muzi Mkhwanazi



THE Edgars group agreed yesterday that the current wage dispute with two unions representing 5 000 workers nationwide be referred for mediation.

Edgars said it had agreed to a proposal by the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) and the Federal Council of Retailers and Allied Workers Union (Fedcaw) that the wage dispute be referred to a third party for mediation.

The agreement follows a meeting yesterday between the two parties. Edgars further proposed that the mediating party be the Independent Services of South Africa and that both parties share the costs of the intervention.

Edgars group human resources director Mr Nigel Unwin said the company had lost between R500 000 and R750 000 in the Johannesburg central business district alone on the first day of the strike.

Southern 9/10/98

Dairy strike turns sour

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

Dairybelle's wage offer to its striking workers in the Western Cape expires today.

The company has offered a 6% increase and a further 2% in April.

But the strikers, members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union, are demanding an 8% across-the-board increase or a minimum wage of R1 600.

The dairy's human resources director, Braam Gerber, said the company had lost about R5-million as a result of the strike.

Senior union shop steward Hubert Matshoba claimed that Dairybelle had threatened to retrench 300 workers in Cape Town.

"Management is trying to divide the striking workers by threatening to cancel the recognition agreement. In doing this, they are making private offers to employees."

Mr Gerber said striking workers had been given a notice in terms of the Labour Relations Act on Monday that the company might consider relieving them of their jobs

Dairybelle had already suspended its recognition agreement with the union, he said.

A High Court order granted on September 29 would be in force indefinitely to prohibit strikers from entering or damaging company property.

Security guards are keeping a watch on plants in the Western Cape and escorting trucks taking products to outlets across the Peninsula.

APR 29 1977

Edgars' bosses 'got pay rise'

By PITSO TSHUKUDU

EDGARS executives voted themselves a 20 percent increase, equivalent to R164 000 in the group's 1998 financial year, yet the company pleaded poverty when its employees asked for an annual wage increase this year, says the Labour Research Service (LRS)

The research group found that in the 12 months to March 1998, each of the groups' five executive directors earned R840 000

The data was released in the wake of the two-week wildcat strike by members of the SA Commercial and Catering Workers Union (Saccawu) over wage negotiations with the Edgars Group

According to Herbert Mkhize, the union's assistant general secretary, Edgars proposed a wage freeze for the next financial year on the grounds that its earnings have declined this year

But Mkhize believes the wage freeze is as a result of the group's inability to reach the profit target the company had set itself for last year

"We disagree that there is no more money for wage increases of about 15 - 20 percent in the current financial year.

"Edgars has made it quite clear that a wage freeze is an ultimatum the alternative is retrenchment," says Edward Cottle, a researcher at Saccawu.

The research group noted that Edgars cash reserves improved from a

negative R46,5 million at the end of March 1997 to a positive R362,1 million at March end 1998

Although there has been a nominal drop in profit in the company over the last few years, it remains economically viable, the research groups says

"The company seems to have been able to cut back some of the costs Year-on-year growth in cost of sales declined from 9,9 percent in 1997 to 4,09 percent in 1998

"This most likely included the retrenchment of 793 workers

"The company is also moving towards being a retailer of branded goods to increase competitiveness and reduce costs

"This may lead to further reductions among manufacturing workers in the group

"Already Edgars' Pretoria division has been able to increase sales by 40 percent through this change," the group adds

This week's negotiations between the union and Edgars ended in deadlock when the company contended that union members had been provocative, had ignored provisions relating to their right to strike and had been threatening customers

The parties have however agreed on the appointment of a mediator but have disagreed on whether to choose the CCMA (Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration) or the IMSA (Independent Mediation Services of SA)

CP 11/10/98

(1988)

'Worker desperation' fuels strikes

Reneé Grawitzky

THE increase in the number of strikes this year could be attributed to a higher degree of desperation among organised workers who were feeling the brunt of rising unemployment, retrenchments and interest rates, analysts said at the weekend.

At the same time analysts and industrial relations consultants warned that the much heralded Labour Relations Act would contribute towards labour peace in SA only if all the parties had the capacity to implement the legislation properly.

Centre for Policy Studies director Steven Friedman said organised workers on the shopfloor, as opposed to the very poor, were the people immediately affected by bond rate increases. They were hence more likely to bear the brunt of the difficult economic conditions—as were employers.

These circumstances would inevitably make wage negotiations more conflictual, Friedman said.

Another analyst said rising inflation for low income groups was also causing more dependence on the bread winner.

Although the average headline inflation rate for the period January to August was 5,9%, the inflation rate for low income groups was 7,1%. Fewer people considered this inflation rate when budgeting for wage increases.

Durban-based consultant Pat Stone said one would have thought that fears about job security would have reduced the number of strikes. The opposite had occurred and in some sectors unions were adopting a short term view to use their power to gain maximum earnings in the short run. People, he said, were trying to get what they could now as they did not know what tomorrow would bring.

In addition, parties were digging in their heels early on in the collective bargaining process.

Employers, Stone said, were confronting a recessionary economy while workers were questioning where inflation was going for them. Friedman said workers and shop stewards might also feel that the government they helped bring to power could be attempting to marginalise organised labour.

Another analyst said that in previous years, employers might have offered a "face saver" or settled a bit higher to prevent industrial action. However the competitive pressures of an open economy were hardening employer attitudes.

A union official said negotiations had become more conflictual as they became fraught with ideological debates and differences as employers argued that labour was becoming too expensive.

The use of replacement labour was exacerbating violence during strikes. However a noticeable and worrying feature was the advent of violence from the start of strikes.

This could be attributed to situations in which

(1/2) PD 12/10/98

weaker unions did not have strong mandates to go on strike and had been forced by their leadership to push the strike.

An analyst said it also had to be acknowledged that unions were facing a delivery crisis. During the 1980's and early 1990's unions had high levels of credibility as they were perceived by workers to be delivering political and economic successes.

"Shop stewards and union leaders could now be facing problems of winning the hearts and minds of workers," he said.

A union official said nothing had changed for workers and some leaders were using them as a ladder for political power.

Friedman said the quality and behaviour of management and unions was relevant in the context of violent strikes.

During the 1980's, he said, some of the violent strikes occurred in sectors where there were inexperienced management and union officials.

Time to resign, says Suzman

Nomavenda Mathiane

VETERAN anti-apartheid activist Helen Suzman has played down the circumstances leading to her sudden recent departure from the Human Rights Commission.

Interviewed at the weekend, Suzman denied speculation her resignation from the human rights watchdog was prompted by any major differences of opinion.

Homosexual ruling may motivate litigants

Jonny Steinberg

A CONSTITUTIONAL Court decision on Friday to strike down laws prohibiting homosexual activity allowed for the reopening of old court cases for the first time and would motivate more potential litigants to take constitutional

been brought under it."

Asked whether last week's decision would set a precedent, a source at the bar said the decision would have "profound effects" on future cases.

"Until now the court has been conservative on retrospective application for fear of disrupting the



Unions 'unlikely' to be sued for loss

BY CATHY POWERS

(152)
Ma 13/10/98

The wave of strikes in the past few months has left both unions and companies battered, but it is unlikely that employers would flock to the courts to sue unions for losses.

Companies appear to be the biggest losers in times like these, but labour analysts said although employers had successfully sued unions for damages in the past, they are reluctant to do so.

Brian Greenstein, labour consultant at Andrew Levy and Associates, said: "Employers are loath to sue the unions because they have an ongoing relationship with the unions and workers. Both parties are bruised after the strike."

In an unprotected strike, employers have the law on their side, said Greenstein. The employer can sue for losses and the labour court has jurisdiction to order the payment of "just and equitable" compensation for any losses.

The court will take into account whether the action was premeditated, the financial position of the parties, the duration of the strike, and the response to unjustified conduct by the other party, he said.

But in a protected strike, the employer could not sue a union for loss of production or profit. Legal action could, however, be launched if there was damage to property.

Sympathy strikes are a new and complicating feature in our labour environment.

Resources group Billiton reportedly intended to sue Numsa for a R4,9-million loss of production because of a sympathy strike by workers at its Hillside Aluminium smelter in Richard's Bay.

Billiton has reportedly denied this, but said it was in discussions with the union over the legality of the strike.

Numsa's strike ultimatum

FRANK NXUMALO
AND ROY COKAYNE

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) warned yesterday that about 14 000 of its members at Iscor Vanderbijlpark would embark on industrial action if there was no resolution of the bonus dispute at a meeting scheduled for October 19 at the steel sec-

tor's industrial council

Last week Numsa declared a dispute after management told workers no bonus would be paid to them "in view of the fact that there is already a profit-sharing scheme in operation" Iscor said the remuneration scheme of senior management formed part of their conditions of service.

However, Numsa in-

sisted that, as creators of wealth, workers deserved to be paid a bonus.

"Any performance-based bonus must take into account those who make the wheels of production turn every day — the workers," said Dumisa Ntuli, the Numsa spokesman

Numsa is demanding that a 30 percent bonus be paid to workers

ET(MA) 13/10/98 (189) #17 (152)

Dairybelle staff weigh deal to end strike

STAFF REPORTER

The three-week-old strike by workers at Dairybelle's Epping processing plant could end soon after an agreement between the company and the Food and Allied Workers' Union.

Now it is up to the workers to decide whether to ratify the deal their union struck at the weekend.

ARG 13/10/98
~~STRIKE~~ (15a)
Dairybelle human resources manager Braam Gerber said the agreement would give workers a 6% wage increase from October 1. They would get a further 1% in April.

Employees would get a further 2% increase at the beginning of March if the Epping plant bettered its target. Mr Gerber said: "The ball is now in the workers' court. They have to decide if they accept the deal or not.

However we have heard that they don't want to accept it and are pressing for 9%."

The striking workers demanded an across-the-board increase of 8% or a minimum wage of R1 600.

The strike has cost Dairybelle about R5-million in lost profits, according to management.

Mr Gerber said the plant was operating at 50% of capacity.

Saccawu workers want police probed

di
Pearl Sebolao (152)

EMPLOYEES of the Edgars Group, who have been on a wage strike for two weeks, yesterday marched to protest against Edgars' refusal to meet their wage demands and over the arrest of their members during the strike.

At least 2 000 SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) members marched through the Johannesburg city centre to the Johannesburg Central Prison and to the retail group's flagship city store. The march passed without incident.

The marchers condemned alleged harassment of, assaults on and unfair charges against strikers. The union has demanded that police conduct during the strike be investigated and that those found guilty be punished.

Memorandums demanding the resolution of the dispute between Saccawu and Edgars were also

handed over at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and to Edgars' management.

The parties have agreed on the terms of the mediation process. Edgars' human resources director, Nigel Unwin, said they would meet for mediation tomorrow.

Meanwhile, there were fears that the strike at Lonrho's West Plats mine, which ended last Thursday, could resume if the National Union of Mineworkers' (NUM's) appeal against company disciplinary action against the 10 union officials is unsuccessful.

The officials were implicated in a hostage-taking incident at the mine last month.

NUM spokesman Eric Galitshana said the outcome of the appeal hearing would be announced by tomorrow.

Sapa reports that the NUM said it would boycott a "pseudo-peace summit" organised by Anglo American Platinum Corporation

and challenged the mining company to a public debate on the "systematic killing" of NUM leaders.

The union was reacting to the murder of NUM shop steward Missionary Mpheni, 28, who was shot dead on Monday on his way to Implats' Townlands shaft.

Mpheni was also an official of the African National Congress and the SA Communist Party.

There have been about 10 such killings since 1996.

Meanwhile, the two-week strike at Impala Platinum Refineries (Implats) in Springs continued as talks between Implats in Springs and the NUM yielded no results.

Parties could not find a mutually acceptable implementation date for a 8,5% salary increase on which they had agreed.

The NUM wants the increase backdated to July 1, while Implats favours the implementation of the increase on August 1.

BD 14/10/98

Dairy strikers return to work

(152) ~~STRIKE~~
Dairybelle strikers have accepted a deal struck by the Food and Allied Workers' Union and the company, and returned to work.

They will get a 6% wage increase now and another 1% in April. And if the company exceeds its targets, they will get another 2% from March 1.

During the strike by about 1 000 employees, a dairy truck assistant was shot dead and the driver wounded in an attack at an intersection in Philippi. Another employee was shot and wounded in a drive-by shooting.

Dairybelle said the strike had cost about R6-million. - Staff Reporter

ARG 15/10/98

MOTOR INDUSTRY

(197) (198)
 16/10/98

DEFINITELY A DAMP SQUIB

Strike's effects minimal

If ever there was a badly timed strike, it appears the National Union of Metalworkers (Numsa)'s recent wage action must take the cake

Seemingly targeting the motor manufacturing and component industries, the union struck just as these sectors were virtually hitting a record nadir. With wall-to-wall inventory, most manufacturers were able to take strategic action to minimise the strike's effects.

National Association of Automobile Manufacturers (Naamsa) director Nico Vermeulen says the six-day strike in August obviously had some effects, but they have been overstated. "Stock availability was not a problem."

Vermeulen says the "other" strike (petrol attendants and so on) had nothing to do with the assembly side of the industry. "There were a number of sympathy strikes which had a knock-on effect into component manufacturing and into assembly."

But Vermeulen isn't crowing. "It only takes one critical part to be unavailable to stop a production line. Most of the motor manufacturers managed to avoid cuts but had to take strategic action and managed to keep running. Tactics varied from company to company, with some companies more affected than others. But by and large the impact was not all that material and lost production will no doubt be made up now that the industrial relations situation is back to normal."

Steel & Engineering Industries Federation (Seifsa) executive director Brian Angus says the effects of the strike were imperceptible.

"There wasn't any great impact on the metal and engineering industry. Some companies experienced sympathy strike action, but it was limited. The first sympathy strike in early September saw a few companies in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and, surprisingly, the Free State shut down. Overall it was very limited."

Numsa's Hosea Morapedi says the strike was prolonged because "we were dealing with right wing employers."

It may or may not be news to Numsa, but its claim of victory in the dispute rings a little hollow. Literally thousands of service station employees turned up for work every day of the strike — sans uniform. No names, no pack drill.

Mick Collins

SEPTEMBER VEHICLE SALES

Manufacturer	Model	Sales	% of total car market
Toyota	Corolla	12,175	
	Conquest	1,552	
	Camry	311	
VW	Passat	2,945	
	Polo	2,361	
Samcor	Proton	1,100	
	Perdana	1,100	
Delta	Delta	1,100	
	Delta	1,100	
M-Benz	M-Benz	1,100	
	M-Benz	1,100	
BMW	BMW	1,100	
	BMW	1,100	
Nissan	Nissan	1,100	
	Nissan	1,100	
Land Rover	Land Rover	1,100	
	Land Rover	1,100	
Chrysler	Chrysler	1,100	
	Chrysler	1,100	
Peugeot	Peugeot	1,100	
	Peugeot	1,100	
Subaru	Subaru	1,100	
	Subaru	1,100	

LIGHT COMMERCIALS

Manufacturer	Number of sales	% of market
Toyota	860	25.6
Delta	706	23.5
Samcor	653	22.8
Nissan	335	18.4
VW	306	4.2
M-Benz	191	2.6
Land Rover	168	2.3
Flat	38	0.5

MEDIUM COMMERCIALS

Manufacturer	Number of sales	% of market
Toyota	118	28.4
M-Benz	108	26.7
Delta	32	7.9
Nissan	50	12.0
Iveco	43	10.3
Samcor	29	7.0
AAD	7	1.4

HEAVY COMMERCIALS

Manufacturer	Number of sales	% of market
M-Benz	151	26.4
Nissan	103	18.0
Toyota	74	12.9
MAN	7	1.2
Iveco	40	7.0
Volvo	37	6.5
Delta	34	5.9
Freightliner	20	3.5
Scania	19	3.3
Tyco	15	2.6
ERF	10	1.7
AAD	2	0.3

TOTAL VEHICLE SALES

Manufacturer	Number of sales	% of market
Toyota	6,262	27.4
VW	3,657	16.0
Samcor	3,393	14.8
Delta	3,070	13.4
Nissan	2,189	9.5
M-Benz	1,645	7.2
BMW	1,050	4.6
Other	1,606	7.0

September 1998: 5,163 (29.0%)
 Jan-September 1998: 18,548 (29.0%)
 August 15, 1997 to September 1998: 10,111 (29.0%)

Day of destiny draws near for UWC students

Row with striking workers a threat to examinations

YVETTE VAN BREDA

UNIVERSITY of the Western Cape students will find out tomorrow if there is any chance of them salvaging the academic year after exams were postponed because of a strike by 500 workers on campus.

If management and the employees resolve their differences, the students will write exams, which have been postponed for two weeks, and the academic year should be successfully concluded.

Sean Lewis, a spokesman for the university's Academic Staff Association, said: "We are hopeful that things will be resolved."

A UWC spokesman said there was no way they would allow striking workers, whom he described as disruptive and violent, to scuttle the year's academic programme. "The students will write exams, no matter what," he said.

During the third week of their strike, workers disrupted classes before also stopping a national squash tournament by throwing objects onto the court and being aggressive on Friday, he said.

As UWC had applied for an interdict to stop disruptions, these actions were in violation of the

(157) (157) court order, said the spokesman. "It's sad when workers, in an attempt to settle a wage dispute, have to resort to this type of action," he said.

Lewis blamed the university's management for the crisis. "There is a climate of uncertainty and dishonesty here which management has created."

As tension mounted between management and staff this week, the university's senate voted to censure rector Cecil Abrahams "in the strongest terms, for the shortsighted, inhuman and mechanical manner around the process which led to recent retrenchments (of 41 academic staff members)".

The senate resolved to form a task force of seven senators to investigate UWC's financial crisis which has led to cost-cutting due to a projected budget deficit of R16-million for this year.

They will also look into the retrenchment of staff, and other problems on the campus.

The senate conceded that it had neglected its primary function — to protect the university's academic programme, "the core business" of the university — and asked for recommendations to help members become more directly involved in the day-to-day running of UWC.

The National Education, Health,

ST(CM) 18/10/98 and Allied Workers Union secretary on the campus, Suraya Jawoodeen, said. "While Rome is burning, Abrahams, who has been so widely discredited on this campus, is off getting some doctorate in America."

Abrahams is in the US to raise funds for a new life sciences building, receive an honorary doctorate from the State University of New York and address two international conferences. He is due back on October 29.

Negotiations between the management and the union will continue today.

Last month, after academic staff told the UWC management that none of the 15 proposals they suggested to reduce the deficit were feasible, management retrenched 41 academic staff, Lewis said.

Fearing similar action — fuelled by rumours that a retrenchment list of 329 workers existed (management has denied this) — the union has steered clear of engaging in any of the 15 options.

The union was demanding a clear financial plan from the university and a six-month moratorium on retrenchments to examine that plan, Jawoodeen said.

"Staff should not be made to feel they are responsible for the financial crisis at the university and should not be faced with salary cuts, retrenchments, or any of the other contractual benefits they suggest we give up."

There was a disconcerting lack of transparency around plans to cut the budget deficit, the retrenchment process and the wage negotiations, said Jawoodeen.

The strike started after management and the union could not agree on wage increases three weeks ago. Originally

management came to the negotiating table rejecting an increase for the workers. The union wanted 13 percent but dropped to 12 percent.

On Friday management offered five percent backdated to October 1 but refused to grant a six-month moratorium on retrenchments.

"Management needs to come up with creative ways to break this deadlock," said Jawoodeen.

The UWC spokesman said the striking workers had accepted the principal of no work, no pay, and now wanted to have that waived. "This is one of the main contentions over which there is a deadlock. The workers must be responsible when they don't work."

Progress can be made, says Clover

Dustin Chick

MANAGEMENT at Clover SA had indicated that progress could be made at a meeting today between the company's management and striking members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union, Fawu regional secretary Philly Magagula said yesterday.

Magagula said hopes were high that the six-week strike by Fawu members could be resolved before the end of this week.

More than 5 000 Fawu members marched to the Clover SA head office in Johannesburg yesterday to hand over a memorandum calling on management to stop planned retrenchments as well as place a moratorium on all retrenchments.

Other demands included a request that management stop "intimidating" workers, and that all charges laid against striking workers be dropped. The union also requested that the national negotiating team be provided with

transport to meetings.

Fawu had also insisted that management respond to its wage demands, which included an 8% or R300 across the board increase, six months' paid maternity leave, a night shift allowance and guarantees on working conditions for workers who had been transferred, within the next 14 days.

Clover management could not be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, striking employees at Edgars continued to return to work yesterday. The number on strike dropped to 1 750, Edgars Human Resources director Nigel Unwin said. During the last week, about 400 workers had returned to work.

Unwin said that of the 11 600 people employed by the Edgars Group, unions only represented about 15% of the total work force and only 37% of union members were actively engaged in strikes.

He said a proposal made by Edgars last week during an unsuccessful mediation process was

the "best the company could do" while operating "under extremely difficult business circumstances".

Edgars offered employees a once-off bonus of R250 payable next month, a once-off incentive bonus of R250 linked to the achievement of the group's combined sales budget for November and December and increases to minimum wages.

Sapa reports that SA Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union national negotiator Lee Modiga said unions would meet with Congress of SA Trade Union affiliates later this week to discuss the possibility of sympathy strikes. The union has called for a consumer boycott against Edgars.

Reneé Grawitzky reports that the three-week old strike at Dairy Belle was resolved last week after agreement was reached with Fawu on an 8% increase. The union has declared a dispute against the company for its policy of "no work, no pay" adopted during the strike.

BD 20/10/98

Wage strike dying out, says HR boss

Director's suspension investigated

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE long-running wage strike by about 3 000 members of the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) is reportedly fizzling out after mediation talks failed last weekend

Edgars group human resources director Nigel Unwin said yesterday only 37 percent of the striking Saccawu and Federal Council Retail and Allied Workers Union (Fedcrow) members were still on the strike

Out of 605 group stores throughout the country, about 20 stores constituting 3,3 percent of the total store base, have been affected periodically by the strike action

Major distribution centres in Johannesburg, Durban and central stores have since been closed, Unwin also said.

The Saccawu executive could not

be contacted yesterday for comment at the time of going to press

Fedcrow spokesman Mr Nat Ketele said union members who were still out of work were those who were affected by the company lockout. The union had suspended its strike pending the outcome of the current mediation

Ketele said a review of the situation would be conducted at a meeting scheduled for Sunday

The company's proposals at the mediation, which were rejected by the unions, included a guaranteed once-off bonus or R250 payable at the end of November in addition to the Christmas bonus

Also tabled by the company is a once-off incentive bonus of R250 linked to the group achieving its combined sales budget for the months of November and December this year payable in January 1999

Edgars also offered a minimum wage of R1 500 a month

NORTHERN Province transport MEC Aaron Motsoaledi said yesterday that he would investigate why no further action has been taken against his chief director, Mr Michael Machabaphala, who was suspended from work with full pay 15 months ago

He was suspended on July 8 last year after he was implicated in corruption involving a video duplication company and has since been receiving a R22 288 monthly salary. He said "The suspension has cost the government thousands of rands. The man should be doing his job in the office while being investigated"

He said the delay for disciplinary action against government officials should be addressed because of the loss incurred in taxpayers' money

Former transport MEC Mr Johan Kriek said the investigation should have been finalised within two months of his suspension - Sapa

UWC strike ends - but now trouble brews at UCT

Wage talks stalled

ARG 23/10/98

ANDREA BOTHA AND CAROL CAMPBELL
STAFF REPORTERS

The crippling strike at the University of the Western Cape is over, but now trouble looms at the University of Cape Town.

UWC lectures will resume on Monday, while National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union members go back to work today after their four-week strike.

Meanwhile UCT management and representatives of the same union were in emergency talks today to stop a strike on Monday.

Union members on the campus voted this week to strike when wage negotiations with management stalled.

End-of-year exams are due to begin on Monday and there are fears of disruptions.

In this week's edition of the university newspaper *The Monday Paper*, the union's administrator on campus, Thembinkosi Qondela, said the primary concerns of union members were wage increases and job security.

While management had offered a 6% increase, the union wanted a R200 a month, across-the-board hike, irrespective of wage level, he said.

"Nehawu wants to put its demands more strongly following the collapse of negotiations," he said, adding that the union was concerned over the extent of the wage differential between the highest- and lowest-paid employees.

"Nehawu also wanted a guarantee of jobs for two years, when management would offer only one year," he said.

Paul Abrams, employee relations manager, said: "UCT has severe financial constraints. We are offering Nehawu 6%. Nehawu is asking for a lot more than we can offer. We greatly regret the fact that we haven't been able to reach agreement."

Meanwhile at UWC yesterday the atmosphere on campus was jubilant as workers braaied and played music.

Negotiators were last night still finalising an agreement reached in all-night discussions on Wednesday.

University management promised to give union members a salary increase of 6,5% from October 1.

This adjustment was to be reviewed in April, 1999, subject to confirmation of income from state subsidies and student enrollment.

An additional R1 000 would be handed to workers as a once-off payment at the end of next month.

The university also undertook not to retrench any non-academic staff before the end of January.

Both parties committed themselves to an exercise to restore relationships and ensure the enhancement of the academic project.

"This is a resolution of a temporary crisis, but the problems of the UWC are far from over," said Sean Lewis, spokesman for the University of the Western Cape Academic Staff Association.

ST (CTM) 25/10/98
Court vetoes UCT strike

A STRIKE planned by workers at the University of Cape Town has been declared illegal by the labour court, writes JANET HEARD. (152) (E)

The UCT management won the interdict late on Friday.

While uncertainty hangs over UCT, classes are due to resume at the University of the Western Cape tomorrow following weeks of conflict when the workers' union and management reached a settlement.

UCT shop steward Leonard Malukazi said yesterday that the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union strike committee was looking at options in light of the court ruling. The union's options ranged from appealing to holding the strike.

"If there is a strike, it will be illegal and workers face possible dismissal," said UCT's director of Communications, Helen Zille.

VWSA chief hits out at SA labour ructions

The Volkswagen boss says a government turnabout and strike action almost killed a R30bn deal, writes **DON ROBERTSON**

(152) (152)
ST(BT) 25/10/98

IN AN attack on government and labour at this week's Auto Africa car show, Volkswagen SA MD Hans-Christian Maergner suggested that unfulfilled commitments and industrial action could have upset a R30-billion export deal won from the German parent.

Proposed changes to the Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP), lack of assistance from government and the recent spate of strikes by motor employees might well have scuppered the deal.

While pleased at securing the contract, Maergner expressed disappointment "Quite frankly, I believe we could have gotten more.

"Unfortunately, but understandably, our parent company has lost some confidence in us in South Africa due to a variety of reasons."

But he added: "The extension of this order will secure VWSA's survival into the next millennium."

Maergner's comments probably represent the views of other manufacturers who extended themselves through substantial investment and commitment to secure export orders

Announcing an expanded export order for VWSA to produce 60 000 fourth-generation Golfs a year worth R5.5-billion for the UK, Maergner said that in spite of initial positive indications, government had not been able to provide concrete financial assistance for this project.

In April, VWSA won a contract to provide 68 000 new Golfs over 18 months. The company invested R160-million in the project and in

training 1 000 new employees plus 400 saved from retrenchment.

The new contract, which continues for the vehicle's life span, perhaps five to six years, will be worth over R30-billion. Next year's intended launch of the car locally will result in increased local content.

Maergner says that in law no provision is made for incentives for major investments not based on a greenfields plant. Manufacturing and retail motor sector strikes had affected delivery of new Golfs.

"What has transpired in South Africa over the last few months is beyond comprehension to me, never mind our parent company. The volatility of the labour situation as reflected in the recent series of direct and indirect strikes has sent the wrong message.

"Government's turnabout regarding changes to the MIDP at the mid-term review has not been well received. This has compounded the loss of confidence by our parent in VWSA. We are right now fighting for our long-term strategy and ultimately our long-term survival."

Maergner says SA is not a logical manufacturing base because of the high cost of shipping material, relatively high cost of labour, its volatility and the rand decline's impact on costs. "Without substantial export business, a relatively high degree of local content and a growing local market, as well as a government that is credible in its commitments, it will be very difficult to be successful in this country"

● See Page 7

Hospital union in conflict after walkout

Reneé Grawitzky

THE Hospital Personnel Trade Union of SA faces a possible split after five of nine regions walked out of its national congress on the weekend amid claims of racism and a leadership battle.

Union sources said the congress was disrupted after a vote of no confidence was taken against the current union leadership. The leadership disputed this and said the congress was disrupted by four, mainly black, regions which had lost a vote by a wide margin.

"This minority faction originates from the Lehowa Action Committee

and favours radicalism"

The sources said tensions had been building up ahead of the congress after the union's former vice-president David Tsheola was forced to resign. He had gained support from the four mainly black regions.

The union said the four regions had tried to create the erroneous impression the leadership was still white.

The union said the congress was forced to close after the five regions walked out as the constitution required that a quorum include six regions. The union will have to reconvene a congress within eight weeks.

BD 23/10/98

Strikes bring losses and hit consumers too

Star 28/10/98 (152)

Unions and management in talks over Edgars and Clover disputes

By EDDIE JAVIVA

While union leaders and management are negotiating to resolve the protracted Clover and Edgars strikes, workers and employers are experiencing financial losses as the industrial action begins to hit consumers and retailers

Edgars and the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saccawu) are meeting today at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in an effort to end the five-week-old strike

Behind closed doors yesterday, Clover and the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) met in a bid to reach an agreement on the seven-week-long strike. The Clover strike has resulted in irregular supplies to leading retailers

A Hyperama spokesperson said the stores had received intermittent supplies from Clover: "It is one of our major suppliers and we hope the strike will end. It has been a trying period for us"

The latest figures from Edgars show that the company has lost R35-million in sales since the strike began, and workers have lost R4-million in wages

According to the group's latest annual report, out of every R100 spent within the group, R73,80 is paid to vendors outside the group who supply materials, merchandise and services.

Of the balance (R26,20), R16,56 is spent on employee remuneration, R5,76 on leases and rentals for stores; R2,59 on direct taxation to the Government; R1,05 on interest pay-

ments to the providers of finance; and R0,24 on dividends allocated to shareholders

The Edgars strike, which is in its fifth week, was triggered by the company's decision to freeze wage increases because of a 28% drop in profits.

To avoid further retrenchments, Edgars decided against pay increases. The union has demanded a 15% increase

"We felt that the 28% loss in profits didn't mean that the company had no money. We could not accept their reasoning, and after protracted negotiations we embarked on a full-blown strike," said Lee Modiga, Saccawu national negotiations co-ordinator.

Fawu and Clover were locked in negotiations yesterday to resolve their wage dispute. The union was demanding an 8% or R300 increase across the board, which has been reduced to R250, and the company is offering 8% across the

board or a R200 increase.

Commenting on irregular supplies from Clover, a Shoprite Checkers spokesperson said, "We have used small suppliers to keep certain stocks on the shelves and the fridges.

"Obviously, our company will welcome the speedy resolution of the strike so that our consumers can once more have a wide range of Clover products in our stores."

At 94 Score stores and franchises, the supply has been "on and off", according to marketing manager Fred David

Spar southern division purchasing manager Andrew Stefanou said "Stocks are short at the moment"

“It has been a trying period for us”

Ballot poser could sideline strike by disgruntled UCT staff

ANDREA BOTHA
EDUCATION REPORTER

The University of Cape Town has questioned a second strike ballot conducted by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union.

Union workers have given UCT management 48 hours' notice of their

intention to go on strike, expected to start on Friday or Monday.

But the university today questioned whether the strike ballot was properly conducted. It is the second time university management has cast doubt over the ballot.

Last week, the majority of union members voted for a strike. After the university questioned the wording of

the ballot, it was changed and a second vote was held yesterday. After the first ballot, the university was granted a labour court interdict against the workers, prohibiting them from going on an illegal strike.

Yesterday, the majority of members again voted for a strike.

UCT spokeswoman Helen Zille said today: "We have reservations

about whether it was a properly conducted secret ballot that met the terms of the interdict, and we are seeking urgent clarification from Nehawu." Union provincial secretary Andrew Madella said he had not heard anything from the university stating it was unhappy with the second ballot.

The 730 union members on the

campus, mainly cleaners and administrative staff, decided to strike after annual wage increase negotiations with management failed.

The union members initially wanted a R500 increase, but dropped their demand to R200 across-the-board, which would amount to an average increase of 8,7%. The university is offering 6%.

ANLY 28/10/98 (152)

Edgars wage meeting drags on

Themba Hlengani

20 (172) 29/10/98
A MEETING to resolve the month-long wage dispute between clothing retail group Edgars and two unions representing almost 20 000 workers went on until late last night, with one union official saying it might take the whole night before a decision was reached.

The SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union and the Federated Council of Retail and Allied Workers met Edgars group management for the third round of negotiations mediated by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

The two unions and Edgars management failed to resolve the dispute during a similar meeting last week.

After more than five hours of talks yesterday, one official said that there was no sign of progress.

Earlier, a spokesman from Edgars

said she also expected the meeting to go on until late last night.

The month-long dispute began when Edgars rejected the unions' demand for a 15%-20% wage increase. The demand, later reduced to 10% by the unions, came after Edgars announced a wage freeze after reporting a 28% drop in profit.

Edgars rejected it, saying it was "excessive" and "could lead to the company's demise".

It proposed a once-off payment of R250 next month plus its usual Christmas bonus, followed by another bonus in January subject to the company keeping within the budget in the next two months.

In the meantime, workers affiliated to the two unions continued with their demonstrations yesterday.

So far, the strike action has cost Edgars millions in lost revenue.

200 000 may back Edgars

wage strike

Star 29/10/98

(158)

Union threatens nationwide sympathy

strikes if latest round of talks fail

By Eddie Javiva

Edgars management and union leaders were locked in talks with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration yesterday in a bid to end the five-week-long strike and forestall a secondary strike by about 200 000 workers nationwide

Union heads and company management met for a third round of mediation to try to resolve the current impasse on wages and working conditions

Members of the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (Saceawu) at various companies around the country were waiting to see if they would be called out in support of Edgars workers

The initial dispute between the union and Edgars was declared by the union, which refused to accept the group's decision not to grant salary increases in the current financial year

Saceawu national negotiator Lee Modiga said "The union leadership has resolved to embark on a secondary strike which will involve about 200 000 members

nationwide, from all companies that have Saceawu members

"The action will include picketing, sit-ins and sleep ins within the Edgars group stores The tripartite alliance (ANC, Cosatu and SA Communist Party) and Sanco (the SA National Civic Organisation) will be asked to join the action. We will petition all Edgars customers to support the strike. We will also call a nationwide boycott," Modiga said

The seven-week-long Clover strike could be settled before the end of the week if the latest impasse is sorted out, according to a senior member of the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu), who did not want to be named

He said talks at the CCMA did not go well on Tuesday and Clover was not willing to budge "Clover is using the courts to force workers to return to work. We have opposed their application, which claims that the strike is becoming violent But they have failed to prove the claims" He added that Fawu wanted to settle Clover group manager of corporate services Dr Bokkie van Heerden said, "We are determined to end the strike."



THYS DILLIART

Hard-times club . Edgars workers solicit charity from Johannesburg shoppers as their five-week-long strike begins to hurt.

By Eddie Javiva

Khetha Mbatsha is penniless after being on strike from the Edgars group for five weeks

A salesperson at the Edgars subsidiary, Sales House, Mbatsha is relying on his mother's pension grant to support him and his three school-going children

The strike has affected Edgars group stores including Sales House, Jet, Cuthbert,

It's a just cause, says struggling father of 3

Edgars and Edgars Kiddie

Retail apparel stores such as Smart Centre, Bee Gee, Patrick Daniels, Guys & Girls and Arthur Kaplan have also been affected

"The strike is beginning to bite," Mbatsha, a member of the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union, said outside the Eloff

Street Sales House yesterday.

"I am grateful that my mother is using her monthly grant to support the family. I don't have to explain the reasons for the strike to my children. Things will be much tougher if the union and the company don't settle at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration today"

Despite the hardships, Mbatsha was adamant that they were fighting for a just cause "We cannot allow management to pay low wages and freeze increases for two years

"It is unfair to pay managers bonuses, while the company ignores our calls for an increment

"We need money to support our families. Transport costs have escalated, but our wages are still low

"We embarked on a march in July to highlight our plight, but management ignored us. We then used August and September to picket and, when management did not respond, then we went on a full-blown strike on September 28

"We would rather be on the street than continue to accept lower wages," he said

'MANAGEMENT DRAGGED FEET'

UCT strike likely to affect exam schedules

CT 30/10/98 (157) (22)

EXAM SCHEDULES at UCT stand to be upset if a Nehawu strike goes ahead on Monday. Education writer **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports.

STAFF belonging to the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) will embark on full strike action at the University of Cape Town on Monday after a breakdown in wage negotiations last week.

Nehawu's main demands are a R200 across-the-board raise amounting to an average 8,7% increase, a guarantee from UCT management that it will not retrench anyone in pay classes 1-4 in the next two years; more time off work for shop stewards to meet; an increase in the housing subsidy for a R60 000 bond, and for the housing allowance — for those who do not receive a subsidy — to be increased to R300 a month.

UCT is offering Nehawu members a 6% salary increase — which would be back-dated to July 1, 1998 — and has agreed that there will be no involuntary retrenchment until the end of June 1999. It has offered more time for shop stewards, but not as much as Nehawu has asked for. No increase in either the housing subsidy or housing allowance is being considered for this year.

Nehawu represents workers in pay classes 1-4, making up a total of 680 staff.

Each pay class has several salary notches but most staff are on the maximum notch for their pay class, according to UCT.

UCT's offer to Nehawu would bring the average cash salary to

BREAKDOWN OF UCT SALARY PACKAGES

Graphic: Nezeah Burch

	Payclass 1 Max RPM	Payclass 1 - 4 Ave RPM	Payclass 4 Max RPM
Salary	1 955	2 301	2 758
Provident Fund	427	600	727
Housing (max)	625	557	491
Medical Aid (m-2)	761	835	830
Annual Bonus	163	192	230
TOTAL	3 928	4 485	5 041

R2 439 in pay classes 1-4 and the average package to R4 671. Recent salary surveys show that this is higher than the wages earned by 90% of service workers in other sectors of the economy. In cash terms alone, UCT remains a market leader.

Helen Zille, director of communications at UCT, said this week that management had reservations about whether Nehawu had conducted the strike ballot properly.

Andrew Madella, provincial secretary of Nehawu, disagreed.

"We complied with all the conditions in the recognition agreement and with all procedures needed to conduct a strike ballot."

"When the results were given to management, they showed no indication that they were unhappy. Management have still not communicated this to us yet."

"Nehawu workers are committed to going ahead with a strike. However, we are prepared to nego-

ciate with management at any time, but they have not indicated that they would like to meet with us," Madella said.

He added that most Nehawu members at UCT were administrative support staffers and that a strike would definitely affect the exam schedules.

He said the wage matter should have been settled in July, but "management dragged their feet and now that strike action is threatened Nehawu is seen as the bad influence wanting to disrupt the exams"

"Management should shoulder the blame if exams are affected in any way."

"Management should shoulder the blame if exams are affected in any way. Our intention is to be out in full force on Monday, with placard demonstrations and marches in and around the campus, but there will be no disruptions of classes," Madella said.

UCT management has issued a stern warning to Nehawu that disrupting an exam will be a dismissable offence.

UCT workers set to strike

Action could hit varsity as exams start

EDUCATION REPORTER

As thousands of University of Cape Town students got down to end-of-year exams today, more than 700 staff were due to start a strike in a bid for higher wages.

Andrew Madella, provincial secretary of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union said it was not the intention to disrupt the exams, but the strike would

probably affect the running of the university as union workers held key positions in the administration.

Members, mainly cleaners and administrative staff, want a R200 across-the-board increase which amounts to an average increase of 8,7%. The university is offering 6%.

The same wage increase offer was made to all staff unions on the campus and was accepted by all but Nehawu

UCT's offer to Nehawu would bring the average cash salary to R2 439 in pay classes 1 to 4 and the average package to R4 671.

Recent salary surveys show this is higher than the wages earned by 90% of service workers in other sectors of the economy.

Mr Madella said: "We will suspend our action immediately if management makes an improvement on their offer. Our demand is fair and not

unreasonable."

Mr Madella said he hoped the strike would not continue as long as the three-week Nehawu strike at the University of the Western Cape.

UCT director of communications Helen Zille said the university was still involved in negotiations with Nehawu.

"In the event of a strike, we have a clear contingency plan," Ms Zille said.

PRG 2/11/98

(153)

Golding warns of strike consequences

Reneé Grawitzky

(152)

CAPE TOWN — Marcel Golding, the trade unionist turned businessman, called on workers yesterday to consider the possible negative consequences their strike actions could have on benefits such as pension funds **BD 3/11/98**

Golding, the chairman of Hosken Consolidated Investment, said at the Industrial Relations Association of SA conference in Cape Town that trade unions had been a major force for social justice and equity before 1994. However in a democratic SA they had to reconsider how they operated. The argument of force should be replaced by the force of argument.

Unions had to find a way of improving the material benefits of their members while guaranteeing the security of post-employment benefits. Strikes could affect company profit and hence the share value. Ultimately, pension fund benefits could be affected and prejudice workers.

He suggested that unions consider more innovative techniques in dealing with conflict.

Golding was assistant general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) until 1994 when he became an African National Congress MP.

The Mineworkers' Investment Union and Sactwu Investment Company, the respective investment arms of the NUM and the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union, have a large stake in Hosken.

UCT acts to stop strikers disrupting its exams

ANDREA BOTHA

EDUCATION REPORTER

ARC 3/11/98

The University of Cape Town has been granted an interdict restraining striking workers from going to the upper campus and disrupting exams.

This follows the arrest of two National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union members yesterday when workers and police clashed.

Director of communications at UCT Helen Zille said the majority of Nehawu workers were at work yesterday, the first day of the strike over a wage dispute.

She claimed that as support for the strike was so low, Nehawu had brought supporters from outside the campus to join their demonstrations.

About 700 Nehawu members are on strike in support of a demand for a R200 across-the-board pay rise, the equivalent of about 8%. The university is offering 6%.

A UCT spokesman said a group of Nehawu workers had marched around the campus yesterday, upsetting rubbish bins, turning on taps and disrupting exams by banging on windows. Police were called and violence broke out when they tried to drive the marchers back.

Two men were arrested on charges of assault.

Ms Zille said: "This is outrageous behaviour and it is illegal. It is also in bad faith, given the fact that both parties had agreed to continue negotiations on Monday on picketing rules."

She said that outside sympathisers had joined about 60 Nehawu workers on the march.

Students in two exam halls were given extra time to finish their papers after the disturbance. "Exams are sacrosanct at UCT," said Ms Zille.

Nehawu provincial secretary Andrew Madella denied that their members had been disruptive or violent. "They were moving in an orderly way towards the hall when police blocked their way."

He said violence broke out when police tried to push workers, who pushed back. The two men arrested had, in fact, been defending themselves, said Mr Madella.

CT 411198

Protesters bused in to back UCT strike

(152) (54)

EDUCATION WRITER

EXAMINATIONS at the University of Cape Town initially went ahead without disruptions yesterday, but busloads of 'imported' protesters once again went against the grain of picketing rules

An urgent interdict was granted against the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) on Monday night

It puts a stop to its members and supporters demonstrating on UCT's upper campus

Final exams are in progress there

While Nehawu abided by the terms of the interdict, it is believed the union brought in more than 300 people from the University of Western Cape to support about 80 workers protesting on the middle campus

UCT's director of communications, Helen Zille, said yesterday that three or four buses had arrived on the middle campus and that workers, believed to be from UWC, had joined in the marching and shouting "for a while"

"Nehawu knows they cannot get enough support from here and that's why they have to rely on

sympathisers from the outside. This is not recognised in terms of the picketing rules, and the legality of the strike is also in question

"I want to reiterate our concern about putting outsiders on the campus, and I think our concerns are entirely justified in this regard," Zille said

The strike on Monday came after a wage deadlock in which Nehawu is demanding an 8,7% across-the-board increase, while management's final offer is 6%

On Friday the Labour Court granted an interdict preventing Nehawu workers from striking this

week on the grounds that the union's strike ballot was invalid

In last week's ballot 420 Nehawu members rejected management's offer, and 135 accepted it. Management has claimed this was not a valid strike ballot because Nehawu members were not asked to vote specifically for a strike

George Daniels, chairperson of the UCT Nehawu Shop Stewards' Council, said the union had a committee to manage the strike

"I don't want to see the situation at UWC developing at UCT, but the ball is now in management's court," Daniels said

Nehawu strikers assaulted me on campus, says photographer

ANDREA BOTHA
EDUCATION REPORTER

A freelance photographer said he was assaulted on the campus of the University of Cape Town today by striking National Education Health Allied Workers' Union workers.

Selwyn Marks, 35, of Muizenberg went to the campus to get the name of a woman he had photographed "I saw the workers protesting, so I started taking pictures - and they attacked me"

Mr Marks claimed workers had pulled his ponytail, kicked him in the side and broken his flash, causing R300 damage. Police had escorted him into a building but workers had run after him to try to remove his film, he said

Nehawu workers at UCT have been striking since Monday in support of a wage demand

Mr Marks said he had been told by the workers they were unhappy with media coverage of the strike and felt newspapers were prejudiced towards them

"I'm a photographer. This is how I make a living"

UCT spokeswoman Helen Zille said. "We greatly regret that a person was assaulted and intimidated



SELWYN MARKS

Angry mob: this group of striking workers is alleged to have intimidated and assaulted a freelance photographer at the University of Cape Town today

in this way in the normal course of his duty. Though the people were wearing balaclavas and scarves and we are unable to tell if UCT workers were involved or not, irrespective of who were responsible this is the sort of deplorable intimidation which has characterised this strike from the beginning"

Ms Zille said students - who are

writing exams - were getting fed up with the strike

By early afternoon Nehawu had indicated that they wanted to negotiate. Talks were to begin later today. Ms Zille said the university was prepared to repackage the wage increase offer of 6% - but not to increase the amount. Nehawu is demanding an effective 8%

Striking UCT staff slash tyres

(157) (157)
LYNNE RIPPENAAR

ART 7/11/98

University of Cape Town workers slashed car tyres in a march across the campus yesterday, as the strike for better wages continued.

Negotiations between Nehawu members and UCT management ended with workers rejecting UCT's settlement offer.

Management offered workers a once-off back payment, effective from July to the beginning of November, and an increase of 6% according to their different pay classes.

But Nehawu members are demanding a R200 increase across the board.

About 200 strikers marched across the campus from the Bremner building to the Protea building on lower campus. During the protest seven vehicles' tyres were slashed and some cars scratched.

Police suspect the damage was caused by workers because they were the only group that passed the building.

However, George Daniels, the chairperson of the Shopstewards Council, said he knew nothing of the incident or of Nehawu members involvement.

Mr Daniels said they would discuss the offer made by management with the other members and that strikes would continue next week if a settlement was not reached.

He also alleged that management had decreased the initial offer given to members during mediation.

UCT strike is bad timing, say students

Exams disrupted

(152)
ARG 10/11/98

"It's just sad. So sad," sighs softly-spoken Odwa Zotongo.

The 19-year-old social sciences student shakes her head as she comments on the strike by the National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union at the University of Cape Town.

She has just finished writing an exam and is waiting for her bus to go back to her residence.

"I don't know a lot about what's happening, but there are two sides to every story. It is sad that it should have had to come to this," she says.

Union members on the campus went on strike last week demanding a R200 across the board pay increase, effectively 8%. UCT management has offered only 6% and says it will not increase the offer.

Negotiations broke down at the weekend and the strike is continuing. Meanwhile, students are writing exams under difficult conditions.

Demonstrators have disrupted exams and broken windows. They have also disturbed students trying to study at the library and at residences with noisy singing and dancing.

Medical student Gill Jacobs, 23, said she understood the workers'

ANDREA BOTHA



EDUCATION REPORTER

demands, but felt it was "terrible timing."

Trying to disrupt the exams was ineffective because students were unable to do anything.

"I don't see how that can make a difference. We are not involved."

But Khotso Sekhobo, 19, and Sizwe Radebe, 19, recognised the workers' timing as a ploy to get more attention.

"Management has to solve its problem with Nehawu. Students are being disturbed," said Mr Sekhobo.

Other students claimed not to know much about the strike and said they were too focused on their exams to care.

Others like Marjorie Ngwenya, 20, said she felt some of union's demands were justified, but a strike was not the right way to go about things. Other options should have been explored before strike action was taken.

~~SECRET~~
**Clover, Fawu
settle after
7-week strike**

(152)
Johannesburg - Clover SA and the Food and Allied Workers' Union have settled the wage dispute which gave rise to a seven week strike.

Company spokesman Marius du Ploy said both parties agreed to a wage increase of 7% or R200.

At the beginning of the strike Fawu demanded an increase of 9% with a minimum increment of R300 per month.

Clover SA then offered, subject to certain conditions, a wage increase of 7% or R200 a month. However, this was rejected by the union.

BD 10/11/98
The parties eventually reached an agreement on Monday and settled on a wage increase of 7% or R200 per month. - Sapa

(2) ~~2000~~ (152)

Striking dairy employees agree to return to work

Workers at Clover SA have called off their long-term wage dispute with the company.

Clover SA and the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) yesterday settled their wage dispute, which gave rise to a

seven-week strike.

Clover spokesperson Marius du Plooy said both parties had agreed to a wage increase of 7%, or R200.

Fawu members were due to return to work today.

At the beginning of the

strike, Fawu demanded an increase of 9% with a minimum increment of R300 a month. Clover offered, subject to certain conditions, a wage increase of 7% or R260 a month. This was rejected by the union.

- Sapa

Star 10/11/98

Strikes backfire as more jobs are lost and SA's economy shrinks

PIERRE-JACQUES RABIE

Arg 11/11/98

(152)

The South African labour market has since August been characterised by costly strikes involving the automotive, chemical, stores and mining industries.

Many of these strikes took weeks to resolve, as employers took a hard line against demands for higher wages - a trend sparked in the global economy.

Meanwhile, unions still insist on inflation-linked wages. According to labour consultant Andrew Levy and Associates, it is estimated South Africa's man-day losses will top 2 million this year, compared with about 650 000 days lost in the previous year owing to strikes.

High-profile strikes by chemical, motor vehicle and transport workers demanding wage rises resulted in the loss of 1,85 million man-days in this year's first nine months.

Strikes in South Africa have reached the highest level since 1994, when the country was edging towards civil war.

Job losses and strikes are costing the South African economy billions of rands.

Lonrho platinum mines, to cite an example, calculated that the strike cost them between R2-million and R2,5-million a day.

Most of the recent strikes have been marred by violence, intimidation and damage to property. Factories have been bombed, court interdicts have been ignored

and there were countless incidents where strikers battled with the police. An alarming number of 12 workers were killed, while other employees were kidnapped and driven from the workplace.

In one incident at Lonrho platinum mines 40 members of the staff were allegedly taken hostage by hundreds of members returning from a union rally.

The dissent in South Africa's labour arena threatens to fuel a rise in job losses because of attempts by employers to curb their wage bills in an economic environment already hurt by stunted growth, high interest rates and jittery emerging market sentiment.

It appears that, with the economy as weak as it is, employers are often forced to keep their wage costs under control by laying off workers.

But the sad fact is that ordinary union members are not aware that this is happening when recession seems imminent. The able approach of some unions is placing some overseas contracts in serious jeopardy when, according to the latest statistics by the Reserve Bank, the South African economy is shedding about 510 jobs every day.

The number employed in the formal sector shrank to 5,1 million at the end of the first quarter of 1998, which was 3,6% less or 187 000 fewer than at the end of the first

quarter of 1997. Our economically-active population is increasing by about 320 000 (2%) a year and higher unemployment can only be prevented if jobs of this magnitude are created on a year-to-year basis.

It is accepted that the number of employees in the public sector needs to be reduced. It follows therefore that the jobs will have to be created in the private sector - which necessitates a business environment conducive to productive fixed investment and production at competitive prices.

It is imperative that unions should realise that if they are concerned about joblessness, they should refrain from activities that can lead to further losses.

Strikes are a feature of the market economy, and no one denies workers the right to strike. The amount of violence and intimidation during the latest strikes cannot, however, be justified.

Union leaders must at least engage resolutely against union members who take part in violent actions during strikes.

The Government must call on its alliance partner, Cosatu, to stress that the absence of violence and intimidation during strikes is in the best interests, not only of the South African economy as a whole, but also of unions and the thousands of unemployed people in South Africa.

■ *The writer is a Member of Parliament for the National Party.*

SA unions told to shift away from strikes

Reneé Grawitzky

(1972) 090 12/11/98

SA UNIONS should shift their focus away from strikes to mechanisms which would assist in rebuilding the economy, a visiting US academic warned yesterday.

John Beck, an associate professor at the School of Labour and Industrial Relations at Michigan State University, said unions should move away from their strict dependence on adversarialism.

He said this shift was necessitated by the fact that global economies were moving ahead and were not waiting patiently for SA to sort out its problems. Hence, unions should move towards building "linked interests" with employers.

Unions could not strike as a way to rebuild, while "simply saying no is not enough nor a complete answer in view of the current climate", he said.

Unions in the current competitive environment had to give back more than mere compliance

"Unions have a responsibility to try to co-operate with management to make things work," Beck said. Management and unions had to find ways to make companies work, but attempts to achieve this were tempered by the fear of co-optation and a belief that it was management's job to run the company.

The SA labour movement had envisaged a future industrial relations system similar to the western European co-determination models. Partly as a result of the effects of globalisation, the pendulum in SA was swinging away from this model towards the US model — which labour opposed. Thus, Beck said, might prove to be a major source of conflict.

Unions in the US were unable to bargain sectorally, but SA legislation provided for this.

However, "unions in SA will increasingly face the fact that it is not sectors that are in global competition, but individual businesses, and therefore need to shift their attention to make things work at the company level"

Unions in SA, he said, could give to their members what they wanted in terms of wage increases but would not deliver what they truly needed, namely jobs; as greater wage increases led to a greater haemorrhaging of jobs.

In the US, unions were trying to protect what they had while President Bill Clinton had adopted seemingly worker-friendly as opposed to union-friendly policies. The US model, Beck said, gave the illusion of representation and hence an "illusion of fairness". But in reality, the system helped maintain a weak trade union movement.

US unions, as opposed to their SA counterparts, were unable to engage over issues such as job security and debate the shape of the economy.

Beck supported the idea that employee share ownership schemes were one way to facilitate the better distribution of wealth. This approach can "change the way wealth is accumulated and bind workers to the company"

Labour group warns of rise in violent strike action

Reneé Grawitzky

WAGE settlements were adapting to changed economic circumstances and were moving more in line with the inflation rate, it said in a report commissioned by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) released yesterday.

There was also a significant rise in protracted and often violent strikes in which more than 14 people died this year.

However the report, compiled by Jeremy Baskin, found that "there is little if any indication that nonstrike settlements were on average lower than strike-linked settlements" In view of this, the report warned that "we are in danger of entering a vicious circle, especially if protracted industrial action leads to only marginal differences in settlement levels"

Baskin estimated that more than 2,8-million man days were lost during the first 10 months of this year — four times more than last year and the highest level since the 1994 election year. By the end of this year, more than 3-million man days would have been lost to strikes, the report said. These figures are higher than those released by Andrew Levy & Associates.

Baskin cautioned against viewing the rise in strikes as a reversal of the downward trend evident since 1994. Most sectors, he said, experienced little or no strike action while the majority of man days lost were a result of strikes in four

BD 12/11/98 (152)
main sectors — metal (motor and automobile manufacturing), retail and services (security), chemical and transport.

The report, released by the labour department, coincided with the second anniversary of the implementation of the Labour Relations Act. It aimed to establish reasons for the upsurge in strikes.

It found that while strikes were lasting longer, they were almost all procedural. This suggested "respect for the act, notwithstanding problems regarding respect for the picketing provisions and the rights of nonstrikers and of employers to use replacement labour".

In addition, Baskin found that in the major strikes, union members were not balloted. Sources said Labour Minister Shepherd Mdladlana intended urging unions to ballot before going on strike in order to gauge the extent of support.

There was "little substantial evidence" to support the argument that strikes were politically motivated. The strikes, Baskin said, were caused largely by economic factors. Inflation fell faster in the early part of the year than workers' expectations while employers were prevented by global and competitive pressures from offering significant real increases.

Average settlements were in the region of 8% wage increases (against August's inflation figure of 7,6%).

Picture: Page 3

One killed in Zimbabwe riots

BD 12/11/98 (152)
Michael Hartnack

HARARE — At least one man was shot dead in Mutare yesterday where Zimbabwean security forces clashed with thousands of rioters as the first of a series of stayaways called by the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions took place.

A petrol station was looted in response to last week's 67% increases in the prices of petrol and diesel, and traffic lights were vandalised.

In the northern town of Chinhoyi people tried to organise a march against alleged government mismanagement of the economy, but obeyed orders to disperse.

In Harare, sporadic violence was reported from the southern suburbs. Banks and supermarkets opened belatedly, with skeleton staff for the few customers on the streets, and schools closed. In other towns the stayaway was 75%-90% effective, with few reports of violence.

The congress, which plans similar strikes every Wednesday until its demands are met, wants fuel price increases shelved at least until the publication of a report into alleged corruption at the national oil monopoly. It is also demanding further talks on a "tripartite agreement", including government and employers, on root causes of the 60% slide in the value of the Zimbabwean dollar.

Although a meeting was convened with employers for today to discuss 20% cost of living pay awards, congress's calls for a wider forum had been ignored, said secretary-general Morgan Tsvangirai.

2,8m work days lost to strikes

CT (MR) 12/11/98 (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — More than 2,8 million man days — the highest figure since the 1994 elections — had been lost to a wave of industrial action in the first 10 months of this year, according to a department of labour report released yesterday

The report was commissioned by the International Labour Organisation and the Swiss Project

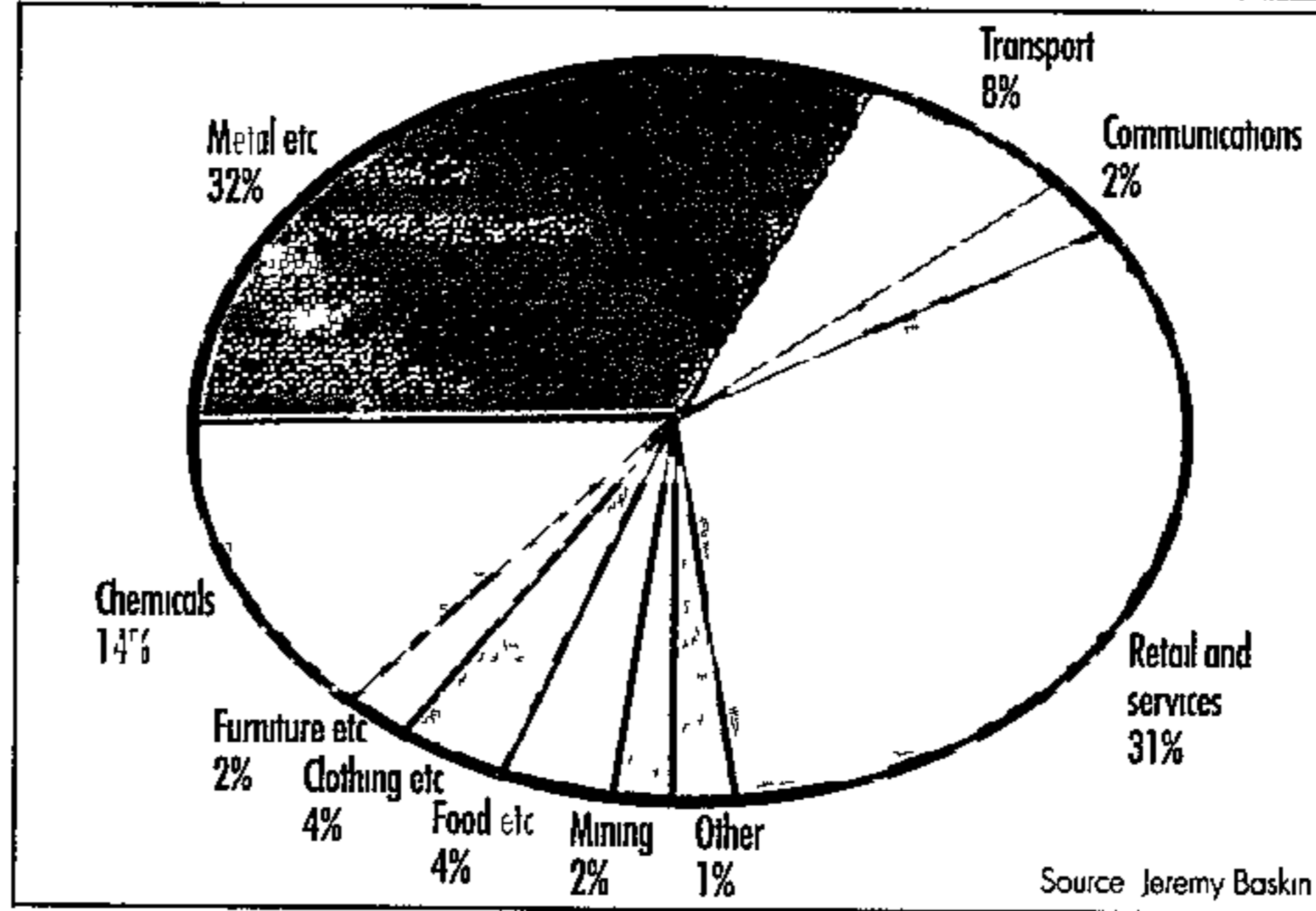
The report also noted high levels of violence with at least 11 people losing their lives and extensive damage caused to property in strike related incidents

Jeremy Baskin, the author of the report and former adviser to the former minister of labour, Tito Mboweni, said this was expected to rise to about 3 million man-days by the end of this year

Baskin said these figures were at least four times higher than last year but "strike levels remain lower than those found in the late 1980s and early 1990s"

However, there was little evidence of the strikes being political, he said

Mandays lost in 1998



"Inflation fell faster in the early part of this year than workers' inflationary expectations, while employers were constrained by global and competitive pressures from offering significant real increases

"Other contributory factors included powerplay between unions and employers in some sectors, an imitation effect among unionists after the trans-

port and security strikes and correspondingly, employers' determination to resist double-digit settlements," Baskin said

The year was also characterised by employers taking a hardline approach to union demands with wages being almost the only issue underpinning the decision to go on strike and only a few instances of grievance-linked strikes being registered

Attitudes to strike-related violence 'are changing'

BD 13/11/98 (152)

Reneé Grawitzky

THE report commissioned by the International Labour Organisation/Swiss Project on strikes and collective bargaining in SA raises two crucial questions whether there has been a rise in strike-related violence or if undue prominence has been given to it

The report suggests there has been a change in attitude by political leaders towards strike-related violence in SA, on the one hand, and a very gradual acceptance by workers, on the other, that democratic legislation implemented since 1994 can work without strikes

It highlights the extent of the violence and damage to company property which marred a number of major strikes as a key feature of collective bargaining this year

In some strikes there were few incidents of violence, alleged or otherwise. However, in sectors such as the security, motor, transport and the chemical sector, strike-related violence and damage to property were extensive

During these strikes more than 14 non-striking workers and replacement labourers were killed, while others were intimidated or kidnapped. A number of companies lost millions as a result of extensive damage to property

Factors contributing to the violence included the limited movement by employers during negotiations, the use of replacement labour and, therefore, the ability of employers to continue operations. However, a far more critical factor was the "culture of violence or the tolerance

of violence that still exists in SA"

Durban-based consultant Pat Stone acknowledged that violence was still an inherent part of SA society. However, "society in general is now seeing violence as less legitimate than in the past because of the new democratic system"

Labour Minister Shepherd Mdladlana said this week that violence during strikes was condemned, "particularly now that workers' rights to strike are enshrined in the constitution and the law"

An observer said perhaps government had more faith in the democratic process than workers who had yet to accept that the new laws would work

Stone said there was a higher propensity for violence when strikes began to have a limited effect on workers' economic leverage. It was difficult to estimate whether violence was on the increase as there was insufficient data available in this regard

This was a major concern of the report, which said: "We are in danger of entering a vicious circle, especially if protracted industrial action leads to only marginal differences in settlements"

Jeremy Baskin, who compiled the report, said if the "vicious circle analysis is correct, then a sense of powerlessness can only grow, especially if industrial action reaps diminishing returns"

Project director Charles Nupen said it was unfortunate that undue prominence was given to the violence which occurred during strikes this year. The report instead highlighted that there was a significantly higher commitment to procedure

Strike threat at Nedcor

ARG 14/11/98
JEAN LEMAY

Employees of one of South Africa's major banking groups, Nedcor, have threatened to strike if the bank does not meet their unions' demands in pay negotiations.

Representatives of the SA Society of Bank Officials (Sasbo) and the Insurance and Banking Staff Association (Ibsa) confirmed that most members had voted yesterday to strike if the bank did not meet their demands.

However, Ashley Sutton-Pryce, the human resources director of Nedcor said the ballots were "testing the water" and that the bank had not put its final offer on the table. There was no question of industrial action. Negotiations would continue on Monday.

He said he was quite sure that the unions' final offer was not on the tables. The unions had "jumped the gun".

The unions could not be reached for comment late yesterday.

The unions objected to the bank's offers being linked to a risk element: a 24% growth in the bank's earnings per Nedcor Group share and a 28% increase in profits after tax for 1998.

Sasbo told its members yesterday that its final demand was for an 11,5% increase for lower-grade employees, an increase of 10,5% on guaranteed pay for higher grades and a two-week productivity bonus.

The bank's final offer was 4,5% on lower grades and 3,5% for higher grades, said Sasbo. In addition, the bank was prepared to make a further 2,5% available in July 1999 on the risk element.

The 2,5% would be back-dated to January 1 1999, it said.

Ibsa said the bank had effectively split the increase due to its members. It said the bank had moved "the goal posts" by demanding that "future targets should be met".

Nedcor's attributable income rose 28% last year to R1 820-million. Earnings per share went up 24% and return on equity to 23,4%.

Fewer days lost to strikes this year than in early 90s

By ZOLILE NQAYI

A REPORT aimed at establishing reasons for the upsurge in strikes this year has found that although four times more days were lost in the first 10 months of the year as compared to last year, this is lower than in the early 90s

The report, commissioned by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)/Swiss Project for the Department of Labour, was released on the second anniversary of the Labour Relations Act in Johannesburg last week

Compiled by Jeremy Baskin, the report said although the increased industrial action this year revolved mainly around wage considerations, powerplay between employers and unions also contributed significantly

Most sectors experienced little if any strike action. The report said 2, 8 million man days were lost as a result of strikes in the chemical, transport, retail and services and metal sectors

The metal sector (motor and automobile manufacturing) accounted for 32 percent of the days lost with the retail and services sector a close second at 31 percent

(157) CP 15/11/98
The report found that "Many strikes were especially protracted this year - major strikes lasting up to five weeks - and the strike 'season' lasted longer than usual, almost all strikes were procedural, only taking place after the provisions of the Labour Relations Act had been complied with. In cases where industrial action was unprocedural, the union usually took steps to suspend the action and after that followed procedures"

Baskin noted that the majority of strikes involved wage issues

"Rights-based strikes were notably absent, unlike in previous years," he said

"There was little evidence of the strikes being 'political'. It was argued that unions were expressing dissatisfaction with government 'non-delivery' and that Cosatu unions knew they would find it politically difficult to strike next year (an election year) and so would have to take action this year"

The report said strikes, in the main, were almost entirely caused by economic factors

"Inflation fell faster in the early part of this year than workers' inflationary expectations, while employers were constrained by global and competitive pressures

from offering significant real increases. These factors tightened the range in which settlements were possible, narrowing the window of settlement and the room to manoeuvre"

Baskin said the hardline attitude adopted by employers when faced with industrial action was also the result of globalisation. Fiscal discipline has meant that most employers were not willing to offer more to their employees

"In part this explains why the key sectoral strikers were so protracted. Employers were relatively immovable, for economic rather than conspiratorial reasons"

The report warned that the recent bargaining indicated that South Africa was in "danger of entering a vicious circle". While the unemployed were increasingly taking any employment on offer irrespective of conditions, the employed and unionised resorted to their bargaining power to improve their wages in order to support the increasing numbers in their households

As a result of the bargaining power of unionised workers, Baskin said, employers were likely to reduce their workforce and subcontract and outsource more

BY THE end of the year, many days lost to strike action will probably hit the 3-million mark, the highest incidence of industrial action since the early 90s and in stark contrast to last year's record lows.

Strikes that hit the headlines included those in the transport, security, chemicals, motor and auto sectors. But there were also significant actions in the footwear, textiles and furniture industries, and at a number of dairies, retail chains and universities.

What caused the upsurge? Not politics, as some have surmised, although the strikes probably reflect some disaffection and pressure on unions to deliver.

Without exception, the major strikes were about wages and little else. Workers wanted more and, at least at the time of bargaining, inflation was falling faster than expected. And employers facing global and competitive pressures had little room to move and were determined to resist double-digit increases. Final settlement levels were generally modest, averaging just over 8%. Few fell outside the 6% to 10% range.

The strikes were almost all procedural but many were marred by high levels of conflict. Employers generally took a hard line and used replacement labour to continue production. Strikers in some sectors resorted to violence. There were attacks on scab labourers and vehicles crossing picket lines.

An estimated 11 people lost their lives and a number of companies saw plant and facilities destroyed. The government continued to put the reform of labour legislation high on its agenda. This year saw the completion of the first phase.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act was passed by Parliament and comes into effect later this year. It brings improved minimums for workers including a 45-hour week, three weeks' annual leave and more generous maternity and overtime provisions. It also provides for greater flexibility in the arrangement of working time.

Significantly it allows the minister to lay down minimum wages for vulnerable workers, although it is not clear at what level these are likely to be set.

The Employment Equity Act became law last month. It outlaws unfair workplace discrimination and requires companies employing more than 50 people to develop equity plans. These larger companies are obliged to analyse their existing race and gender profiles, identify obstacles to the advancement of disadvantaged groups and set goals. The new law does not require companies to meet government-determined quotas. Percep-

Stormy on the wage front but a drought of new jobs

STC 027 15 11 98

15a

Labour-market policies will have to be assessed continually if SA wants to generate sufficient jobs, writes JEREMY BASKIN

tions that by the year 2002 the law requires that companies must have 50% women and 75% blacks at all levels are simply incorrect. But the law does demand that companies set their own goals and make meaningful progress towards a diverse and representative workforce.

The skills development legislation is also working its way into law and will bring a new approach to training, improving the quality and portability of certified skills and increasing the resources devoted to training. A 1% levy on the wage bill can be expected.

Labour legislation comes in for repeated criticism from business and in the media. Calls for less regulation and more flexibility are widespread. This has prompted some re-assessment, including impending amendments to the Labour Relations Act. Special dispensations for smaller businesses are under review both within the Department of Labour and as part of the Department of Trade and Industry's overall small-business regulatory review.

If the recent Job Summit achieved one thing it was to highlight the central importance of job creation. For decades our economy has been singularly unsuccessful in reducing unemployment. Officially we have an unemployment rate of nearly 23%, which rises to almost 38% if we include those who have given up actively searching for work. No society can sustain these levels and

hope to remain stable forever. And the problem is especially severe among the youth, women and the rural population.

In simple terms, we must create 350 000 new jobs a year just to absorb new entrants into the labour market, and more if we want to eat into the unemployment backlog. In practice we are not doing this and the backlog is growing. Core sectors of the formal economy especially mining and manufacturing, continue to shed jobs — 100 000 in these two sectors in the last year alone.

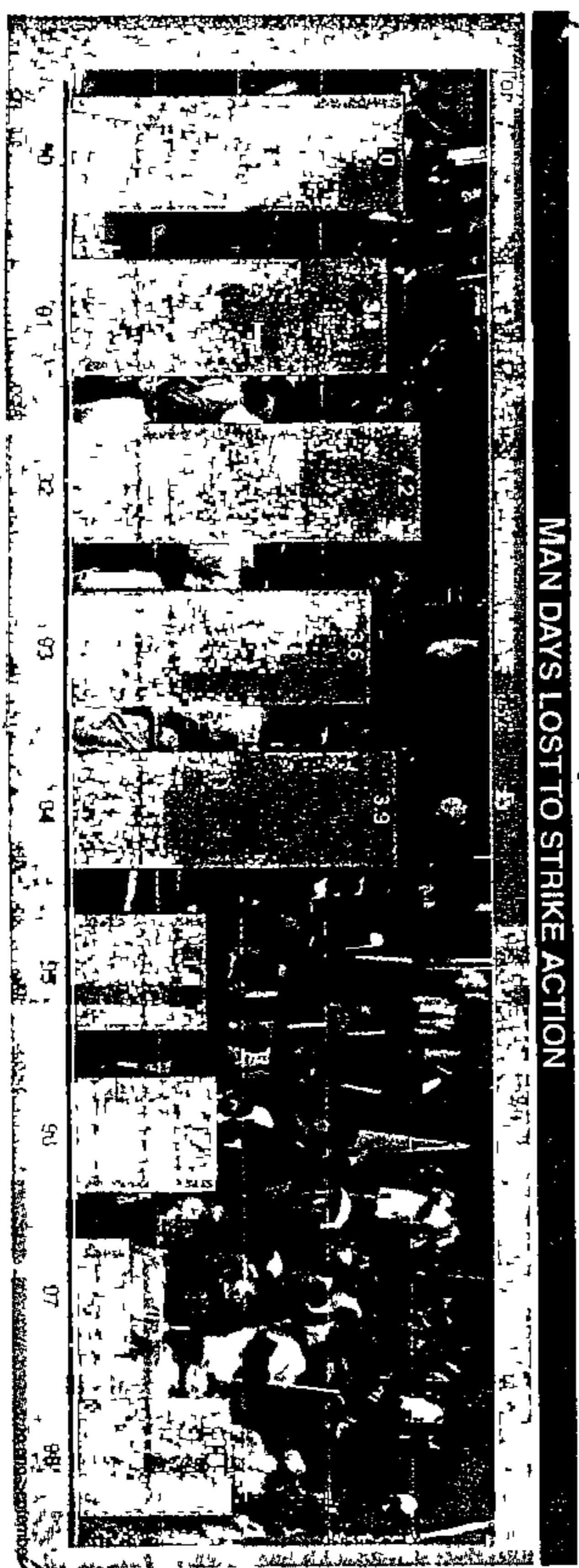
There are no quick fixes but clearly three elements require attention. The first is growth and investment. Sluggish growth simply won't do the trick, whatever other policies are in place. The second is education and training, generating the skills our economy needs and ensuring a literate workforce committed to lifelong learning. And finally, labour-market policies need to be assessed continually. They affect how many people are employed, how many jobs are created for every R1-million invested.

We are living in a job drought. Only if we get these three elements right can we hope it will "rain jobs". To break the drought we will need to get our policies right and apply them well. A little luck would also come in handy. Rahmstark, after all is as much an art as a science.

● *Jeremy Baskin is a public policy analyst*



INDUSTRIAL ACTION... an estimated 3-million man days will probably be lost to strikes this year, the most since the early '90s



Police probe shooting during strike

Themba Hlengani

POLICE are investigating an attempted murder case after a worker was shot and injured by security guards at a condom and surgical glove manufacturing plant, Latex Surgical Products, south of Johannesburg, during a strike earlier this week.

Anna Sehlako was taken to South Rand hospital after she was shot in the ankle by a Metro Security employee. The Chemical Workers' Industrial Union claims the shooting was unprovoked.

CWIU spokesman Bongani Magqaza said the workers had been demonstrating since Monday be-

cause of a wages and working conditions dispute with the company.

On Tuesday, two security guards who were transporting nonstriking workers in a truck, suddenly started shooting randomly at striking workers, he said. Magqaza said Sehlako was discharged later that afternoon after being treated. He said other workers also suffered minor injuries during the shooting but did not need medical attention.

A Latex Surgical Products spokesman said yesterday the shooting occurred after strikers "attacked the vehicle transporting temporary workers to the premises".

Booyens police captain Ian Co-

etsee said police were investigating an attempted murder case against the security guards.

A Metro Security spokesman said the company was aware of the incident but would not comment as it did not have all the facts.

The union has demanded a 12% across-the-board increase and a minimum wage of R1 800, while management is offering a 2,5% increase and a minimum wage of R1 100.

Magqaza said the union rejected the company's offer because it translated into a meagre R30 increase, while the minimum pay offer was what most workers were receiving at the moment.

MD 20/11/98

Toyota workers on strike over cutbacks

(152)

Pearl Sebolao

THE dispute between the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) and Toyota over planned retrenchments took a turn for the worse yesterday when workers downed tools demanding that the retrenchments be halted.

Meanwhile, forced retrenchments at Nissan were put on hold until January next year after Numsa reached an out-of-court settlement with the company. However, the process of voluntary separation packages would be allowed to continue, Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said yesterday.

The union had applied for an interdict in the Labour Court against Nissan alleging that the company had failed to disclose information on its financial accounts, its strategic plans and why it was necessary to retrench as required by the industry's bargaining forum agreement, Ntuli said.

The case has been postponed to

January to give both parties enough time to prepare their arguments.

He said that about 6 000 workers downed tools at Toyota's manufacturing plant in Isipingo, Durban, after it became clear that only hourly paid black workers had been targeted for forced retrenchments.

Ntuli said the workers saw this as "naked and brutal discrimination".

Toyota group human resources director Harry Gazendam described the work stoppage as "a minor problem" involving only 200 employees.

He said the company would take appropriate action against the workers as their action was illegal. Gazendam denied that only hourly paid workers were targeted for retrenchment, saying 150 salaried staff would also be affected, including 25 to 30 in management positions.

Demonstrations and work stoppages were expected to continue today with the company's Johannesburg employees joining the protests.

Nissan could not be reached for comment.

PD 25/11/98

Toyota workers on strike

(152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

(Signature)

AT LEAST 6 000 workers at Toyota's main Isipingo car assembly plant went on strike yesterday, demanding a moratorium on retrenchments

National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said workers protested at alleged workforce retrenchment discrimination, which reportedly affected only hourly-paid black employees

South Africa's major car manufacturers, adversely affected by a severe decline in car sales, were reportedly pushing for a reduction in manning levels, while representative trade unions disagreed with retrenchment plans saying these made a mockery of the recent Presidential Jobs Summit

Ntuli said workers objected to the retrenchments since hourly-paid black workers were singled out on the list of an involuntary package of about 400 identified with effect from December 11 1998

About 230 workers were offered voluntary severance packages this month in addition to 400 who were to be retrenched forcefully in December. The company reportedly plans to retrench about 400 workers next March, explained Ntuli

The union maintained its broad view that the car manufacturing industry could be revitalised to ensure job retention and the creation of new jobs

The industry had a potential for economic growth, job creation and human resource development unless the role of trade unions was undermined in strategic plans aimed at the reconstruction of the economy

Toyota group human resources director Mr Harry Gazendam was reportedly locked in meetings yesterday and failed to return repeated calls for comment

Source: Sowetan, 20/11/98



Workers 'could face axe in violent strikes'

BD 27/11/98

(152)

Reneé Grawitzky

VIOLENT strikes could be declared "unprotected" if government went ahead and amended the Labour Relations Act, the head of the act's drafting team, Halton Cheadle, said yesterday.

The implication is that workers could be dismissed if strikes are marred by violence.

Speaking at Juta's labour law seminar yesterday, Cheadle said strikes this year were characterised by high levels of violence. Unions should "get their house in order" or face possible amendments to the act.

He said government might consider following the example of other countries and remove the protection afforded to strikers. If government decided on this route, the Labour Court could be given the power to declare strikes unprotected as a result of violence. This could then allow employers to dismiss striking workers.

A report by the International Labour Organisation for the labour department highlighted the extent of the violence and damage to company property which marred some strikes this year. More than 14 nonstriking workers and replacement labourers were killed, while others were intimidated or kidnapped.

Speaking at the same seminar, Andre van Niekerk, also part of the act's drafting team, warned that "something must be done soon" to deal with the capacity problems

at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

If mechanisms were not put in place the commission would "speedily deteriorate" and this had major implications for industrial peace and social justice.

Van Niekerk said more than 20% of cases referred to the commission "should not be there".

His warnings follow renewed reports that the commission continues to face major internal problems over the resignation of a number of senior commissioners and claims of mismanagement.

Van Niekerk said the passage of the Labour Relations Amendment Bill through Parliament last month ensured that the labour minister could transfer the outstanding cases before the Industrial Court to the commission for resolution. He questioned whether the commission had sufficient capacity to deal with these cases as well as disputes which could arise as the Basic Conditions of Employment Act came into operation.

Labour lawyer Pak le Roux said a number of disputes could arise over the definition of remuneration in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. "There is a lot of uncertainty about what forms of benefits fall under the definition."

There could be major cost implications for employers, depending on the type of benefits included in the definition. This was especially pertinent in determining accrued annual leave.

www.bday.com

Toyota grinds to a halt as workers strike

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

PRODUCTION lines ground to a halt at Toyota's Prospecton car manufacturing plant in Durban yesterday after members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) embarked on a work stoppage

Toyota human resources director Mr Harry Gazendam said yesterday that production was affected by a group of about 200 Numsa members who downed tools and engaged in "illegal demonstrations".

"The entire workforce had to be sent home and the plant was closed down for the safety of the majority of non-striking workers and to protect property," Gazendam said, also claiming that the strikers broke down the gates to the plant.

Union claims

He pointed out that the plant would remain closed unless the union stopped the demonstrations

Gazendam also rejected union claims that retrenchments were discriminatory and aimed only at hourly-paid African, Indian and coloured workers, saying the list handed to Numsa representatives had names of their union members on it who were hourly-paid workers too.

He said names of salaried staff members, managers and technical staffers to be retrenched were represented to the representative staff association.

"We have been in consultation with the trade unions for almost 12 months about the recessionary economic state of the industry

"We have followed labour relations legislation and national bargaining forum processes to the letter," he said.

Strongly opposed

Numsa spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said the union was strongly opposed to the retrenchments because the company failed to disclose financial information for all Toyota divisions.

"Workers are being used as scapegoats for the inefficiencies of the company. The management failed to consider other alternatives, like job sharing arrangements, reduction of working hours and termination of the services of sub-contractors."

The union demanded a moratorium on retrenchments and full disclosure of information on all retrenchments

Ntuli maintained that the company should be "revitalised" for Toyota to reduce its "high reliance on Japanese models's design and research"

SOWETAN 27/11/98

(152)
(108)



Teachers face salary cuts for striking

(27) (152)

BY TPO MATHELI

Education Reporter

Star 27/11/98

Thousands of teachers countrywide are to have their salaries docked next year for embarking on an unprotected strike against the rationalisation process in June.

Education Ministry spokesperson Bheki Khumalo said yesterday that they were determined not to back down on applying the no-work, no-pay rule. "We are governed by the law and do not have a mandate to deviate from it."

He said the matter could be referred to the Education Labour Relations Council for debate.

South African Democratic Teachers' Union general secretary Thulas Nxesi said they had no grounds to oppose the decision.

Nxesi said it would be difficult to determine which teachers participated in the action and which did not.

He said his organisation was disappointed because the Government would not consider ways for teachers to make up the four days they were absent from work.

"For instance, our view was that the days teachers were going to assist in the voter registration process would compensate for the hours they were on strike. We also feel that teachers can be asked to put in extra hours to offset the deficit."

Car maker threatens to take action against 'intimidators'

Numsa denies responsibility for damage to Toyota plant

ET (PR) 1/12/98 (152) (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) would not take responsibility for any damage that might have been caused to Toyota's property during an industrial action by its members at the Durban plant on Friday, the union said yesterday.

About 6 000 Numsa members embarked on a protest on Friday morning over a retrenchment programme in which 380 of their colleagues would be retrenched after 250 had already accepted voluntary retrenchment packages.

Dumisa Ntuli, the spokesman

for Numsa, said Toyota had threatened to take disciplinary action against union members suspected of "provocation and intimidation".

He warned that if the company decided to proceed with such action it would be a "pyrrhic victory that would ricochet and boomerang" back to the union.

Ntuli said workers had been frustrated and angry. In any event, he said, their right to protest action was enshrined in the Labour Relations Act.

However, Harry Gazendam, Toyota's human resources director, said the right to protest was obviously only protected if it was legally and procedurally correct.

He said no conclusions had been reached yet on what disciplinary measures to take.

Numsa said it was not "taking part in disciplining our members".

Ntuli also slammed Toyota for refusing to "reciprocate or consider" alternatives to retrenchments that had been

proposed by the union. Such proposals included job sharing arrangements, reduction of working hours and replacement of contract workers by permanent members of staff.

Gazendam said "all realistic alternatives" to retrenchments had been considered in great detail.

Ntuli said the union's labour relations with Toyota were "very sour". He accused the employer of "not negotiating in good faith".

Toyota said its industrial relations with Numsa were "generally fine", save for a problem with a small number of about 50 to 100 employees who had "behaved unprocedurally".

Union says it won't take part in disciplining members who were 'angry and frustrated'



Workers go back after lockout

(152)

Sowetan 1/12/98

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour reporter

NORMAL operations resumed at Toyota's Prospecton car manufacturing plant in Durban as more than 6 000 workers returned to work yesterday after a three-day lockout

National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said management had agreed to reopen the plant following protest action by union members demanding a moratorium on retrenchments

The union believed continued closure of the plant fuelled tensions and exacerbated the situation, he said. He added that the union would press for the company to reverse its plans for disciplinary proceedings against protesters

Ntuli said the Numsa delegation had requested a meeting with the group's executive directors, claiming current company negotiators were incompetent and unilaterally dictated terms on union shop stewards and failed to consider the union proposals

regarding retrenchments

The union said it was not going to accept a situation where the company would take any form of disciplinary action against its members.

Group human resources director Harry Gazendam was not available for comment as he was reported to be in meetings

The plant was closed for three days last week after workers embarked on a series of one-hour demonstrations at the Isipingo, Durban, plant in a move to stop the company from retrenching 607 workers. They claimed only hourly-paid union members were singled out for involuntary retrenchments

● Meanwhile, Reuters reports that unions in Zimbabwe said yesterday they would challenge president Robert Mugabe's order banning national strikes for six months and that they were ready to defy the rule "any time".

The Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) also announced it was calling off one-day strikes for now because the government had accepted its proposals to convene urgent talks

COMPANIES

Toyota strikes cost company more than R25m

Disciplinary action is being taken
in consultation with Numsa

Stan Maphologela

DD 2/12/98 (152)

RECENT strikes at Toyota SA's Durban plant cost the company more than R25m in cumulative turnover, with employees forgoing more than R1,5m in salaries and wages, spokesman Joe Thompson said this week.

In a demonstration last week, which the company said was illegal and unprocedural, National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) members damaged property and threatened other employees and contractors.

As a result Toyota management had decided to close the main production plant in Isipingo until Numsa leaders were prepared to control union members. The decision was reversed at the weekend and workers resumed production on Monday.

The company said disciplinary action against the individuals involved was being initiated in consultation with Numsa. The plant is producing between 300 and 350 vehicles a day, and the company said last Thursday and Friday's production shortfalls would be made up.

"Given the state of the motor industry where demand is highly depressed and where less production volumes are required, the impact of last week's labour action could be gradually recovered," Thompson said.

Due to cost pressures and prevailing economic circumstances in SA, the company recently announced the possibility of retrenchment with the aim of aligning its business strategies with the problems in the industry.

Toyota group human resource director Harry Gazendam said the company had been consulting for several months with the employee representatives and unions active in Toyota.

This process culminated in a voluntary separation exercise in October and last month.

"Unfortunately retrenchments per se will have to be effected in December 1998. Both the voluntary separations and the scheduled retrenchments affect employees of all levels and race in the organisation," he said.

"The whole process is being conducted strictly in terms of agreed procedures and the requirements of the Labour Relations Act," he said.

'Let's see an end to labour unrest'

By Mzwakhe Hlangani (152)
Labour Reporter

LABOUR Minister Membathisi Mdladlana has challenged the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration to be better prepared for cooperative labour relations to ensure a decrease in the number of strikes

The CCMA began its two-day annual convention at Kalfontein, outside Johannesburg, yesterday to evaluate, among other issues, the impact of the Labour Relations Act on industrial relations and the effectiveness of collective bargaining

"It would be in the interests of the country to see a further decline in strikes and a move towards more cooperative labour relations," Mdladlana said in his address

He said with the impressive settlement rate of labour dispute cases, a foundation for more cooperative labour relations had been laid, enabling the country to move away from the adversarialism of the past

United States ambassador to South Africa James Joseph commended CCMA director Thandi Orleyn for settlements achieved in major disputes in

transport, the hospitality, security, motor and chemical industries

Joseph said the US community was gratified for the part it had played in supporting the CCMA in its initial stages, through conflict resolution and mediation training and funding

"I have heard pessimists railing at South Africa's crime, brain-drain, labour unrest and what is sometimes described as labour inflexibility, but Americans are investing here at a phenomenal rate," he said

Joseph said since the advent of democracy in South Africa, an average of six US companies a month had been making new investments or expanded their operations. They had assets valued at R60 billion and provided employment for about 100 000 people

Mdladlana urged the commissioners to deal with the root causes of labour unrest

Resources should be ploughed into dispute prevention, education, training and promotion of internal procedures

"Our challenge is to develop a holistic approach in respect of the implementation of these labour laws, including the new Basic Conditions of Employment Act," he said

Strikes at Netcare likely to 'escalate'

ADELE SHEVEL

(152) CT(OR) 11/12/98

Johannesburg — Strikes at Netcare, South Africa's largest private hospital group, would "escalate next week when we continue the pressure", Albert Wöcke, the assistant general secretary at the Hospital Personnel Union of South Africa (Hospersa), said yesterday.

But discrepancies abounded as Peter Warrener, Netcare's human resources director, said what was touted as a national strike ended up being "isolated events", with only 13 administrative staff taking an active role.

The dispute revolved around yearly wage increases. Netcare had put forward an increase of 8,5 percent, while union members were demanding a 9,5 percent rise.

"We believe the offer is good given the economic climate," Warrener said.

Wöcke said the action had been boiling for the past three years. Yesterday, it ranged from a series of short work stoppages such as "grasshopper strikes" to go-slows to general disobedience.

Wöcke said the union had to build confidence of members, some of whom had been intimidated.

Warrener said the dispute could not extend to other hospitals because the union represent-

ed administrative staff of only seven of the 35 hospitals within the group.

The union claimed they had been "recruiting like mad", and sympathy had been expressed from the nursing staff in one of the hospitals.

Wöcke said 300 union members had been involved nationally through six hospitals in four provinces.

"The irony is that the union negotiated with us recently over the same increase with regard to the nursing staff, which they settled," Warrener said.

Wöcke said the increases in this regard included an adjustment in the nurses' minimum salaries.

"This was not the case with regard to the administrative staff, who have been given a raw deal," Wöcke said.

"The effect has been minimal, and there has been no negative effect on any of the hospitals," Warrener said.

Although Wöcke said replacement labour had been taken on board, this was refuted by Netcare.

Hospersa is the biggest union in Netcare, with about 3 000 members. It represents about 76 000 hospital staff, mainly within the public services sector.

Netcare closed up 1c at 72c on the JSE yesterday.

Sowetan 15/12/98

Prosecutors protest over salary increases

(158)
COURT prosecutors around the country stopped work yesterday calling for salary increases

Magistrates at Johannesburg's regional and magistrate's courts in West Street remained in their offices while members of the public thronged the passages

Last Thursday prosecutors received their salary slips in advance and found they had not received an expected increase

A ban on overtime pay saw prosecutors start court later than usual on Thursday and Friday as they prepared their cases during court time

In section one of the regional court, one court dealt with bail applications, another with postponements and new cases, and a third took the overflow

Many of the prosecutors sat on the steps at the court's Bezuidenhout Street entrance, displaying placards

bearing slogans such as "Stop Tipping, Start Paying" and "Crime should be treated with more conviction"

Similar action occurred in Durban, Pretoria and Soweto

Neither the president of the National Union of Prosecutors of South Africa, Mr Eduard van der Spuy, nor a Justice Ministry spokesman immediately available for comment

The prosecutors embarked on a strike despite national director of prosecutions Mr Bulelani Ngcuka's assurances that increases would be included in their Christmas salaries

Ngcuka's spokesman, Mr Siphon Ngema, said efforts were being made to get the deal tied up

The Society of State Advocates accused the Justice Ministry of being inept, saying it had not budgeted for a pay rise for prosecutors - Sapa

Promise of increase fails to halt strike

By Gabi Khumalo and Mbongeni Hlophe

STRIKE action by prosecutors throughout the country continued yesterday despite an announcement by national director of public prosecutions Mr Bulelani Ngcuka that prosecutors' salaries will be increased

Thousands of prosecutors in Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria courts engaged in strike action this week demanding salary increases to replace the overtime payment suspended by the justice department at the beginning of December

Department of Justice spokesman Mr Paul Setsetse said yesterday the minister Mr Dullah Omar was still holding discussions with Minister of Finance Mr

Trevor Manuel for funds to pay state advocates

However, Setsetse could not say what contingency plans were put in place for prosecutors to return to work before they received any increases

Prosecutors' salaries

The announcement of how much would be added on to the prosecutors' salaries would be made before the end of this week

The strike began after the prosecutors discovered from their payslips that the increases that were due yesterday had not been included in the payment

Spokesman for the National Union of Prosecutors in South Africa Mr Mike Vehbi said yesterday that they would continue

the strike until Ngcuka make a formal announcement directly to the prosecutors

"Yesterday prosecutors explained to state witnesses and informed them of the current situation and postponed all cases that were due for yesterday's sitting," he said.

Vehbi said they had not received any announcement from Ngcuka's office but were promised a report-back after they had written a letter to Ngcuka

"Sipho Ngwema, (spokesman for Ngcuka's office) made an announcement through the media, saying that they were sorry and that they had problems but the prosecutors didn't receive that report," said Vehbi

152
16/12/98
Sowetan

D. I. C. 1



Wheels of justice turn even more slowly as prosecutors slack off

(152) (24/2)

Government departments pass the buck on money question

By CATHY POWERS

As government departments passed the buck yesterday, cash-strapped prosecutors around the country embarked on a work-to-rule after Monday's strike action.

Cases started between an hour and an hour-and-a-half late at the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court because prosecutors were preparing their cases during office hours, according to acting senior public prosecutor George Thiar.

Only four of the 14 regional courts were in operation.

A similar situation prevailed in Durban. Prosecutor Mike Vehbi said the Durban regional and district courts were operating in a "crippled fashion".

Durban prosecutors were following the work-to-rule strategy of their Johannesburg's counterparts.

"We think it is the most appropriate action and it is the least disruptive," he said.

Courts started up to two-

and-a-half hours late yesterday.

Vehbi added that there would be "precious little time" for trials to be heard after case preparation, remands and bail applications were heard.

Prosecutors were disillusioned after a promised pay rise failed to materialise when they received their Christmas pay slips last week.

Overtime payment was suspended at the end of last month and National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka has made repeated assurances of an announcement regarding increases.

Meanwhile government departments could not say who was ultimately responsible for the delayed announcement of a salary increase for prosecutors.

The finance department referred *The Star* to the public service and administration department, which referred the matter to the justice department.

Justice ministry spokesperson Paul Setsetse said he could not comment and referred *The*

Star to the office of the national director of public prosecutions.

Ngcuka said there were bureaucratic problems but he was "not at liberty" to specify them.

He was trying to get all concerned parties - the finance, justice and public service and administration ministers - to agree on a settlement, he said.

"I am really frustrated about this matter - I've had enough," he said.

Logan Wort, spokesperson for the finance department, confirmed that the department was involved in re-structuring prosecutors' salaries. He said money had been set aside for the increase but would not divulge the amount.

"Our role is to ensure that increments can be financed within the justice budget and that increases are sustainable over three years."

The negotiated increase had to be agreed by the cabinet's mandate committee, Wort said, adding that the delay was in the bargaining chamber.

Prosecutors to persist with their strike action

By ZOLILE NQAYI

PROSECUTORS' strike action is set to continue this week, despite an announcement by the national Director of Public Prosecutions, Bulelani Ngcuka, that they will receive salary increases

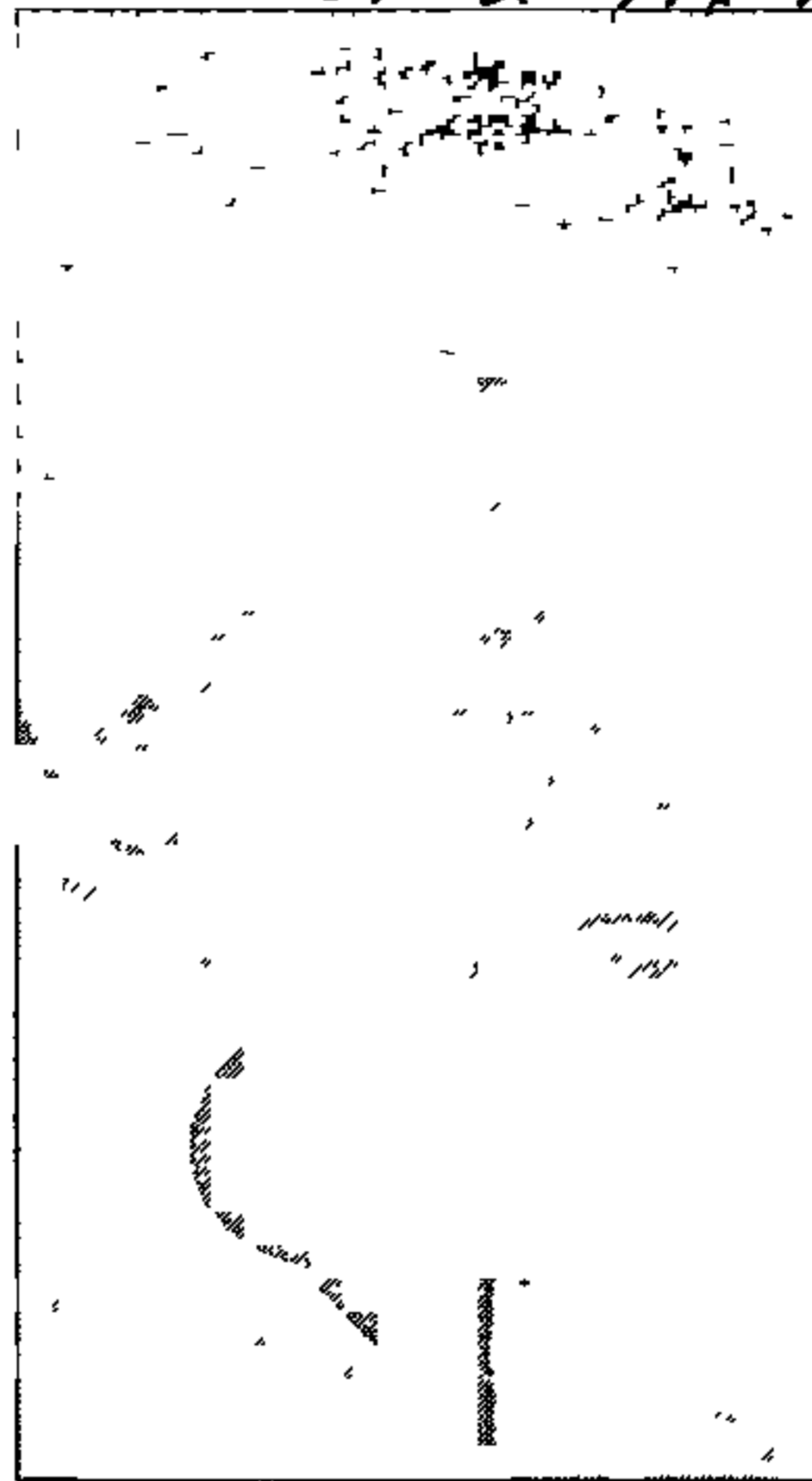
Ngcuka apologised for the delay to implement increases for prosecutors and promised the matter will be resolved before the end of the year

"The director met some of the prosecutors this week and they were informed an increase was imminent

"However, I cannot say when this is going to happen, because I do not know what's causing the delay," said Christo Roberts, a senior public prosecutor at the Pretoria Magistrates' Courts

About 2 000 prosecutors embarked on a go-slow last week, after the 30 percent increase they expected was not reflected in their December salaries

This followed a decision by Justice Minister Dullah Omar to ban overtime payment from the end of last month, because of



NO PAY... Justice Minister Dullah Omar decided to cut all overtime pay to prosecutors

budget constraints in the department

A ban on overtime payments was shelved last year, when prosecutors refused to work any overtime without pay

Earlier Ngcuka's spokesperson, Siphon Ngwema, said the delay was caused by technical hitches Ngwema added that an announcement pertaining to the increases would be made before the end of the year

Since the cut in overtime pay, which prosecutors claim reduced their income by about 30 percent, many prosecutors started preparing cases in the morning instead of at home

"This resulted in some cases, which were scheduled to be heard at 9 am, being heard about two hours later. It caused serious disruptions," Roberts said

The strike is expected to again have an adverse effect on the backlog of cases that courts around the country are faced with. Because of the strike action last Monday, a number of courts had to be closed and cases postponed until next year

Prosecutors on go slow despite increase

BD 24/12/98

PRETORIA — Hundreds of prosecutors countrywide were still engaged in a go slow in protest against poor salaries yesterday in spite of a 6% increase announced on Tuesday

National Union of Prosecutors of SA president Eduard van der Spuy said the refusal by prosecutors to work overtime was a response to the justice department's refusal to treat them as professionals

The problem of low salaries was recently compounded by a ban on overtime. "This is of the department's own doing," Van der Spuy said "They themselves said if they

didn't pay overtime they wouldn't expect us to work overtime."

Prosecutors were demanding salaries comparable to those of magistrates, which would mean increases of between 30% and nearly 100%.

Van der Spuy said the union would advise its members to resume working overtime only once they received appropriate pay rises

About 30 prosecutors at the Pretoria Magistrate's Court took part in the go slow. Senior public prosecutor Christo Roberts said labour action would continue "until they do something about our salaries" Some

prosecutors earned less than half the salaries of magistrates. Before the ban on overtime came into effect, prosecutors could earn up to a third of their monthly salaries extra by working longer hours, he said

Roberts said the go-slow was having no real impact on the court's functioning, but would definitely slow down proceedings as soon as the festive season was over

Justice Minister Dullah Omar on Tuesday announced a 6% pay rise for public prosecutors and state advocates, saying this was all the country could afford — Sapa

~~(152)~~

(152)



Fawu to extend strike against Earlybird

Themba Hlengani
and Taryn Lamberti

BD 31/12/98 (152) (3) ~~PREP~~
THE Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) intensified its month-old strike against Earlybird yesterday by giving notice of a secondary strike against all business units of the poultry company

The intensified action is expected to cripple the company's production, as more than 1 500 workers will be involved. The strike was previously concentrated at the company's Ohlantsfontein slaughterhouse only.

Fawu spokesman Nzapho Kalipa said the union decided to call for a secondary strike after an attempt to break the deadlock with employers on Tuesday night was unsuccessful.

He expected the company's Stander-ton works to join the action today.

Arnold Prinsloo, Earlybird's human resource manager, said the union's notice was in contravention of the Labour Relations Act, and the company was waiting for the union to talk to them before taking action against the expansion of the strike.

Workers and management deadlocked a month ago after they failed to reach a settlement on a wage increase.

The company is offering an 8% increase while the union is demanding 10,5%. Kalipa said the union was prepared to compromise at 9,6%, but the company had not agreed.

"We reduced our demand according to inflation. The 8% the company is offering is far less than the inflation figure which is above 9%," Kalipa said.

The Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and an inde-

pendent mediator have failed to break the deadlock.

Kalipa said the company had agreed to increase Christmas bonuses from R300 to R500. He said workers had not yet received their bonuses for 1998.

Prinsloo denied this, saying workers had all received their 13th cheque.

Meanwhile, striking National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) members and Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) again failed to reach agreement yesterday over a wage dispute. The dispute has resulted in 5 000 workers downing tools over the Christmas season at four mines and a smelter in the North West and Northern provinces. Amplats spokesman Steve Calladine said yesterday. The parties will meet again on Monday with an independent mediator in a bid to settle the dispute.

NUM strike at Amplats mines continues (152)

Reneé Grawitzky

BD 24/12/98

THE wage strike by thousands of members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) at Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) mines enters its second day today with the parties unable to reach final agreement on the referral of the dispute to arbitration

At the same time, the union's regional leadership said it was difficult to estimate the effectiveness of the strike as many miners had already gone on leave for the Christmas long weekend

Amplats claimed that 3 000 miners were on strike while the union estimated there were about 10 000 strikers

It is believed that a tentative understanding was reached on the terms of reference of the arbitration and the identity of the arbitrator and that arbitration would be held on Monday

Amplats said late last night that the union had departed from the agreed process. A NUM spokesman could not be reached for comment

There have been no reported incidents of violence between NUM members and those of the rival Mouthpeace Workers' Union

The NUM's deputy general secretary, Archie Palane, said that the union's national executive committee endorsed its support for the strike yesterday on the basis that the company's wage offer was unreasonable in the context of its profit

Amplats posted a record net profit of R1,64bn for the year to June. Its interim results for the half year to end December would be reported in February

The company's share was trading at R82 before the start of the strike. The share price closed at R77,50 yesterday.

Platinum analysts warned that the drop in share price might not necessarily be linked to the strike but to the overall drop in precious metal prices

The wage strike centred on an 8% wage increase

The union claimed the company had offered an effective 4,5%

I.R. STRILES

1999

Prosecutors step up work-to-rule action

By Mbongeni Hlophe

STATE prosecutors at Durban and Pretoria courts yesterday intensified their work-to-rule action in protest against a six percent salary increase announced last December.

Their action began in mid-December last year after they discovered that salary increases promised by Justice Minister Dullah Omar were not effected.

Omar had earlier promised to grant prosecutors salary increases as a substitution for the recently terminated overtime pay.

Overtime payment was terminated from December when the department said it was running out of cash.

However, the work-to-rule action

Sowetan 6/1/99
continued yesterday despite the six percent salary increase announced by Omar

From Monday this week, prosecutors at the Durban Regional and District courts started work two and half hours later than the scheduled 9am starting time.

KwaZulu-Natal spokesman for the National Union of Prosecutors in South Africa (Nupsa) Mr Michael Vehbi said it was unfortunate that members of the public were the victims of the situation.

"We do not believe that we are to blame. The public can judge who is failing to do the job between us and the department," Vehbi said.

Yesterday prosecutors started work at 11.30am after they were told that Omar was not available for

negotiations as he was on a "working holiday" in India.

"We have no one to speak to Omar can't be reached and Bulelani Ngcuka (national director of public prosecutions) is also nowhere to be found," said Vehbi.

"Why is the minister out of the country when there is such a crisis," said Vehbi.

He said prosecutors were left with two options: either to embark on an unprotected strike or to embark on a "blue flu" Blue flu refers to obtaining a false medical certificate to justify being on paid leave

Vehbi claimed that salaries deposited into their accounts did not reflect a six percent increase, only four percent.



WORK STOPPAGE ... security guards went on a protracted strike last year over pay and working conditions

Unions flex muscles with strikes

(152)

ST (CM) 10/1/99

TRADE unions flexed their muscles in the industrial sector last year with strikes, some violent, accounting for 2.35-million lost mandays — the highest since 1994.

Days lost to work stoppages, which took place mainly in the security, road transport, chemical and motor industries, were significantly above the 650 000 mandays lost during 1997.

With most wage negotiations starting in June, the bulk of the strikes occurred in the second half of the year. In the first six months of the year, the number of days lost rose by 20% to 310 000 days from 260 000 days in the first half of 1997.

Jackie Kelly, research asso-

INDUSTRIAL ACTION
By DON ROBERTSON

ciate at industrial relations group Andrew Levy & Associates, says wage demands represented the major stumbling block in 98% of all disputes between unions and employers.

The tough economic climate and the reduction in disposable income was used by unions to demand substantially increased wages, while employers, subject to similar economic constraints, were compelled to offer reduced wage hikes, says Kelly.

Significantly, the trend towards central bargaining, whereby unions negotiate on

behalf of an total industry sector, rather than at individual company level, gained momentum.

It is estimated about 65% of strikes involved more than 1 000 workers with 90% of the strikes undertaken on a national basis, adds Kelly. This compares with only 43% involving more than 1 000 workers in 1997.

An example of this trend was evident in the extended dispute between the Automobile Manufacturers Employers Organisation (Ameo), representing the retail motor division, and workers represented mainly by the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa). Ameo insisted unions negotiate directly

with the 18 000 different companies involved on an individual basis, but Numsa insisted on a national bargaining strategy.

The new year, however, has not got off to a good start. A two-week strike by 8 000 miners at Anglo American Platinum was resolved only this week, while hundreds of workers at the Earlybird poultry farm in Olifantsfontein are continuing with a six-week work stoppage.

An Andrew Levy & Associates survey shows the average wage settlement was 9.2% in the first half of the year compared with 9.7% in the first six months of 1997. Second-half figures have yet to be finalised.

SA loses 2,8-m days to strikes

Sowetan 11/1/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

SOUTH Africa's track record as one of the world leaders in strike action is being exacerbated by labour legislation's protection of sympathy strikes, a leading labour relations consultancy warned yesterday

The group said that civil society needed to examine whether the right to strike was balanced with the country's economic imperatives

Webber Wentzel Bowens human resources consultancy partner Mr Rod Harper decried the new Labour Relations Act's definition of a strike which he said encompassed primary and secondary industrial actions and "is broad enough to cover a strike involving employees of the same employer who are not directly affected by the dispute"

Major impact

The increase in secondary strikes last year played a major role in the 2.8 million mandays lost to strikes, he said

Harper cited recent major strike actions in the chemical, motor, auto and metal industries where the Labour Appeal Court upheld the protection of secondary strikers

"It is a major defeat for employers with far-reaching economic and strategic implications," a worried Harper added

The LRA's definition of a strike only required that the striking employees share the purpose of wanting to remedy a grievance or resolve a dispute, he said

Harper argued that the recent Labour Court ruling on secondary strikes could encourage unions which did not exercise "self responsibility to engage in more industrial action than might otherwise have been the case"

Confusion over Earlybird strike

~~STANDERTON~~ (152) CT (AR) 12/1/99
FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg — Earlybird, the poultry farms management company, yesterday denied claims by the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) that more than 2 000 workers in Standerton had resolved to strike in sympathy with colleagues at Olifantsfontein.

"The information we have received from Standerton management is that workers there have declined to go on a sympathy strike," said Arnold Prinsloo, Earlybird's human resources manager.

Prinsloo said his company had also not received any notice of a strike action, which is a stringent requirement of the new Labour Relations Act.

However, Khalifa Nzapho, Fawu's spokesman, said the sympathy strike was on for next week after Standerton workers had "endorsed" a weekend meeting's resolution on the issue.

Hundreds of workers allied to Fawu at the Olifantsfontein works have been on strike since early last month to press their demands of wage increases of 10,5 percent against manage-

ment offers of 8 percent.

Fawu also demanded substantial improvements on night shift and coldroom allowances.

Mike Maloba, the union campaign organiser for the Gauteng region, said over 600 Olifantsfontein workers and other Fawu members from the surrounding industrial area would march on the works on Tuesday or Wednesday next week.

Prinsloo said the way forward was to try to resolve the matter. "We are willing to engage in talks at any time (and to) look at a restructured package," he said.

Key cases at risk as court staff work to rule

STAFF REPORTER

(152)
ARG 13/1/99
Western Cape prosecutors and State advocates embark on a work-to-rule action today - and warned it could mean important cases being ditched.

By preparing their cases and consult with witnesses only during their prescribed 8 1/2-hour working day, they expect to further cripple the justice system's ability to deal with crime in the province

Court officials are expected to start their working day at 7.45am and courts will sit only after the officials have prepared their cases. Courts will rise punctually at 4 15pm.

The work-to-rule was agreed at a meeting of Western Cape prosecutors in Wynberg at the weekend.

Prosecutors in Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal started similar action after Justice Minister Dullah Omar last month announced they would get a 6% pay increase, an amount described as a joke by angry staff.

The justice department also suspended overtime pay in November after funds apparently dried up. Simon Meyer, spokesman for the 60 court officials who met at the weekend, said the work-to-rule action would mean that State witnesses could expect to sit at court all day without being called.

They would then have to be subpoenaed again, he said.

"It also could happen that magistrates refused to grant further postponements and that important cases then could be scrapped from the roll."

Prosecutors said they were sick and tired of losing experienced court officials to the private sector simply because they were not being paid enough.

Many prosecutors have said they were finding it hard to survive in the present economic climate and that the private sector appeared to be their only remaining option.

Fedusa threatens to go on strike

(152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

Source: Star 13/1/79

THE Federation of Unions of South Africa (Fedusa) has filed a notice of intended protest action in the National Economic Development and Labour Council to pressure the Government to address demands for pay increases by public prosecutors

Fedusa general secretary Chez Milani warned yesterday that should the matter not receive the satisfactory attention of Nedlac, then protest action across the country would follow

"If the Government is serious about tackling the high level of crime in South Africa it must pay attention to the plight of public prosecutors and the functioning of the criminal justice system.

"Failing to do so will have a negative impact on the socio-economic interest of all workers and the country at large," Milani said

Meanwhile, the National Union of Mineworkers general secretary Gwede Mantashe presented a cheque for R50 000 yesterday to aid the victims of the tornado that devastated Umtata in the Eastern Cape last month. The presentation was made at the Umtata mayoral office

Increase in strikes set to continue

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

SHARP upturn in strike activity will continue this year and next year as an unpredictable wage bargaining environment will cause major confrontations and growing resistance from employers, a leading labour law consultancy warned yesterday

Andrew Levy and Associates' research consultant Ms Jackie Kelly also anticipated "a degree of instability" into this year's bargaining due to the elections

The Employment Equity Act's wage differentials clause would certainly result into bargaining confrontations, she said, adding that employers would continue to resist wage demands that cannot be funded from productivity gains or improved work flexibility

"There will also be a growing resistance from employers to centralised bargaining arrangements which have previously proved not to be attractive to

employers," she said

The sharp upturn from 1997's total of 650 000 mandays lost due to strikes (the lowest figure recorded since 1983) to 2,3 million mandays lost at the end of 1998, could be attributed to a number of strikes which took place at the centralised level where new agreements were being thrashed out

Kelly said the fact that there was an increase in strike actions when employment levels continued to drop and retrenchments were still rife was a cause for concern. These strikes reflected heightened expectations and existing tensions in the workplace as the economic belt was being tightened

She also pointed out that different interests were at play since unions were pushing to the limit to maximise earnings for their members while employers sought to minimise costs

And this exacerbated the already volatile situation which saw some strikes, notably chemical, motor industry, security and transport sectors being marred by incidents of intimidation and violence

SOWETAN 14/1/1998

Prosecutors join go-slow


ASHLEY SMITH
COURT REPORTER

(152)

ARG 14/11/99

Western Cape prosecutors say they will know only next week how long their work-to-rule action will last.

Simon Meyer, spokesman for the local prosecutors, said today the office of the national Director of Public Prosecutions, the Department of Justice and prosecutor unions would meet in KwaZulu Natal today to discuss the crisis.

Local prosecutors will meet next week for feedback about today's crisis

talks, said Mr Meyer.

Western Cape prosecutors yesterday joined colleagues in Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal in working to rule, which means they will prepare cases during office hours and work a strict 8½-hour day.

Mr Meyer said prosecutors were demanding salary parity with magistrates and that the 6% increase offered by the justice department had angered many colleagues

Mr Meyer said prosecutors would work overtime without extra pay if their salaries were raised to almost the levels earned by magistrates

NEWS

Andrew Levy report says elections will create instability in bargaining

Strike action on 'upward trend'

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg — A volatile bargaining environment could be expected in the next few years as strike action was once again moving on an upward trend, labour analyst Andrew Levy & Associates said yesterday

The Andrew Levy overview report for the past 12 months showed that strike action — which recorded a marked increase from 650 000 man days lost in 1997 to 2,3 million man-days lost at the end of last year — was set to continue, increasing in 1999 and the year 2000

Chief among the reasons contributing to this trend was that an election year would introduce a degree of instability into bargaining

Resistance from employers to centralised bargaining — a

process that had never been attractive to them — was also expected to grow

"In addition, the wage differential clause in the Employment Equity Act will translate into bargaining confrontations. Employers will continue to resist wage demands that cannot be funded from productivity gains or improved work flexibility

"Finally, the economic environment itself, as well as the lack of depth and experience in the labour movement's leadership, will contribute to what will become a volatile bargaining environment in the next few years at least," said Jackie Kelly, the consultancy's researcher

Contrary to a view held by many observers that there was a strong political motive behind the strikes, Kelly said wages were the major strike trigger in 1998

"The majority of strikes that

took place this year (1998) were wage-related, procedural and the culmination of months of intense negotiation between the parties concerned

"Strike action is a weapon of last resort and when the stakes are high, it reflects the resolve of both sides to hold out for maximum benefits," she said

As strike triggers, wages stood at 96,8 percent (its highest level in eight years), followed by grievances at 1,2 percent, dismissal/discipline at 1,1 percent, retrenchment at 0,7 percent and recognition agreement disputes at 0,1 percent

By far the majority of strikes took place at national level and accounted for 90,9 percent, followed by Gauteng at 4,6 percent, Western Cape with 2,6 percent, KwaZulu Natal 1,1 percent and others at 0,8 percent

"There was also a significant

(178) CT(COR) 14/1/99
increase in the number of workers involved in strike action, which directly relates to the increase in the number of nationwide strikes 65,8 percent of strikes involved more than 1 000 workers, compared with 43,7 percent in 1997. Strikes involving 200 or less workers (fell) to 2,6 percent compared with 22,9 percent in 1997

"The most active unions in terms of man days lost were CWIU (29,2 percent), Numsa (28,9 percent), TGWU (10 percent), Fawu (8,4 percent), Sacwu (6,8 percent) and NUM (4,9 percent)," Kelly said

The year also saw more than 200 000 engineering and automobile Numsa workers embark on the first-ever sympathy strikes under the new Labour Relations Act with colleagues in the motor component sector on September 1 and 22

courts

PROSECUTORS' ACTION MAY CAUSE CHAOS

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
SALDRU LIBRARY

Work-to-rule hits Cape

ET 14/1/99 (152)

WESTERN CAPE prosecutors, "fed up" with what they consider pathetic salary increases, yesterday embarked on a work-to-rule protest — and sparked off similar protests around the country. **JUDY DAMON** reports.

THE decision by 95% of Western Cape prosecutors to start a work-to-rule protest and further slow down the justice system came after the Justice Department last month awarded them a 6% salary increase over and above the last general civil service increase.

But this was below the 20%-30% raise they had hoped for.

After a two-year "paper war" between prosecutors and the Justice Department, promises made over increases and overtime pay were never kept, according to Simon Meyer, spokesperson for the prosecutors.

He said when they first voiced their dissatisfaction over their income early last year, overtime pay was given "to tide them over" until proper salaries could be paid.

"Then suddenly they stopped paying us overtime and we thought we could expect the great salaries they had promised us. But instead they gave us a 6% raise. And that is why this new discontent has started."

Prosecutors also say that the next budget excludes scope for further increases.

Meyer said experienced prosecutors had been abandoning their posts for more lucrative positions on the bench, as well as defecting to the private sector. This left newer prosecutors with the burden of large case loads and difficult-to-handle cases.

Yesterday, another experienced Wynberg prosecutor, who earned his maximum salary of R55 000 a year, was lured away by the R140 000 annual income of a magistrate.

The protest action was agreed to at a prosecutors' meeting in Wynberg last Saturday, Meyer said.

Prosecutors would work only in their normal working hours between 7.45am and 4pm. Preparation of cases, often done

outside of these hours, would only be undertaken within working hours and no work would be done at home.

"The negotiation process is over. We will consider going back to work once they come up with something concrete and we are satisfied with what we see," Meyer said.

The repercussions for the entire justice system could be "serious", including the pile-up of cases and awaiting-trial prisoners having to spend more time in jail.

The Justice Department had threatened the striking prosecutors with misconduct charges, Meyer said. "If all the prosecutors in the Western Cape go on strike, of course courts won't start on time. These are the kind of things that they have to face."

However, the Justice Department could compel prosecutors to work overtime and their action was not illegal, he insisted.

Paul Setsetse, spokesperson for Justice Minister Dullah Omar, confirmed this and said the department was relying on the goodwill of prosecutors. "They must put the interest of the country first."

He added that on Omar's return from a trip to India, the minister would set up a forum with representatives of prosecutors and advocates to discuss salaries.

National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka's spokesperson, Siphon Ngwema, said his department was also pursuing the re-introduction of overtime despite Western Cape prosecutors saying they would not take work home.

According to reports last night, most Johannesburg courts were operating normally, with some of the prosecutors taking cases home to prepare them after hours, while in Pretoria and Soweto delays of two to three hours to the start of each day's proceedings were becoming more common.

Prosecutors also embarked on protest actions in Durban and Bloemfontein.

Labour militancy sees increase in strikes

By Alister Bull

SOUTH Africa lost almost four times as many mandays to strikes in 1998 than in 1997 as escalating militancy over wages halted three years of steady improvement in industrial relations, according to a report published this week.

Industrial disputes were blamed for the loss of 2.3 million mandays in 1998, as opposed to 650 000 the year before, according to data revealed in the latest survey by leading labour consultants Andrew Levy and Associates.

Economists warned of dire consequences for the country's international reputation as a long-term investment destination and said the unions were jeopardising the future prosperity of millions of their members.

"Some of the incidents were quite unnecessary, quite militant and quite damaging to perceptions and investor confidence," said Nico Czipionka, director of economics and strategy at SG Frankel Securities in Johannesburg.

Officials at the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) were not immediately available for comment.

"Cosatu tried to change the balance of power from employers to employees at the same time as management were rationalising to face increased global competition. It was a crude struggle between these two seemingly incompatible objectives," said Czipionka.

Levy warned that the year ahead was likely to prove equally challenging for labour relations, with

unions agitating for a better deal as South Africa gears up for its second democratic elections.

"The union movement will rally for certain causes and the fact that we are in an election year is likely to foster volatility in the bargaining environment," said Jackie Kelly, a research consultant at Levy and Associates.

The findings cover a period in South Africa which saw thousands lose their jobs as key industries, particularly mining, slashed payrolls to enhance profits. Over a third of the labour force is estimated to lack formal work.

Mounting labour militancy in a country teetering on the brink of recession fuelled concern that Cosatu was flexing its muscles ahead of the election, to be held this year.

"However, we are of the opinion that this was not the case. The majority of strikes that took place were wage-related, procedural and the culmination of months of intense negotiations," the report said.

Wage-related

Levy estimated that 96,8 percent of all industrial action was triggered by wage demands – the highest level for eight years – whereas other grievances were responsible for only a tiny proportion of stoppages.

"That was because inflation fell sharply but unions kept looking backwards (to recent years of high inflation) and found it hard to sell single-digit wage settlements to their members," said Johannesburg-based JP Morgan economist Peter Worthington.

The consultants estimated that wage settlement levels actually fell slightly in the period to 8,6 percent against 9,7 percent in 1997, reflecting the tough stance adopted by both management and unions in an increasingly lean business climate.

It found the number of mass actions grew sharply, with almost two-thirds of all strikes involving 1 000 or more workers compared with less than half in 1997.

The main strikes took place in the motor assembly and motor component industries, the chemicals sector, road haulage and in the private security business – *Reuters*.

● Brand Pretorius, chief executive officer of Durban-based McCarthy Motor Holdings, foresees more job losses in the motor industry and expects the unsettled labour climate to continue.

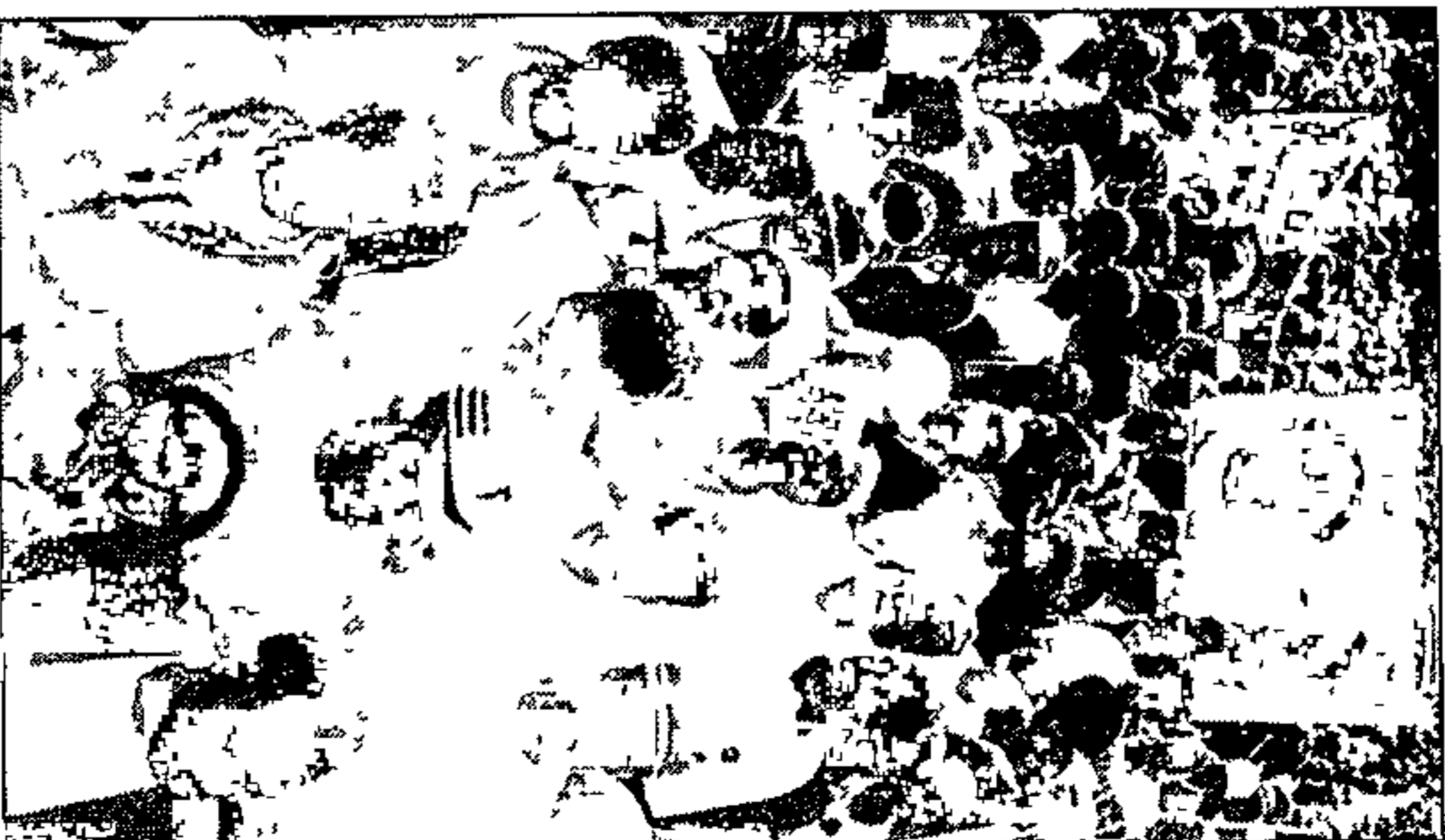
He made the forecast on Wednesday at a news briefing at Johannesburg International Airport.

Aggressive stance

"Cosatu will in all probability continue with an aggressive stance in the run-up to the (general) election to demonstrate to the ANC how strong it can be.

"I do not expect an harmonious period, but I am hopeful the election will be peaceful," said Pretorius.

He added that South Africa was affected by the disruption to global economies and warned "The situation in the United States is something we should watch very carefully. I see a big bubble that could burst" – *Sapa*.



Flashback .. chemical workers on strike in Johannesburg last September.

PIG LEN KUMALO

Prosecutors 'weary of sacrifice'

ASHLEY SMITH
Court Reporter

Prosecutors are risking their family relationships, economic well-being and personal health by preparing cases for up to three hours a night at home and not being paid a decent wage for their efforts.

This was the message from Simon Meyer, a 25-year-old Wynberg prosecutor and spokesman for hundreds of his colleagues who started a work-to-rule action two days ago.

The go slow action effectively means that 95% of the province's prosecutors will work a "normal" 8 1/2 hour working day and not prepare their cases the night before.

Prosecutors have acknowledged this will mean important cases may be struck from the roll and witnesses might be required to come to court on several occasions before a case is called.

Mr Meyer warned the Department

of Justice that prosecutors would no longer be "duped into accepting false promises", but that they wanted "concrete steps to be taken by the ministry" to address their grievances.

Many of his colleagues, especially those who were sole breadwinners, were sick and tired of scraping together an existence. Many of those who had recently entered the department were still dependent on their parents for financial support, he said.

Many of his colleagues were realising now they had neglected their wives, children and friends by accepting as normal the need to work at home, Mr Meyer said.

For him the past two days had been "amazing" because he had had time to play with his twin daughters and spend time with his wife. Other colleagues told him they now had time to go out with friends and relax. However, the main reason why the majority of prosecutors decided to join their Gauteng and KwaZulu

Natal fellows in a go slow was because they could not survive on present salaries, said Mr Meyer.

Despite promises by the Department of Justice three years ago that their remuneration would be adequately increased, many prosecutors

'We chose to resist the economic lure of the private sector to give a vital service to the community'

could hardly afford to pay the bond on their home and buying a vehicle was out of the question, said Mr Meyer.

He said he and his colleagues had chosen to resist the economic lure of the private sector to give a vital service to the community.

AKG 15/1/99

(172)

(172)

They enjoyed their work and "putting away" someone guilty of rape, murder and other serious crimes gave them "immense job satisfaction".

Most prosecutors have 15 to 20 cases in court a day which takes between two and three hours to prepare the night before. These cases have to be read from cover to cover to adequately prepare, he said.

A document drawn up by prosecutors indicated that a typical Western Cape prosecutor, starting in the justice department, earned R44 000 a year gross, he said. "Five years later, he is earning R55 000 a year, a gross which works out to less than R5 000 a month, but after deductions these experienced officials go home with R3 200 a month."

However, if the same prosecutor was accepted to the Bench as a magistrate he could expect to earn about R140 000 a year.

Any person faced with a choice of remaining a prosecutor, becoming a magistrate or entering the private sector would choose one of the last two. When this happens, the service loses another prosecutor with expertise, said Mr Meyer.

When prosecutors went on a go slow in 1996 the Department of Justice had identified that salaries were inadequate and implemented overtime payments were stopped and time payment in November last year, overtime payments were stopped and Justice Minister Dullah Omar announced a 6% salary increase.

Mr Meyer said overtime amounted to about R1 500 extra each month, but the new salary increase meant prosecutors lost their overtime money and were paid only R300 extra over and above their gross salary.

"We are not going to be duped into accepting more promises. We want a mechanism in place which will be required to begin a salary negotiation process immediately. This must be done before the go-slow action ends."

"This is an extra financial burden for their clients, who have to travel to courts only to face further postponements," said Ms Mkwana.

"Once the problem between the prosecutors and the Government has been resolved, attorneys could help to reduce the backlog by offering their services to the state on an equitable basis," she said.

Law Society says go-slow is 'holding justice to ransom'

COURT REPORTER

The Law Society of South Africa has criticised Western Cape prosecutors for going on a go-slow that is "holding the justice system ransom".

Society spokeswoman Anna Mkwana said today the organisation was "very concerned" with the pre-

sent state of affairs in courts.

The society had offered to help "in whatever way we can" to reduce the present backlog of cases, she said.

According to the work to rule action that began on Wednesday, 95% of Western Cape prosecutors are working a normal 8 1/2-hour day and are not working at home preparing cases.

The action began after the Department of Justice announced a 6% salary increase and at the same time stopped payment for overtime.

The Law Society had "no quarrel" with prosecutors negotiating better salaries, but this should be done without "holding the justice system to ransom", said Ms Mkwana.

"The Law Society believes that the



Time to play: prosecutor Simon Meyer with his baby daughter Emma

BREITON 65/43

Earlybird, Fawu talks broken off

~~FRANK NXUMALO~~ (52)
FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg — Mediation talks between the Food and Allied Workers' Union (Fawu) and Earlybird broke down yesterday after the company failed to accede to workers' demands, the union said

Sam Mashilwane, branch organiser for Fawu's greater PWV region, said the union demanded a 9 percent wage increase backdated to September 1 1998

Mashilwane said Earlybird also rejected union demands for increased night shift and cold-room allowances and the inclusion in the negotiation process of other categories of workers who were still not part of the central bargaining unit

He said the company refused to consider the case of 10 workers who were dismissed for striking at the poultry works' Olifantsfontein factory

However, Earlybird accused the union of adding new items to the list of demands, using the wrong forum for some of their grievances and leaving the negotiation table too early when management was prepared to talk as long as necessary.

"We are a bit disappointed in their attitude and unwillingness to sit down and talk," Arnold Prinsloo, the Earlybird human resources manager, said

Prinsloo said his company was offering a total package of 8 percent and not an 8 percent increase on each individual union demand

He said the other category of workers the union wanted included in the bargaining unit were supervisory staff. Earlybird opposed this as it regarded supervisors as part of management

Prinsloo said the matter of the 10 dismissed workers should be "pursued through the right channels"

"They must take the dismissals to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration if they are not happy with them," he said

Fawu also served Earlybird with a sympathy strike notice by about 2 500 Earlybird's Standerton workers. The strike is scheduled for next week

The Standerton workers will be striking in solidarity with their colleagues at Olifantsfontein who have been on strike since early December

At the same time about 800 Olifantsfontein workers will march to their factory on Tuesday or Wednesday next week

By Wilson Ramothata

THE work-to-rule industrial action by members of the National Union of Prosecutors of South Africa continued to disrupt courts around the country

The union intensified its action on Friday because it felt its members were being victimised for not working overtime

Thousands of prosecutors at Johannesburg, Durban, and Pretoria courts have been engaged in industrial action since the beginning of December due to a wage dispute

The prosecutors are demanding wage increases to make up for lost overtime pay which was suspended by the justice ministry

The union has rejected a six per-cent wage increase announced by Jus-

Prosecutors slammed for obstructing justice

Justice Minister Dullah Omar in December

Soweto Protea Court senior prosecutor Adriaan Lamprecht told

Sowetan that the strike by Nupsa members was affecting court proceedings because they were now processing less cases a day - resulting in longer court rolls

"On average prosecutors start to work between 10 and 11am instead of

at 9am" said Lamprecht

A spokesman for the Ministry of Justice Mr Paul Setseise said the ministry would in the next few days set up a forum consisting of prosecutors and state advocates aimed at solving the dispute

Law Society of South Africa chairman Willie Seriti strongly condemned the strike

"We have no quarrel with the prosecutors in their quest for better salaries but it is of our view that they should negotiate without holding the justice system to ransom," said Seriti

Seriti said the society noted with concern that any breakdown of the court system affected attorneys who had court practices

He conceded that once the problem between the prosecutors and the Government was solved, attorneys could help to reduce the backlog by offering their services for the same pay

However, national director of public prosecution spokesman Sipho Ngeema said the industrial action by Nupsa members was not as effective as reported

He described it as isolated work-to-rule action in some parts of the country Nupsa has rejected overtime work and after-hours bail applications except in the Western Cape which has promised to pay prosecutors for such services

Jo'burg prosecutors protest

(52) ~~200~~
ABOUT 120 public prosecutors carrying placards calling for salary increases held a lunchtime protest outside the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court yesterday

The prosecutors said the country's justice system would come to a halt if salary problems were not resolved

They called on President Nelson Mandela to instruct Justice Minister Mr Dullah Omar to pay them full salaries instead of "peanuts"

"We are disheartened by the fact that magistrates with the same qual-

sewera 19/1/99
ifications as ours earn double our salaries," a spokesman for the prosecutors said

Prosecutors throughout the country began a work-to-rule after the justice ministry stopped overtime pay last year and awarded them a six percent salary increase in December, which they said was less than what they had been promised

Many prosecutors are refusing to work overtime and cases are being delayed, clogging the court roll and the criminal justice system.

The Federation of Unions of

South Africa, of which the Union of State Prosecutors is a member, last Thursday informed the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) that it was planning protests over the poor state of the country's justice system

The law requires that Nedlac attempts to resolve the problem and that it must convene a meeting within 14 days to do so

Nedlac spokeswoman Jennifer Wilson said yesterday Omar had not yet responded to the request for a meeting - Sapa

SAB forced to reinstate 52 workers

(152) (42)
RONNIE MORRIS

Cape Town — SAB was required to reinstate and pay several months' backpay to 52 workers it had sacked in December 1997 following a strike when wage talks broke down earlier that year, the labour court ruled last week.

The workers, all members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union, went on strike in August when wage talks deadlocked.

The company then launched a labour court action to interdict and restrain the workers from engaging in alleged misconduct and breaching strike rules.

The strike was settled the following month and the workers returned to work, but after a disciplinary hearing 18 were suspended and 52 later dismissed.

The union and SAB agreed to private arbitration. David Woolfrey, the arbitrator, found the dismissals were unfair. Instead of dismissal, he ruled, the company should have issued the workers with final written warnings.

He reinstated them retroactively but imposed suspensions without pay for three and four months, respectively.

SAB took the matter on review to the labour court, on the grounds that Woolfrey did not have the power to impose the sanction of disciplinary suspension without pay and that the sanction would be in breach of the provisions of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

Judge D Mlambo said the imposition of suspension without pay as a disciplinary penalty was for an employee who had committed some form of disciplinary breach.

An employer was entitled to take action against an employee who misconducted, he said. Once the employer had decided that instead of terminating the contract of employment it would simply suspend it for a period, it was not acting unlawfully.

Mlambo said he found nothing reproachable in Woolfrey's award and SAB's application was dismissed with costs.

CT (CSF) 20/1/99

Unions suspend planned strike

(152)

Sowetan 22/11/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

FOUR trade unions in the building construction industry have suspended a planned industrial action by 15 000 construction workers to force the Gauteng Master Builders Association (GMBA), not to withdraw from the industry's bargaining council

GMBA executive director Mr Chris de Kok yesterday congratulated the trade unions for agreeing to review their position. He said the unions had conditionally withdrawn their dispute lodged with the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration. The GMBA was delighted at the re-opening of debate around the statutory affirmative procurement requirements for the building industry.

"Though we are not against the

political implications, we feel certain issues needed to be debated and changed because a lot of emerging builders won tenders without having the capacity to render satisfactory work," De Kok said.

"Most were not registered and did not pay income tax, VAT, or for the unemployment fund," he added.

Spokesman for the Building Construction and Allied Workers Union, Amalgamated Union of Building Workers Trade, Construction and Allied Workers Union and Bouwerkers-Vakbond Mr Narius Moloto confirmed they had decided to suspend the strike pending industry-wide debate on the restructuring of the bargaining council.

The union had rejected the association's reasons for withdrawing from the council and claimed the association was trying to resist change.

Union sides with justice minister in wage row

Taryn Lambert

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union — which represents about a quarter of the public prosecutors in SA — has sided with Justice Minister Dullah Omar in a wage dispute, saying the court action by other unions was misguided.

Union president Vusi Nhlapo said the National Union of Prosecutors of SA (Nupsa) — which represents about half the prosecutors in the country — and the Society of State Advocates, were mistaken in their decision to take Omar to court to force him to reinstate overtime payments for prosecutors and state advocates.

Nhlapo said employees could not force their employers to pay them for overtime, a sentiment expressed by Omar earlier this week.

He said his union would meet National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka this afternoon to discuss a long-term solution to the salary crisis, which has resulted in prosecutors and state advocates embarking on a work-to-rule action.

The "go-slow" action followed the minister's announcement in November last year that prosecutors and state advocates would no longer receive overtime payment. Omar said prosecutors would be compensated for the overtime cut with an increase. However, his announcement of a 6% pay rise last month was met with widespread dissatisfaction.

In December 1997, a similar cut in overtime payment resulted in work-to-rule action and Omar finally reinstating the overtime payments.

Nupsa and the Society of State Advocates are likely to seek an urgent interdict in the Labour Court next week to force Omar to reinstate the payments.

Nhlapo said prosecutors were the only public servants he knew of who did not have bargaining powers because, in terms of legislation, the justice minister determined what they should earn.

Prosecutors have complained magistrates earn far higher salaries than they do, despite the fact that they have the same qualifications. Nhlapo said in countries such as the US and Germany prosecutors were paid more than magistrates because they had heavier workloads.

The work of prosecutors is critical because they are the ones that have to bring the criminals to book, Nhlapo said.

Handwritten notes and markings at the top of the page, including a date stamp and illegible scribbles.

CAPE ARGUS, FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 1999

Chaos in court as prosecutors work to rule

LENDRE OLIVER AND JOSEPH ABRAHMS
STAFF REPORTERS
(152) 11 11 99

Cases are being postponed or struck from the role as the work-to-rule by prosecutors begins to bite and causes chaos in the courts. The work-to-rule action means the prosecutors will work a normal 8 1/2-hour working day and not prepare any of their cases at home.

Hundreds of prosecutors in the Western Cape - and nationally - started the protest action about a week ago after a 6% increase in their salaries, far less than they were expecting, and the suspension of overtime pay.

Today, the prosecutors will march from the Grand Parade to either the regional offices of the justice depart-

ment or Parliament to hand over a memorandum to regional head Hishaam Mohammed.

Spokesman Simon Meyer, a prosecutor at Wynberg Magistrate's Court, said courts were running late because prosecutors did their work during office hours and did no overtime.

But the protest action has caused a snowball effect, resulting in courts not completing their rolls for the day and cases having to be postponed or struck from the roll.

There has been the inevitable pile-up with the public waiting in court corridors, lawyers waiting for their cases to be heard as well as awaiting-trial prisoners who have their cases postponed for the umpteenth time and a build-up of pending cases.

Mr Meyer said: "Many attorneys

are not able to wait around, so they arrange for a postponement date and the accused then often appears without counsel.

"But a magistrate may also not be prepared to delay the case again and the prosecutor is faced with the decision of either having to proceed or withdraw the charges.

"In many cases, the decision is to withdraw the charges and this means awaiting-trial prisoners have to stay in custody even longer."

Mr Meyer said there was often not enough time to prepare cases as well as complete the court roll in the allotted court hours. He added that the prosecutors had not heard anything positive from the justice department.

"The prosecutors have reached the end of their tether and this should

not be underestimated," he said.

Meanwhile, the Law Society of the Cape of Good Hope has called on the prosecutors and the Department of Justice to do everything to achieve a working relationship which permitted delivery of a professional service.

Cape Town's tourism industry has come out in support of the prosecutors, saying the climate of lawlessness and urban terrorism was detrimental to the economy.

In a fax to Mr Meyer, Cape Town Tourism manager Sheryl Ozinsky said they were "empathetic to the dilemma the prosecutors are facing".

"Tourism contributes 300 000 jobs in the Western Cape bringing in a revenue of R11-billion per annum - figures that could be jeopardised directly by crime," she said.

The animals were brought to the... crops. It is a very unpleasant... was asking someone to... this



Prosecutors take wage dispute a step further

MOTSHIDISI MOKWENA

PROSECUTORS are on the march. Today about 150 of them, all disgruntled, are determined to march to the offices of the Regional Department of Justice in the city to hand over a memorandum to the regional head, Hishaam Mohamed.

The march, which is organised by the National Union of Prosecutors of South Africa (Nupsa), follows more than a week-long work-to-rule action by about 95% of prosecutors.

They had followed their Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal counterparts in joining the go-slow

The work-to-rule action by the legal officers was in opposition to the 6% salary hike by the Department of Justice

Spokesperson for Nupsa, Simon Meyer, said permission had been granted for the march

He said the march was meant to put forward prosecutors' grievances and to impress upon the department that concrete steps need to be taken by the ministry to address their grievances



PREPARED: Hishaam Mohamed of the regional Department of Justice.



OVER TO YOU: National Director of Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka.

ET 22/1/99
"The Department of Justice and all the role players have not been effective at all in addressing this salary question," Meyer said.

"And we are hoping that today's march will formally make the department aware of the urgency of the matter."

Meyer argued that the Justice Department's claim that there was not enough money to give prosecutors more than a 6% salary increase or to pay them overtime was unacceptable.

"This sentiment does not go well with us because the salary issue has been going on since 1996," he said.

He said the matter could have been resolved sooner.

He added that the justice department said it was going to form consultative forums that would address the issue but that prosecutors were not consulted on this

Meyer also added that the work-to-rule action has meant that most

cases were remanded because prosecutors had been working only 8 1/2-hour days and not outside their working hours

He acknowledged that the action has had a negative effect on the courts

"It has meant that awaiting trial prisoners have had to wait longer to get their cases heard, but we had to go on a go-slow because we are tired of promises," Meyer said.

The prosecutors will be marching from 1pm from the Grand Parade to the regional head's office or the steps of Parliament.

Prosecutors were requested to dress in their court cloaks and to carry placards

Mohamed confirmed yesterday that he would be presented with the memorandum

He said the document would be forwarded to the office of the National Director of Prosecutions, Bulelani Ngcuka.

CCMA to hear prosecutors' case

Taryn Lamberti

UNIONS representing public prosecutors and state advocates are to take the justice department to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) on Friday this week, despite yesterday's agreement between the parties

Society of State Advocates of SA chairman Retha Meintjies said the unions' case would still be heard at the CCMA, although Justice Minister Dullah Omar guaranteed cash-strapped prosecutors yesterday that he would "make every effort" to provide them with interim financial relief

Omar's guarantee follows his announcement in November last year that prosecutors would no longer be paid for overtime work

Although no figures were mentioned yesterday, Omar said he would speak to the relevant ministers in an

effort to secure more money for the prosecutors

He said their salaries would not be formally reviewed until June

In return, the prosecutors agreed to recommend that their members suspend their work to rule

Four unions agreed to recommend this to their members, but the National Union of Prosecutors of SA (Nupsa) said it could not undertake to do this without consulting its membership

The agreement was reached at a meeting called by Omar in Pretoria attended by the five unions representing prosecutors and state advocates and national director of public prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka.

At issue was the wage dispute which has resulted in almost two months of working to rule, with prosecutors refusing to prepare cases after hours because they were not being paid for overtime work.

BD 26/1/99 (152) (152)

The prosecutors were dissatisfied with Omar's announcement of a 6% salary increase in December and are demanding parity with magistrates

Meintjies said the meeting was long overdue

"While everybody agreed the salary announcement of 23 December was totally inadequate, it is a pity that a month of chaos had to occur before such a meeting was called," she said

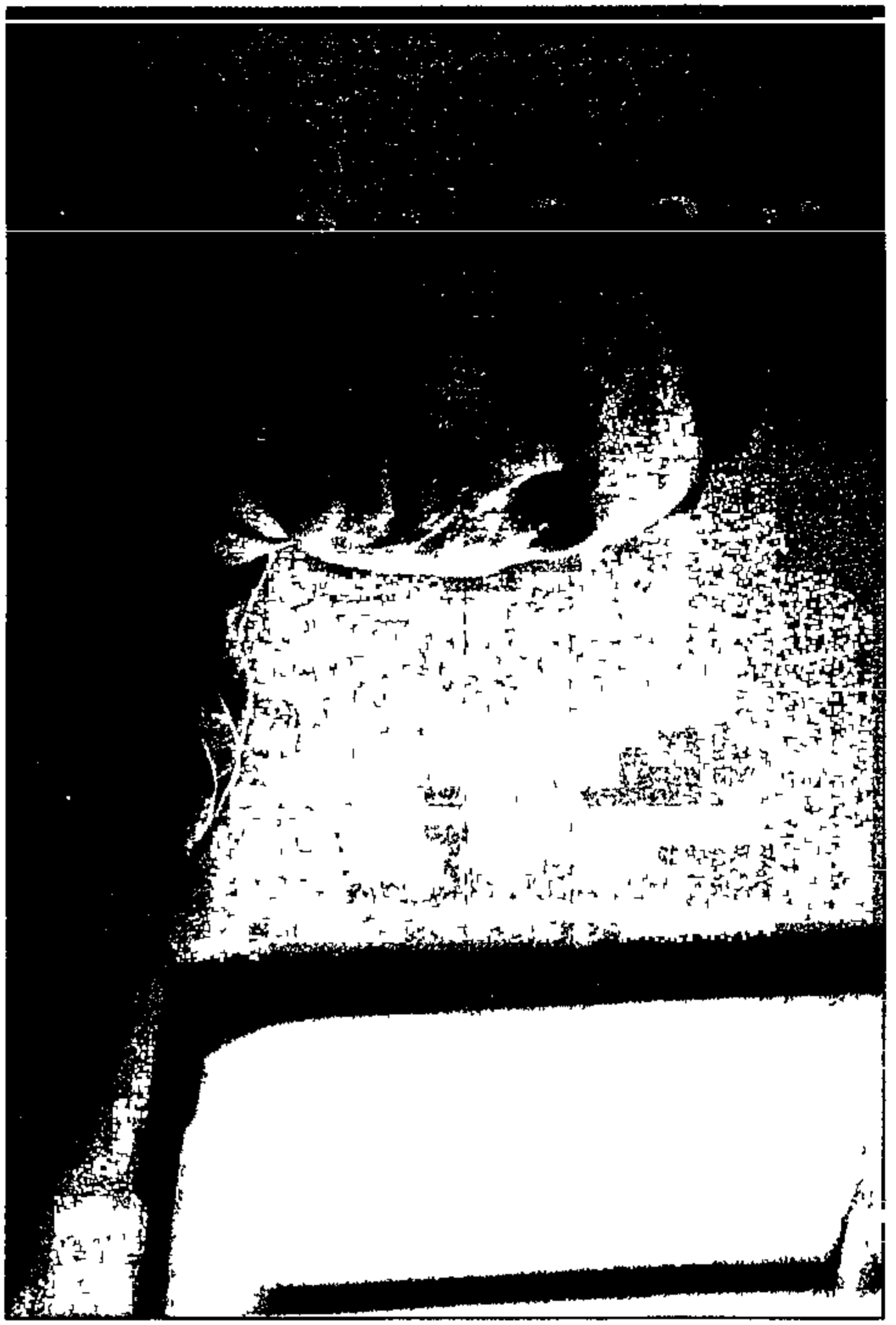
State advocates had still not received their 6% salary increases yesterday because of a computer glitch at the justice department

Meintjies said vacancies in Ngcuka's division amounted to 30% — a situation which called for "desperate measures"

The society and Nupsa were still "seriously considering" taking Omar to the Labour Court for suspending overtime payment, despite yesterday's meeting, Meintjies said



Justice Minister Dullah Omar, right, and national director of public prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka at a meeting in which Omar announced interim relief would be sought for prosecutors. Picture TREVOR SAMSON



IN NO GREAT RUSH: Prosecutor Sylvan Africa, of the Cape Town Magistrate's Court, says the work-to-rule strike was a necessary evil, a means to an end that would hopefully get the Justice Department to re-examine prosecutors' salaries

PICTURES: MILWAU SAPOROVA

Prosecutors' work-to-rule brings languor to the courts

MOTSHIDISI MOKWENA

STATE prosecutor Sylvan Africa, who has been working in the Cape Town Magistrate's Court for two years, says ever since the work-to-rule action was called by National Union of Prosecutors of South Africa over the wage dispute, he is not working outside of his working hours.

However, he acknowledges that this has affected court proceedings and has meant the postponement of a lot of cases. Africa does not jump out of the starting blocks as soon as he gets to work these days, an hour-and-a-half before court starts. Instead, he relaxes quietly with a cup of coffee. Like hundreds of other prosecutors around the country involved in the go-slow, Africa no longer works overtime.

"Before the work-to-rule action, I used to take work home to prepare cases for the following day. But since the go-slow, I haven't taken any work home because that would be working overtime and we are not being paid for this anymore," he says.

The Department of Justice has stopped paying prosecutors overtime. Instead, the latter have been given a 6% increase that resulted in some experienced but disillusioned state advocates resigning from Cape Director of Public Prosecutions Frank Kahn's office late last year.

Said Africa "I used to take home on average about R750 after deductions on my overtime pay but since it was stopped and we were given the increase, I get about R250 and it is nothing really."

The 27-year-old prosecutor studied for six years at the University of the Western Cape for his B Jurs and a post-graduate Bachelor of Laws Degree (LLB). He says, "My father paid for my first degree but I managed to secure a bursary with the Attorneys Fidelity Fund for my LLB."

"I love being in court and I always wanted to be in this profession and be a litigator," he said "and I also enjoy what I do and believe that the law is one of the most admirable professions."

He passionately explains that his job is not only to send people to jail "but also to seek the truth". Explaining how he used to carry out his morning routine when prosecutors were still paid overtime, Africa said that he used to rifle the morning before court to trace dockets from the police stations, to liaise with investigation officers, read through charge sheets "cover to cover to prepare adequately for on coming cases", and trace witnesses.

"But since the go slow I just come in the morning and do nothing work-related until my normal shift starts.

"During the course of the day I incorporate both court appearances and administration, but it is time-consuming and that is why there is a delay in cases."

As a result of the lack of productivity in the mornings, during tea and lunch break, Africa postponed most cases, some for technical reasons but others because he did not have enough preparation time.

Said Africa "It is normal to postpone a case because witnesses can't be traced or the investigating officer has not briefed me about the details of the investigation."

"But these are some of the things that I would normally do at home in the evening or very early in the morning at work, but since we are not paid overtime anymore, I don't do any work outside working hours hence cases get postponed."

Africa explained that the go-slow was a necessary evil. He argued that as professionals, prosecutors expect to be compensated accordingly.

"The fact of the matter is that we put in everything in our work, and not being paid accordingly sometimes leads to one being demotivated. I am not saying I want to be paid a lot of money or that I should be given an increase that is way above my scope of work, but as a professional person I expect to be paid a professional salary and that is not the case now."

Africa acknowledges that the go-slow is affecting the justice system. He also points out that the rights of awaiting-trial prisoners might be violated as their cases get postponed, "but that does not necessarily mean that every awaiting-trial prisoner gets awarded bail, some of them remain in custody for the duration of the trial."

Why they're asking for overtime pay

AFRICA'S schedule before the work-to-rule:
7:30am Gets to the office.
Prepares dockets.
Looks for missing files.
Calls the police stations to liaise with the investigating officers.
Traces witnesses and tells them what time to get to court.
Reads through charge sheets and prepares the court roll.
9am Court starts.
10:45am Tea break — but he takes charge sheets with him and reads through them.
11am Back to court.
11pm Lunch break — usually a working lunch as he takes dockets along, signs completed cases and has more briefings with the investigating officers.
1:45pm Back to court for more cases.
4:15pm Court adjourns.
Takes dockets to his office, signs them and makes sure they are returned to the police station before he goes home.
Home for the next three hours — prepares the following day's cases, writes up charge sheets and appearances.
8:30pm Work ends.

HE'S a born-again agnostic and a born-again angler. a much loved priest who is still running a great show in the corporate world. Don't miss the WEDNESDAY INTERVIEW with DIANE CASSERE, in your Cape Times tomorrow

Promise of 'relief', but details left in the air

OWN CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG Minister of Justice Dullah Omar softened his stance on the prosecutors' salary row, promising a greivelling meeting yesterday that "interim relief" would be sought.

However, the dispute will still go to the Commission for Mediation Arbitration and Conciliation. Retha Meintjies, president of the Society of State Advocates of South Africa, says the CCMA is to deal with the dispute on Friday.

Embittered prosecutors around the country have refused to work overtime, causing a backlog of cases since the department scrapped overtime pay last year and gave prosecutors a pay increase of 6% which was far less than they had expected.

When prosecutors embarked on their work-to-rule, Omar said in a statement that the increase was "the best the country can afford at present, taking into account the serious financial crisis in the world and which has also engulfed South Africa".

Omar also urged prosecutors to go back to work, saying the work-to-rule was not in their or the country's interests.

According to a National Union of Prosecutors of South Africa (Nupsa) source, progress in overcoming the virtual stalemate between prosecutors and the department was made yesterday at the meeting involving Omar and the National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelan Ngwenkwa.

Others at the meeting were representatives of Nupsa, the Public

Servants' Association of South Africa, the Society of State Advocates, the National Public Service and Allied Workers Union (which also represents court interpreters) and the National Health and Allied Workers' Union.

Omar promised to "make every effort to secure interim relief". It was unclear what form this relief would take.

"I didn't go to the meeting with money in my pocket," Omar said. Figures had not been discussed, he added, but prosecutors' unions were seeking parity with magistrates.

The department would report on the progress it had made in securing interim relief when an interim forum — of five members representing the unions, the department and the national Pub-

lic Prosecutions office — met on February 1, Omar said.

Meintjies said the talks had been disappointing as nothing concrete was put on the table, although the society was "appreciative" that efforts were to be made.

"There is a feeling of been there, done that," she said.

According to union sources, there was also disappointment that Ngwenkwa, who had expressed "bitter disappointment" at the 6% salary increase, did not flex his muscles more.

Omar said those at the meeting had agreed that prosecutors and state advocates were professionals and should be paid accordingly.

Their present pay was inadequate. Nupsa and the Society of State Advocates said they would discuss



PAY BELOW PAR: Minister of Justice Dullah Omar

the contents of the meeting with their members before deciding whether overtime work should be resumed.

Frustrated prosecutors near breaking point

Gareth Newham focuses on the findings in a recent study about various adverse factors which are hampering the prosecution of criminals

OVERWORKED, underpaid and underresourced while having to deal with an overwhelming tide of cases reflecting the darker side of humanity is the lot of most public prosecutors

With a significant exodus of experienced people to the better paid private sector, those left behind are becoming increasingly frustrated with the system's dwindling capacity to put criminals behind bars

Recent police statistics show that only 20% of serious crimes prosecuted in our courts result in a conviction. These figures bear testimony to a continuing crisis in our court system in which, it seems, only the unluckiest or most careless of criminals go to jail

An alarmingly small proportion of crime that is reported actually reaches the courts in the first place. Only about 9% of the car hijackings and 12% of the armed robberies that are reported to the police result in an accused in the dock.

Furthermore, according to the recently released national victimisation survey, apart from murder, of which 8.3% of cases are reported, well below half of the incidents of violent crime are reported to the police. Only 41% of the victims of robbery with force and 38% of assault reported the incident to the police.

A crucial question that needs to be answered, however, is why the vast majority of serious cases that are presented before the courts fail to end in a conviction. The prosecutors will usually decide not to prosecute a case unless sufficient evidence is available.

Research recently conducted by the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation into crime investigation and prosecution around Gauteng provides an insight into some of the most serious obstacles facing prosecutors in their quest to obtain convictions. Most significantly, prosecutors at regional court level are totally overloaded with cases

This leaves them with little time to prepare cases properly, resulting in minimal, if any consultation with witnesses about the evidence to be presented. As one participant stressed "Without a witness we generally cannot secure a conviction."

It is clear from responses, however, that all prosecutors interviewed had experienced difficulties getting witnesses to co-operate. This was commonly seen as a result of three main factors. Firstly, witnesses may be intimidated by the accused, or relatives and friends of the accused, to withdraw charges or change testimony. Secondly, constant postponements interrupt the lives and work of witnesses, which leads to disobedience. Thirdly, there is a general loss of faith in the criminal justice system. One of the prosecutors was adamant that "if it can be seen that perpetrators are found guilty and put behind bars, then people will be more willing to testify."

Although prosecutors indicated that they generally had good working relationships with detectives, it was repeatedly mentioned that the problems facing the police were significantly hampering their ability to ensure successful prosecutions.

Prosecutors saw the main problems with the police being that their work load was very high and their morale very low. The result was that "detectives often cannot or won't go that extra mile with investigations."

Inadequate training and a serious lack of resources for detectives were most commonly cited as reasons for investigations failing to produce the necessary evidence for a conviction.

Respondents to the centre's study who worked for victim support services and who had working experience with prosecutors were generally impressed with the dedication and commitment they displayed under trying circumstances. There was a general perception from these respondents, however, that case overload and inexperience



Prosecutors in Johannesburg protest against over working conditions earlier this year

often led to prosecutors presenting evidence badly or not cross-examining sufficiently. "We have experienced an accused being let off because of the failure of a prosecutor to question what we saw as obvious discrepancies in his testimony," a victim's counsellor complained. All respondents to the study were asked

what they saw as the potential solutions to the problems facing criminal prosecutions. Unsurprisingly, the common answer was "more money spent on the justice system". Most prosecutors said this money should be used to improve the training of police investigators, hiring of more prosecutors to reduce

case load and payment of salaries that made being a public prosecutor a viable long-term career. It is crucial that the voices of those working within the justice system should be heard if meaningful solutions are to be identified and implemented. The extent to which government hears these voices and acts positively

on their concerns will ultimately determine whether South Africans can start believing that they have access to justice, safety and security.

□ Newham is a researcher with the Criminal Justice Policy Unit at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

Union locked out

(152)
More than 400 members of the Paper, Print, Wood and Allied Workers Union have been locked out at National Magazine Printers in Cape Town after the union staged a go-slow after what it termed futile wage negotiations.

The go-slow began yesterday, SABC Radio reported this morning.

A management spokesman said they informed workers the go-slow would be considered industrial action. A spokesman for National Magazine Printers said it was business as usual at the printing house. — Sapa

ART 28/1/99

Naspers locks out workers at Die Burger

Themba Hlengani

(152)

THE publishers of the Western Cape daily, Die Burger, locked out more than 500 union members from their Cape Town plants yesterday following a wage dispute

National Magazine Printers and Nasionale Pers (Naspers) said they had exercised their lock-out privilege after the Paper, Pulp, Wood and Allied Workers' Union embarked on a go-slow on Wednesday.

However, the union said the go-slow was called after the companies called armed security personnel to their premises to intimidate union members. The union served the companies with a 48-hour strike notice on Tuesday, following a breakdown in wage talks.

The union is demanding a 10% or R63 increase, whichever is greater, for members employed by National Magazine Printers and a 10,7% or R53 increase for workers at the Die Burger. The companies are offering 8%.

Naspers GM Freddie Steyn said the company was prepared to resolve the dispute. It had signed agreements with the SA Typographical and the Communication Workers unions, which had accepted Naspers's offer.

Meanwhile, Reneé Grawitzky reports that the wage dispute between Times Media and the SA Union of Journalists has been referred to the Independent Mediation Services of SA. The union is demanding a guaranteed 8,4% increase while the company is offering a guaranteed 5,3% plus an additional 2,3% linked to merit

BD 29/11/99

(187)

Security industry row is referred to arbitration

(186) (152) CT(BR)10/2/99
FRANK NXUMALO

Johannesburg — The planned security industry strike by more than 70 000 workers belonging to eight unions was put on hold and referred for arbitration by the Labour Court yesterday after employers successfully challenged the Committee for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration's jurisdiction over the dispute

The parties are deadlocked over whether the unions' demands for a reduction in working hours from 60 to 55 hours a week, as provided for by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, should be accompanied by a reduction in wages

The dispute is an acid test for the act, which was promulgated on December 1. The settlement, whether by arbitration or agreement, will be a vital barometer of the unions' ability to defend hard-won labour rights.

Just as important, the outcome of the dispute will also be a measure of how far employer organisations are prepared to go in defending shareholder value at the expense of good working conditions for employees

The labour department said wage determination 481 would still apply to the security industry until investigations into sectoral determinations

were completed
Jerry Ngcobo, the spokesman for the Transport and General Workers' Union, said the unions were awaiting the date for the arbitration hearing at the Labour Court. They would then chart a way forward.

The employers' organisations did not mention the arbitration hearing. They talked instead of a planned bosberaad for February 16 and 17.

The organisations said they were disturbed and shocked at the irresponsible and inflammatory statements the unions had made about the strike

"Employers are concerned that these statements are misinforming the workforce and public in general, which could lead to uncontrollable conflict," they said.

"Labour's position at the declaration of the dispute in December 1998 was an increase in cost to employers of 19,9 percent.

"This position has moved twice since then and now sits at some 25 percent in costs.

"This constant moving of the goal posts by labour is hampering the negotiations. The employers trust that the proposed bosberaad will pave the way to reaching a suitable settlement without any need for industrial action "

The conflict is an acid test for the Basic Conditions of Employment Act

Nehawu plans solidarity strike against job losses

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

ARG 13/2/99
Johannesburg — The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) has notified the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) of its intention to embark on a national strike

The strike is expected to bring 250 000 Nehawu members out in solidarity with 30 000 members in the tertiary education sector, who face retrenchment. Joe Lekota, the Nehawu spokesman, said tertiary institutions blame budgetary constraints and heavy government subsidy cuts for the intended layoffs

Lekota said inflated salaries for managers were the real reason for shortages of money in the public sector. He said some managers were "earning more

(152) (210)
than R1 million a year, while workers are paid little more than R1 000 a month".

In addition, he said, the government was losing millions of rands to ghost workers, said to number almost 20 000 in the Eastern Cape alone. The problem is believed to be equally serious in the Northern Province.

The government believes it is overstaffed by about 55 000 employees

Relations between the government and public sector unions have been uneasy since President Nelson Mandela said the public service was not an employment agency, early last year.

Meanwhile, more than 3 000 Nehawu members marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria yesterday to launch a membership drive to ensure Nehawu has 400 000 members by 2002

Airport strike hits planes

~~ARGUS~~
ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

(152) ARG 26/2/99

Johannesburg - Thousands of passengers were stranded at the Johannesburg International Airport this morning when Swissport workers, who handle baggage for British Airways, prevented several planes from taking off.

One passenger, who was on a flight to Durban, said his plane was stranded for almost an hour before passengers were told to get off because it was

unlikely that any planes could take off. The passenger said demonstrators parked vehicles in front of and behind several planes.

It was impossible to get comment on the situation from airport, British Airways or union officials.

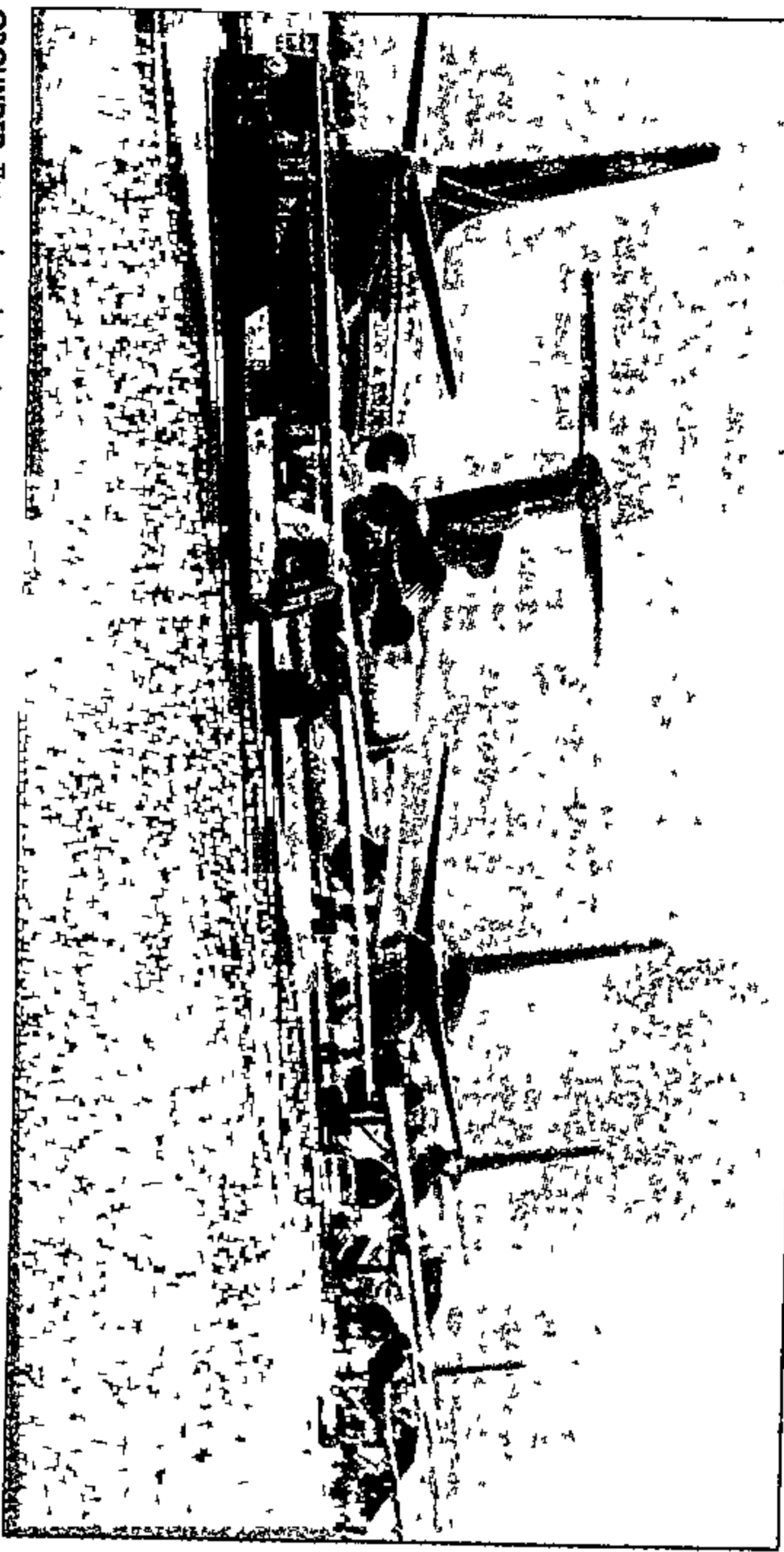
Airports Company spokesperson Nicky Rose-Innes said: "I am going to our crisis centre and I cannot comment. We will issue a statement later."

SAA spokesperson Victor Nosi said: "I am waiting for information from our crew on the ground."

Cops disperse strikers at Joburg airport

By PAUL EKSTEEN

(158) 



GROUNDHED This picture, taken by a passenger shows a row of idle planes parked at Johannesburg International airport

Chaos reigned at Johannesburg international airport yesterday morning as about 100 members of the ramp-handling service provider Swissport (SA) went on strike. More than 10 people were arrested as police and defence force members battled for two hours to gain control of the situation.

According to Rory Mackey, general manager of the airport, about 19 flights, half of which were international, were delayed as workers marched across the airfield and prevented planes from reaching their parking bays by blocking their paths with stationary vehicles.

"Access to a number of parking areas was delayed. LANDING of aircraft took place safely, but 19 aircraft could not reach their parking bays. They were parked on taxi ways," he said. Passengers were later unloaded from these points and transported safely to the terminal building.

Mackey admitted that the strike would affect flights for a couple of days. "Most of the flights have left already. It will have an impact on flights from this time," he said.

The strike came as a result of a two-week-old judgment to uphold a tender process for ramp-handlers, a decision which Swissport appealed against. Mackey was quick to defend the use of the police and defence

forces to disperse the strikers. "Johannesburg airport is a national keypoint and is obviously guarded by the legislation under the country's constitution."

"At 11am, they (police and defence force members) brought the strikers to order. Accsa (Airports Company of South Africa) regrets greatly the incidents that have happened, but obviously the action was conducted by people who do not have the same control mechanisms that we do," he said.

According to Piet de Jager, divisional general manager of airport services at Johannesburg international, similar incidents occurred at other major airports around the country. "We've had similar incidents in Cape Town and Durban. These were more peaceful," he said.

Although no incidents of violence were reported, Superintendent Eugene Opperman of the SAPS confirmed that several strikers resisted arrest.

"We have arrested a number of people. We discussed it with them and asked them to disperse peacefully. Some wouldn't. Some of them resisted arrest, and we had to contain them in the normal way under the Criminal Procedure Act," he said.

According to De Jager, most of the strikers had returned to work. "The staff are back at work at their institutions and are working as usual. We just want to ensure that everything will be normal when we hit the next peak," he said.

SAW 27/2/99

Strikers cause chaos at airports

IAN SHIFFMAN

(152)

Industrial action by the employees of a company providing ramp services at Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban airports delayed dozens of flights yesterday

Swissport staff staged a march at Cape Town International Airport to highlight their grievances

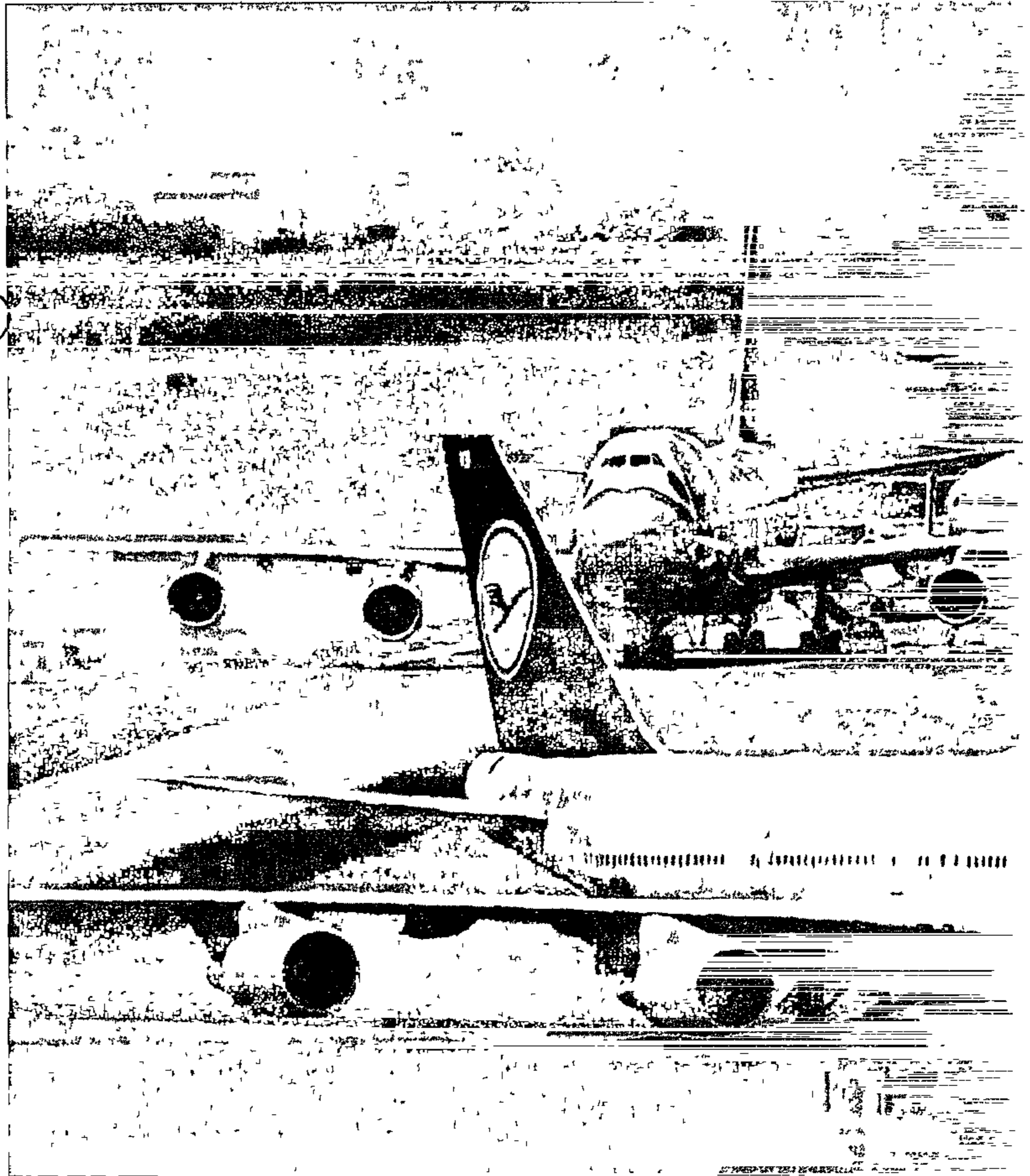
At Johannesburg International they blocked the apron, preventing aircraft from landing and taking off and causing chaos in overcrowded terminals. International and domestic flights were delayed for about three hours while negotiations took place

Their strike action followed a request to President Nelson Mandela to intervene in what they allege has been the unfair issuing of licences for ramp handling services at South African airports

In their appeal to Mr Mandela, the workers wrote "It cannot be disputed that if there is an unfair ruling against Swissport in the case of issuing of the licence, there will be an increase in the number of unemployed people in South Africa"

Ramp-handling licences were awarded to Apron Services and newcomer Gatwick Handling International. Swissport, which has been operating at Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town for some years and has 350 employees, lost its licence

Swissport has appealed against the Airports Company's decision to award the licences to new companies. The dispute will go to arbitration this weekend. Should Swissport win its appeal, the Airports Company will have to start the licensing process again



WAITING GAME. aircraft wait to take off from Johannesburg International Airport as a result of delays caused by the...

Seatbelt missing: SAA accused

IAN SHIFFMAN

Cape Town travel agents have expressed dismay at declining safety standards, the deteriorating condition of aircraft and poor staff training at South African Airways

Dermont Swaine, editor of Inside Travel, questioned how SAA could allow an aircraft to fly with a passenger seat safety belt missing

Travel agents ask whether SAA had cut expenditure on training, maintenance and aircraft checks, with its new, aggressive pricing policies to regain lost market share

SAA chief Coleman Andrews said the airline had made a financial turnaround and hoped to make a

profit of R50-million, or at least break even, in the six months to March 31

He said the improvement had been achieved through extensive training and the development of new alliances with other carriers. Earlier he launched a campaign to cut costs and improve customer service

A prominent city travel agent, who asked not to be identified as he feared reprisals from SAA, asked how aircraft could be fully examined and safety checks carried out with such fast turnaround times

Mr Swaine said he was flying on SAA flight SA314, an Airbus A300, from Cape Town to Johannesburg, when he experienced what he

described as "new" standards in SAA's "cost cutting" policy

Mr Swaine said seated in 30D "the right side armrest had no cushion pad. My arm and elbow leaned on open aluminium with big holes that added to the discomfort. Not very comfortable. But forget comfort, at least I had a working seatbelt"

"An Oriental visitor across the aisle in seat 29C had no seatbelt. He alerted the flight attendant, who searched in vain for the missing seatbelt, but did nothing about it. It was up to the tour group leader, doing his head count, to hear the concerns of the unfortunate passenger and move him to a free seat with the required seatbelts intact

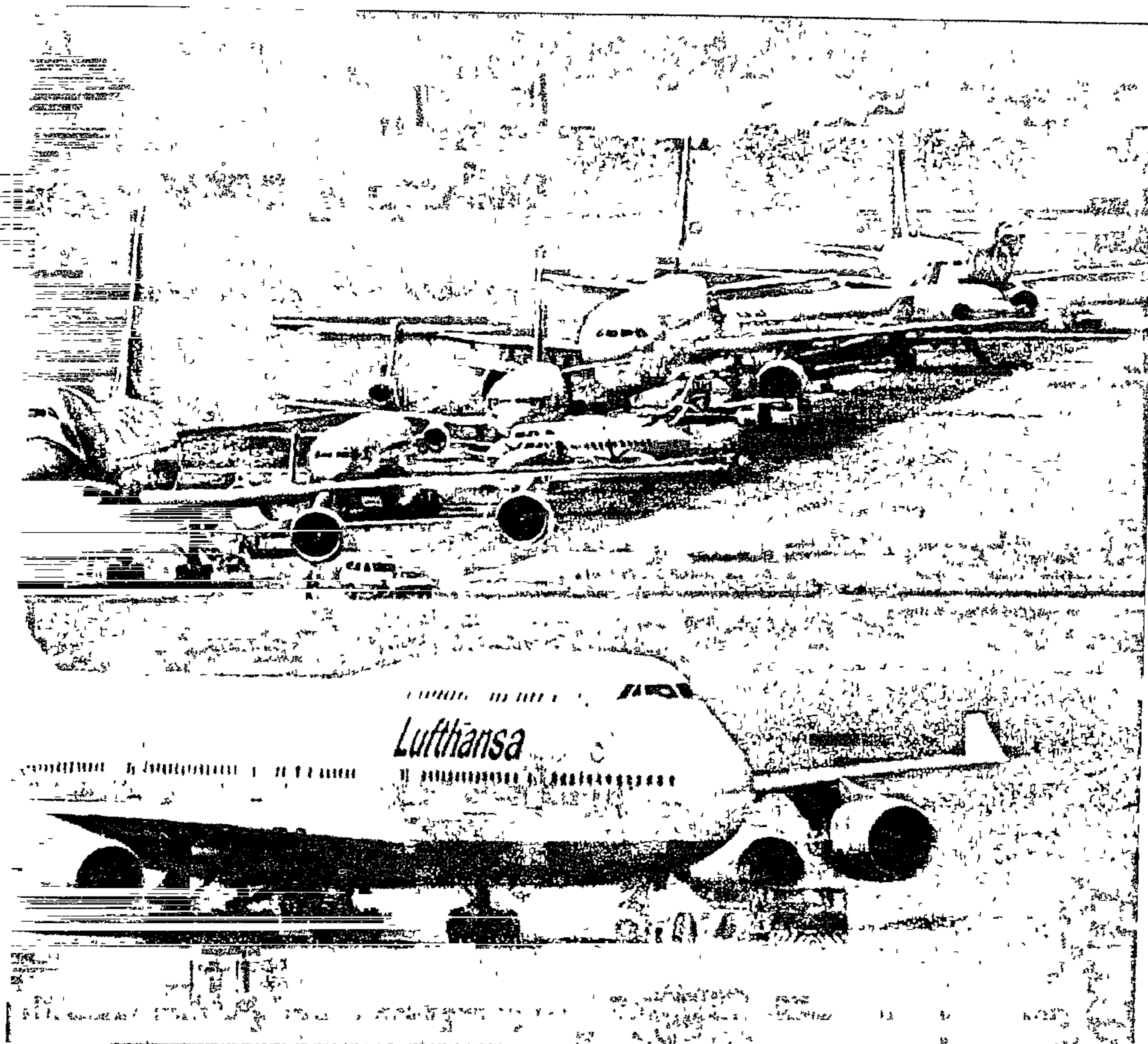
"The flight attendant had no idea what to do. Surely he, not the tour leader, should have moved the passenger to a 'safe' seat," said Mr Swaine

He asked what would have happened if the plane had hit bad turbulence and the passenger had been injured or if the flight had been fully booked with no spare seat

If a flight attendant could not handle this type of problem efficiently, how safe would passengers be in a real emergency, he asked. He was also concerned that SAA was seeking to become a "winning" airline at the cost of lowering standards

Last year an SAA aircraft had serious wing damage after an engine

blew another Boeing...
S...
sta...
quite...
The...
fl...
and...
they...
serv...
On...
gers...
the...
to...
flight



Airport as a result of delays caused by the strike

accused of drop in standards

"The flight attendant had no idea what to do. Surely he, not the tour leader, should have moved the passenger to a 'safe' seat," said Mr Swaine.

He asked what would have happened if the plane had hit bad turbulence and the passenger had been injured or if the flight had been fully booked with no spare seat.

If a flight attendant could not handle this type of problem efficiently, how safe would passengers be in a real emergency, he asked. He was also concerned that SAA was seeking to become a "winning" airline at the cost of lowering standards.

Last year an SAA aircraft had serious wing damage after an engine

blew on a flight to Johannesburg. In another incident, an engine on a Boeing 747 flying from Sydney caught fire due to a faulty fuel line.

Several travel agents said service standards had dropped and it was quite obvious the airline had cabin attendant problems.

They said attendants were put on flights without sufficient training, and they were concerned how staff would react in a real emergency if they could not handle normal cabin services.

On a number of occasions passengers had reported that the backs of the seats or tray tables did not close to the correct positions and that flight attendants were often rude

and unhelpful.

On longhaul flights, attendants were not on duty all the time and ignored passengers' call bells.

Toilets were dirty and blocked and paper and tissues not replaced.

Although passengers had special meals confirmed on the ground, they were informed on the flights that no special meals had been requested.

They also complained that SAA had closed its Cape Town "ops" office and it was almost impossible to get through to Johannesburg on the telephone.

Victor Nosi, SAA's corporate communications spokesman, said the airline had 710 flights a week and isolated incidents did occur.

Mr Nosi said Mr Swaine's seatbelt and armrest incident had been investigated but no report could be found.

Mr Swaine said the cabin attendant or her superior should have reported the incident.

If SAA had no record of the complaint, there was even more suspicion that staff could be negligent or were covering up faults, he said.

Although SAA does maintenance on several foreign airlines at its Johannesburg headquarters and is recognised for a high standard of work as demanded by foreign carriers, travel experts are asking whether SAA cares as much about its own passengers and aircraft.

NATIONAL

airport strike
158
3/3/99

**Reneé Grawlitzky
and Sapa**

THE legal battle over a tender process for ramp handlers at Johannesburg International Airport continued at the weekend between Swissport and the Airports Company after Swissport workers caused disruptions at the airport on Friday.

The SA Police Services and the SA National Defence Force were called in to disperse striking Swissport workers who blocked access to the aircraft parking areas, resulting in delays of up to

Legal battle continues after

Police and troops called in to quell protest over tender process

four hours of domestic and international flights. A number of workers were arrested. Police said some workers were facing charges including malicious damage to property, resisting arrest and contraventions of the National Key Point Act.

The illegal protest action preceded an arbitration appeal that was heard at

the weekend. The ruling has not yet been handed down.

Swissport, a ramp handling service provider at the airport, failed to secure one of the two ramp handling tenders awarded late last year. The company

claimed there had been irregularities in the tendering process. An arbitration ruling handed down two weeks ago upheld the tendering process. Swissport appealed against this ruling.

The tenders were awarded to GHI-

Thobela consortium and to Apron Services, a subsidiary of Transnet which is to be sold off in the near future. There has been some speculation that Kopano ke Matla, Cosatu's investment arm, has expressed an interest in buy-

ing Apron Services last year. Apron Services employees caused major disruptions when they too blocked the tarmac at the airport in protest against the decision to call for tenders.

Swissport director Mike van der Watt said yesterday the termination of Swissport's operations would deter future foreign investors.

He said the decision to award the services tender to a company with no ramp handling experience, and to just Swissport, "implies that a government official can take away the right of any company which has been operating legitimately in this country to continue its business."
"This will serve as a warning for other companies that are considering investing in SA, and would seem contrary to government policy which is trying to attract foreign investment."
The Airports Company could not be contacted for comment.

NEWS

LABOUR Company refuses to pay bonuses, workers down tools

Stoppage knocks Toyota SA

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria — Toyota's main plant at Prospecton in Durban had been closed since Friday because of disruptive unprocedural action by 200 to 300 hourly paid workers, Harry Gazendam, Toyota SA's human resources director, said yesterday.

He said the disruption was related to a profit-linked incentive bonus scheme. The company had received an interdict ordering the workers back to work yesterday.

He said union officials and shop stewards were doing all in their power to get workers to adhere to an agreement with the company. He said the workers should be back today.

Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for the National Union of Metalworkers

of South Africa, said the union had not opposed the interdict and was asking its members to return to work. Agreement had been reached that workers would not be disciplined for coming back to work late.

But he said the stoppage was triggered by management's failure to give workers incentive bonuses, as had been previously agreed.

He blamed Toyota for the disruption because the company had failed to combat the situation more strategically and had not disclosed relevant information to workers.

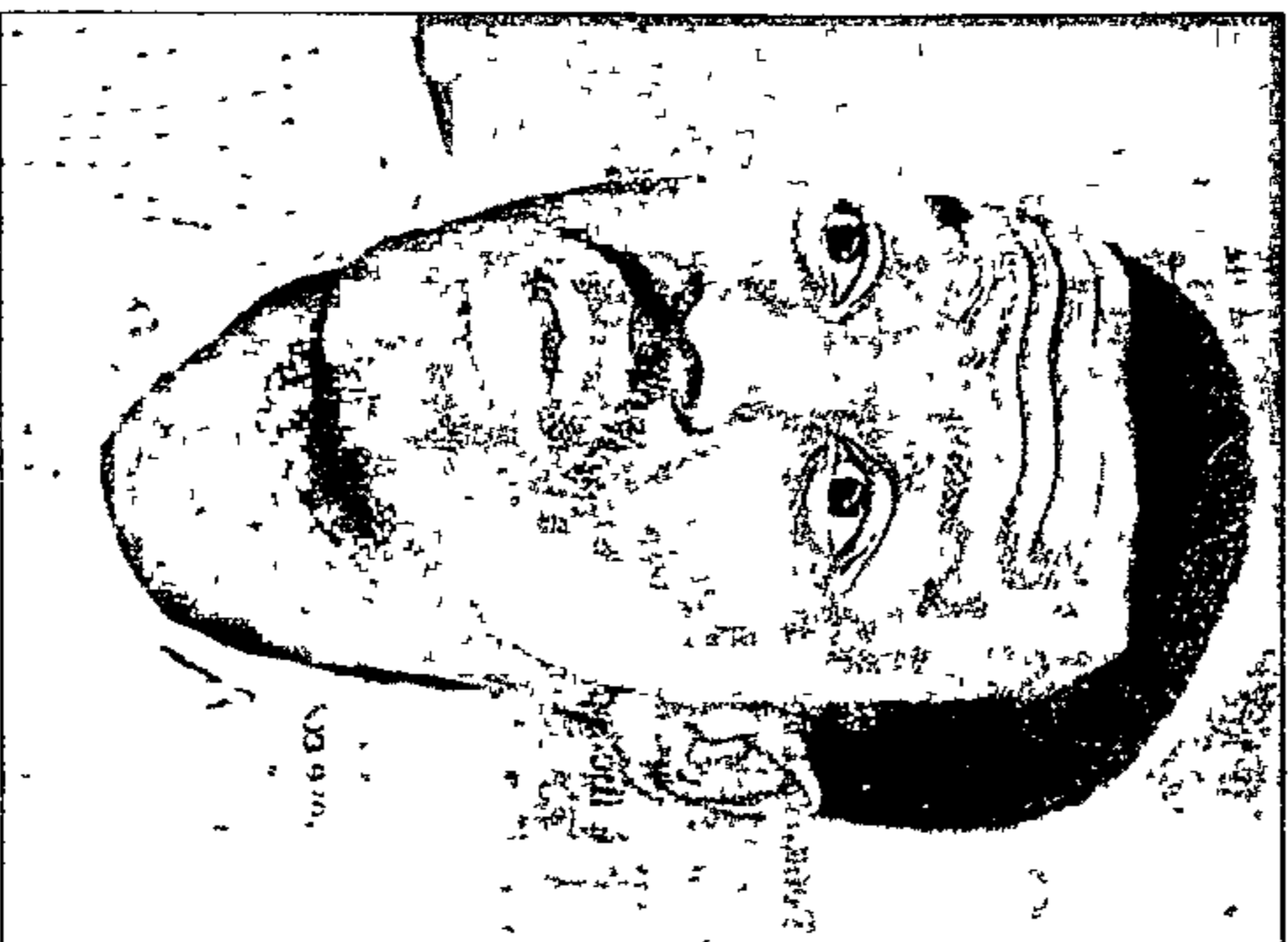
Gazendam said Toyota set its profit target and paid incentive bonuses at the end of February, the close of its financial year. "Last year was a dreadful year for the motor industry and motor company profits," he said

"If the target is not met, no bonus is paid, and we've announced there will not be a profit bonus this year."

As a listed company, he said, Toyota SA was constrained by JSE regulations from releasing detailed information until it had been disclosed to the general public and the exchange.

He said the stoppage had been limited. "The other three plants at Prospecton and our operations in Johannesburg have been unaffected, but the core group incapacitated the plant and nobody could work. We have to close the plant if there is any disruption because of unprocedural action, so a total of 2 500 hourly paid workers were affected," he said.

"He said the company had lost 330 units a day because of the disruption. He could not give a revenue figure



ASK MANAGEMENT Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for the National Union of Metalworkers of SA

Workers on illegal strike face the sack

By Mbongeni Hlophe

MANAGEMENT at Toyota's Prospecton plant have threatened to dismiss all 300 striking workers if they do not return to work today.

The workers - most of whom are members of the National Union of Metalworkers in South Africa (Numsa) - went on an illegal strike last month and refused to return to work despite a court interdict obtained by management instructing them to do so.

The strike was triggered by Toyota management's announcement that incentive bonuses which the workers were hoping to get from the company's 1998 profit would not be paid.

Management refuses to pay the incentive bonuses saying that last year's profit was far below the target profit enabling them to pay the bonuses.

"We are not prepared to pay incentive bonuses. The agreement signed between the union and management states clearly that we would not pay if we did not reach the target profit," Toyota spokesman Mr Harry Hezendam said.

He said if workers did not return to work today, management would resort to the expulsion of some, if not all the striking workers.

"There are numerous procedures the workers should have used before engaging in an illegal strike, Hezendam said.

Numsa spokesman Mr Magrapes Hlatshwayo said the workers would not return to work until management furnished them with an audited financial statement proving management's claims that the company had failed to reach the profit target last year.

"Workers say they do not care about the interdict and will remain on strike until they see the audited statement," said Hlatshwayo.

● Sapa reports that the Congress of SA Trade Unions has disclosed that there has been an overwhelming response to the call for donations to labour's job creation fund.

Spokesman Mukom Ratshitanga said on Friday that tens of thousands of employed people throughout South Africa had donated one day's pay to the Job Creation Trust aimed at alleviating the country's high unemployment rate.

NEWS

Agreement for a summit on restructuring of tertiary education holds off April 28 action

Nehawu suspends planned strike

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) last week suspended a national strike planned for April 28 by more than 250 000 members in solidarity with 30 000 of their colleagues facing retrenchments in the tertiary education sector.

The suspension followed an agreement brokered by the National Economic Development and Labour Council (Nedlac) between Nehawu and the

sector to hold a summit to discuss union concerns about the restructuring of these institutions.

Nedlac said a task team had been established

It would identify additional agenda items for the summit, solicit views from those tertiary education institutions which were unable to send representatives to the meeting and propose a date for the summit.

"The first meeting or the task team will be convened by Nedlac. Thereafter, the Council for Higher Education will

take over responsibility for convening the summit, as this falls within the scope of their obligations in terms of the Higher Education Act 1997," said Jennifer Wilson, the spokesman for Nedlac.

"The task team will report to a committee of principals which will finalise the agenda and date for the summit."

Agenda items for the summit agreed already included the restructuring of the tertiary education system, the contracting out of services and discussions on the possible establishment of a

bargaining council for the sector

Nehawu said it believed the summit should look at ways to arrest the mass retrenchments in the sector and find alternatives to the privatisation and outsourcing of services that were "being wantonly implemented by employers in the sector."

The union believed a joint framework of managing the restructuring and transformation processes in the tertiary education sector should be entered into by the summit, in place of unilateral action

(152) ~~(152)~~ CT (GR) 12/4/99

Why I must fight for my money, by bus driver

Strike set to hit 150 000 in city

ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

Being a bus driver is a difficult, stressful and badly paid job.

Yet Toyer Abrahams, 53, likes it. He likes the people he sees every day and he likes having a job - although he would like to get at least a 10% wage increase as he has to support a wife and seven children.

So, tomorrow morning, he will not be getting up at 4 30am as he has for the past 23 years.

From midnight tonight, he and other members of the Transport & Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu) will be on strike after a deadlock in wage negotiations between the unions and the South African Bus Employers Association, of which local bus company Golden Arrow is a member.

The company is offering a 6,5% wage increase and wants employees to work a spread-over shift of 14-15 hours instead of the present 12-hour shift.

Spread-over duties allow bus drivers to work during both traffic peaks, with several hours off in the middle of the day. The unions want the 12-hour spread-over shifts to remain, and an 11% wage increase.

As a senior employee, Mr Abrahams is fortunate - he does not have to work the 12-hour spread-overs that exhaust the company's younger men.

Driving the Manenberg-Claremont route, he works from just before 6am until just after noon on Mondays to Fridays, and a slightly longer shift on Saturdays.

After deductions for tax, medical aid and pension, he takes home about R500 a week out of a R650 wage, and he struggles to pay his bills, especially with increases in school fees.

His car is broken and he lives in a council house in Hanover Park, yet he does not believe in complaining.

"To me, money isn't everything"

Of course, earning a living is important, and the possible consequences of a strike weigh heavily on his mind.

"I must work for my family and now I must fight for my money."

Sometimes it is extremely dangerous to be on the road in Manenberg, especially when gang violence flares up. Yet most bus drivers have to deal with gangsterism, violence and crime.

Many have been mugged or held up, like Mr Abrahams, who lost his watch in a robbery.

"You work in fear, but you can't refuse to come to work or they will dismiss you," says Mr Abrahams.

He wants his children to stay in school and to matriculate so that they can have a better future.

The nationwide strike, which will leave 150 000 Peninsula bus commuters scrambling for alternative ways to get to work, is likely to cripple bus services in many parts of the country.

■ A Metrorail spokesman today confirmed that people with weekly and monthly bus clipcards would be allowed to travel on suburban trains for the duration of the strike.

She could not yet confirm whether extra trains would be laid on to cope with Golden Arrow's passengers.

ART 14/4/99

(152)

18 000 transport workers set to strike over wage impasse

By EDDIE JAVIYA

About 18 000 transport workers are set to embark on a nationwide bus strike tomorrow which could paralyse industry in major cities

Four unions - the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union (Towu), Transport and General Workers Union, Transport and Allied Workers Union and Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union - are demanding a

13% wage increase, while employers are offering 4.5%. Other contentious issues include re-trenchment packages, daily overtime payments, working hours and insurance benefits

The strike will not affect municipal buses.

Towu general secretary Gary Wilson said "We are no longer prepared to accept low wages from the employers. We are willing to compromise on other issues, but will not accept

their offer. Last year we received between 10.5 and 11%, and the 4.5% is too little

"There will be no buses on Thursday and major cities will be affected. The industrial action will affect major bus companies in all the provinces."

South African Bus Employers Association president Barry Gie said the employers met the unions on Monday in a bid to resolve the impasse

"The unions made it clear that they would call off the industrial action only if we offered them 11%. They told us that they were flexible on other issues. But we could not agree as we felt the resolution of the impasse did not hinge on one issue. We wanted a package settlement.

"The present economic conditions don't allow us to pay an 11% increase," Gie said.

"We are still willing to negotiate with the unions."

~~(152)~~ (152)

Star 14/4/99



Union wants late talks in bid to avert bus strike

PD 15/4/99 (172) (27)

THE Transport and General Workers' Union was hoping to set up an eleventh-hour meeting with the SA Bus Employers' Association last night to settle their wage dispute and head off a nationwide bus workers' strike today.

The union said earlier that short and long-distance passengers could be inconvenienced today if 18 000 bus workers around the country go on strike.

Union spokesman Zakhele Sibego said yesterday he had asked the union's general secretary to look at the possibility of meeting the employers association. Its president, Barry Gie, said he was willing to consider a compromise. "We are keeping our doors wide open."

The strike will affect 17 private bus companies — including Putco, Greyhound, Translux and Golden Arrow — but not municipal buses.

"Everything is on track," Sibego said. "We are expecting services to be disrupted all over the country. I don't expect any long-distance trips to be carried out by our members."

Gie says the employers' association offered a 6,5% increase, but the union "steadfastly maintained" its demand for 11%. Sibego said the association had not offered more than 4,5% — Sapa

Thousands stranded as city suffers bus-strike hell

Argis 12/199

SHARKEY ISAACS AND TREVOR OOSTERWYK

STRIKERS

About half of Cape Town's 150 000 hired commuters were left stranded by today's national strike while the rest crammed trains or braved heavy road traffic in to the city.

Bus services were halted as drivers and other bus company staff joined the national strike.

People streamed to stations and train ranks, while others took to their own cars adding to serious congestion on the roads. Some firms either used their own transport or hired taxis to ferry workers to factories.

As many as 3 million bus commuters and their employers are affected country-wide by the strike of more than 18 000

workers, including thousands of bus drivers.

The strike follows a deadlock in wage negotiations between four leading transport unions and the South African Bus Employers' Association.

The workers are demanding an 11% wage increase, while management offering only 6,5%.

Cape Town traffic department's chief inspector, Malcolm Little, said the morning peak lasted longer today.

South taxi drivers trying to cash in on the strike dipped in and out of lanes and were ticketed, he said.

The city's chief traffic inspector, Gerald Sobolker, said department staff were coping well in unclogging bottlenecks. Meanwhile, at suburban stations, commuters crowded on to platforms and

squeezed into 620 packed peak-hour trains.

MetroRail's Ruana Jacobs said extra trains were unavailable, but the existing fleet was coping with the surge.

She described peak-hour congestion as "slight" at most stations, but commuters on the Cape Flats said trains were filled to capacity, especially those heading into the city from Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha.

South African Taxi Council chairman Joe Mabaso said taxis would cover all bus routes. There were enough vehicles to cope with the predicted increase in demand, he said.

"We are going to cope with more commuters, but there could be hiccups as traffic builds up during the two main peaks. "We will even use local taxis to trans-

port people to the city, where other taxis will take over."

In the Peninsula, the worst-affected area was high-density Atlantis, where there are no suburban train services and commuters had to rely on minibus taxis.

Commuters in the area had an unexpected prelude to the strike yesterday when 27 drivers failed to arrive for their duty stint and were booked off "sick".

At Mitchell's Plain Town Centre, many people were waiting uncertainly early today. Sharon Davids was expecting company transport to pick her up.

"This bus strike is not a nice thing at all. It upsets one's rhythm so early in the morning," she said.

Three other commuters echoed her

To page 2

P.T.O

Long haul ... commuters stand in winding queues waiting their turn at a taxi rank in Orange Farm this morning.



Anger as bus strike starts

(1977) Mar 15/14/79

Marshals struggle with long lines of commuters

By EDDIE LAVIVA AND SAVA

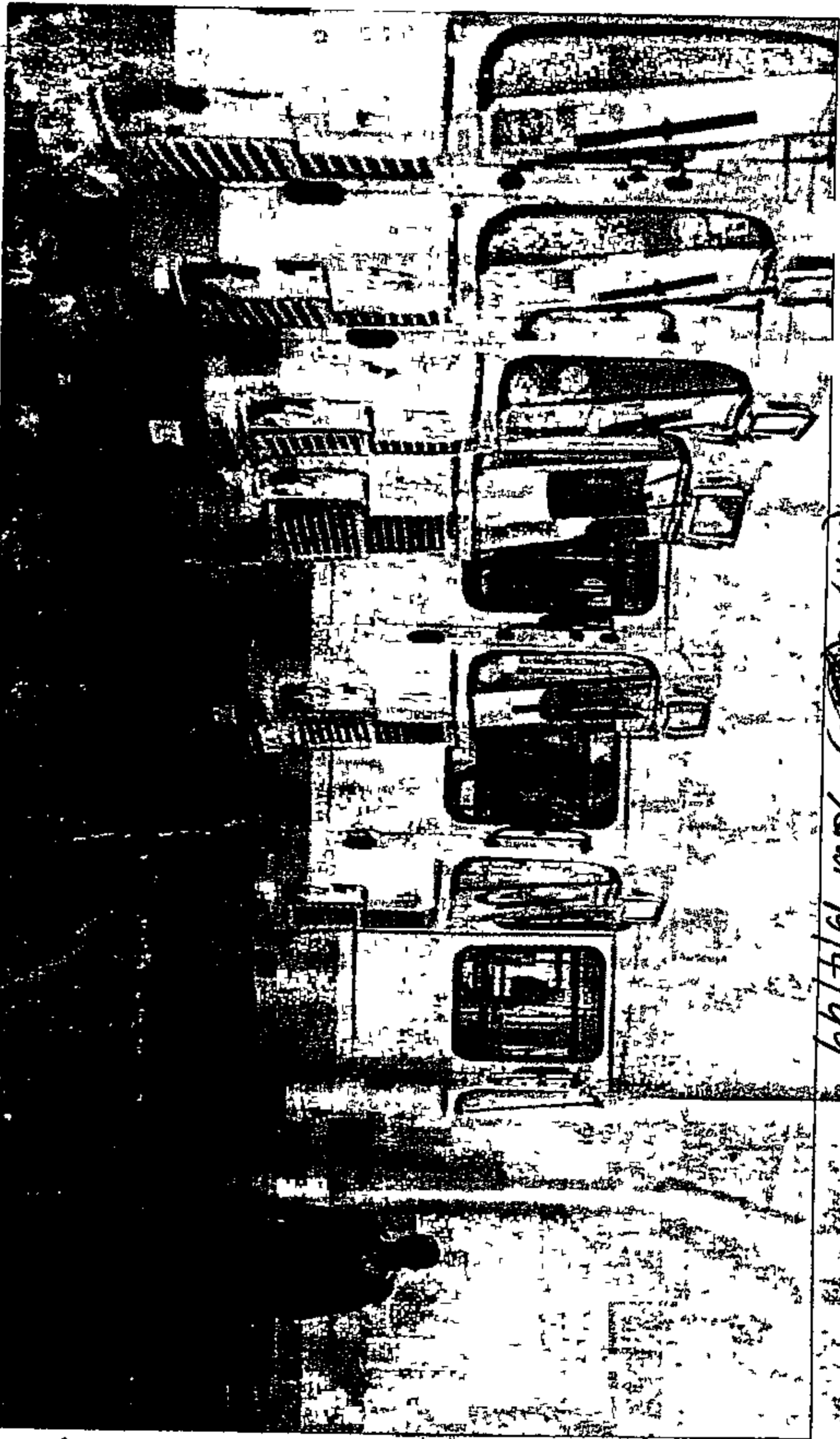
Bus commuters across the country battled to get to work this morning as the stand-off between unions and employers continued.

The four unions involved say their bus drivers and other staff will go on until their employers improve their wage offer of 6.5%. The unions are demanding 11%.

Taxi owners cashed in, putting more vehicles on roads. The number of taxis travelling to Johannesburg from Orange Farm, Palm Springs and the Vaal Triangle doubled, but taxi rank marshals warned things might worsen if the strike continued.

"We are using local taxis to transport commuters to the major cities around our ranks, but we are incurring the wrath of passengers who use local taxis. People who travel to Bara everyday were inconvenienced today," Palm Springs queue marshal Ezekiel Thulam said.

Pretoria Metroval spokesman Margaret Dingalo said the company had deployed



Stand-off - a Putco security guard walks along a line of buses left standing in a depot in Sebokeng.

extra staff. More trains were on standby, but she said no problems had been reported. At Mahopane, north of Pre-

torlia, the North West bus company said most bus drivers were expected to strike, stranding thousands of commuters

on the outskirts of Pretoria. Most affected are commuters from former Kwa-Ndubele who rely on the Putco

The four unions involved are asking for 11% wage increases. School children have been advised to remain at home. In Durban, public transport

is operating normally. Several bus companies said they had not been affected by the strike. In the Cape, about 150 000

commuters were using alternative transport. A spokesman for the Golden Arrow bus company said commuters in three areas of the Peninsula would be badly affected.

In Port Elizabeth, the situation at the Algoa Bus Company was volatile, with a big truck in front of the gates to prevent vehicles from entering or leaving.

Putco human resources executive Tlys Heyns said the strike seemed effective in many areas and major companies were affected. "We don't have the full picture yet, but information reaching us indicates the strike has been effective."

Transport and Omnibus Workers Union general secretary Gary Wilson said, "We are prepared to meet the employers and South African Bus Employers Association to resolve the impasse. But we want them to come with a better offer."

The unions were elated with the response of members. They said pilot drivers heeded the call and there were extensive disruptions. But they conceded in areas such as Nelsonspoint, some drivers were working normally.

Wilson added that commuters were supportive and had made alternative transport arrangements from yesterday. But the commuters are angry with the bus companies because they have trip cards for which they paid and they are not being compensated for paying fares on taxis and trains."

Bid to end bus strike as the big squeeze goes on

SHARKEY ISAACS
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

(152) (870)
ARG 16/4/99
A meeting aimed at ending a national strike by 18 000 workers at 17 bus companies will be hosted by the Department of Labour on Monday.

The announcement came as Cape Town commuters this morning again braced themselves for another big squeeze in trains and taxis as the strike entered its second day. Unions and employers are at odds over wage increases.

In high-density residential areas of the Cape Flats, train passengers crowded into third-class coaches.

Other commuters in cars and taxis caused traffic jams as Cape Town's chief traffic inspector Malcolm Little confirmed a significant increase in the volume of peak hour traffic for the second day.

However, he said traffic officers were doing well to iron out bottlenecks.

On Monday the Department of Labour will meet the SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea), says Mogamat Soeker of the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu).

Zakhele Sibego, of the Transport and General Workers' Union, said there was no question of calling off the strike until a settlement had been reached.

"We don't like it and we are very sorry about the inconvenience we have caused to the commuters, but we are fighting for the rights of workers."

Mr Sibego said the union was prepared to move from its original demand for a 13% wage increase.

"We are going to move drastically and we are hoping employers will do the same."

Arbitration under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration meeting will be attended

To page 3

Unions meet in bid to end bus strike

From page 1

(152) (870)
by representatives of Towu, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union and the Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union

Mr Soeker of the Transport and

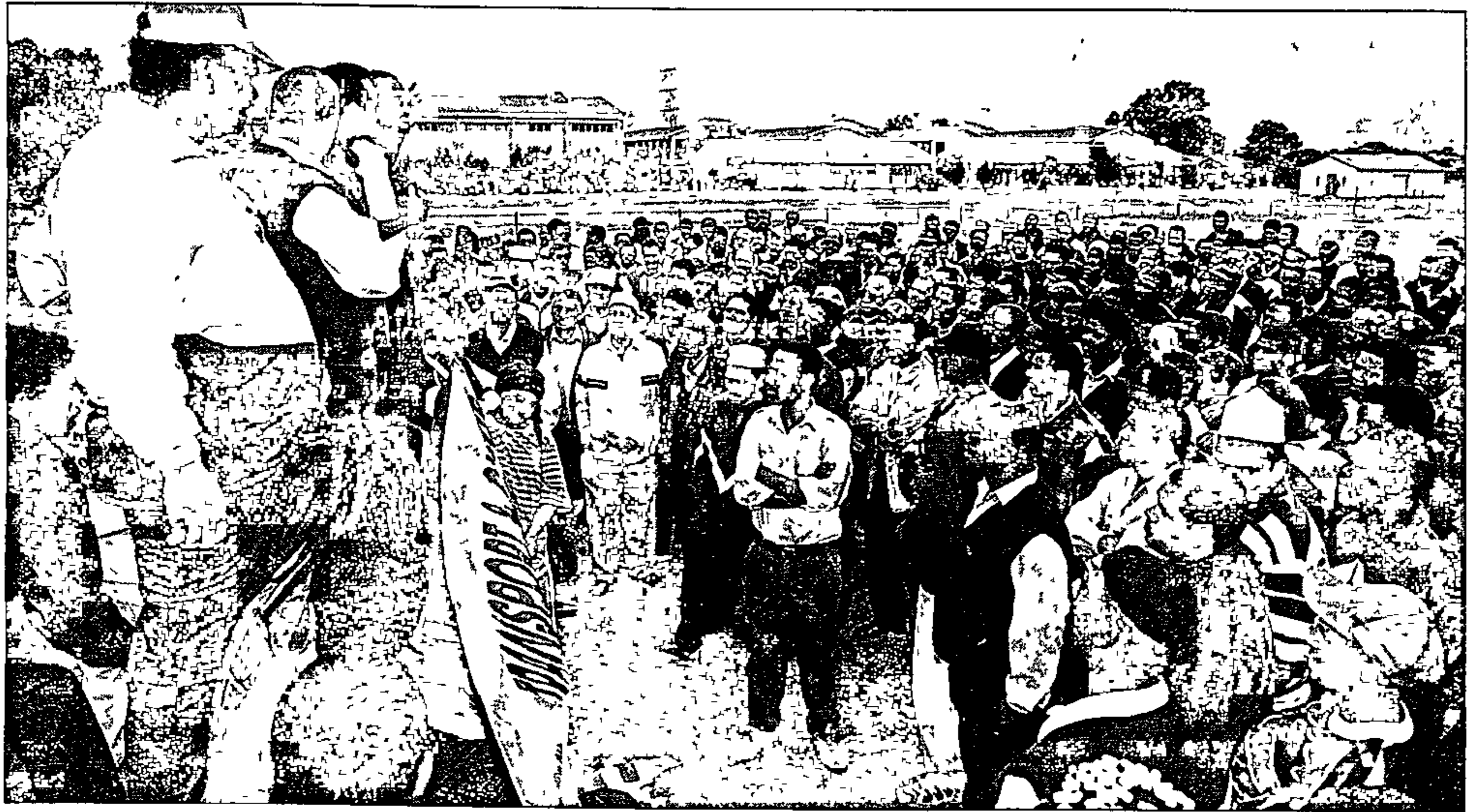
(152) (870)
ARG 16/4/99
Omnibus Workers' Union said four trade unions would again meet in Athlone today to decide on a strike strategy

Barry Gie, president of the SA Bus Employers' Association, said: "We have already indicated that there is still some scope for movement from our offer of 6,5%, but the

unions will have to base their expectations in reality."

As many as three million bus commuters and their employers are affected countrywide by the strike.

Metrorail's Riana Jacobs said Cape Flats trains were filled to capacity, especially those from Mitchell's Plain and Khayelitsha.



STRIKING SUPPORT: Golden Arrow bus drivers gather yesterday outside the Simaj Centre in Gatesville to discuss the next phase of their strike action

PICTURE: DENZIL MAREGELE

Unions to reconsider bus strike

ET 16/4/99 (152)

MOUNTING pressure from commuters yesterday prompted transport unions to consider calling off their nationwide bus strike, but for now it will continue

Cape Town's 150 000 bus commuters were left stranded yesterday, and trains and roads were crammed as thousands of commuters were forced to make alternative arrangements to get to work.

People streamed to railway stations and taxi ranks, while others used their own cars, causing major congestion on the roads

Some firms provided transport to ferry workers to work

About 2 500 bus commuters made use of trains.

Riana Jacobs of Metrorail said it had a deal with Golden Arrow to assist, and additional trains will be made available. However, only

commuters with weekly and monthly coupons, will be allowed on trans

The Cape Town traffic department said there was an increase in traffic on the N2, N3 and M5

The worse affected area was Atlantis, where there is no train service and commuters had to rely on taxis

The unions' decision to reconsider their strike has come as a surprise to the industry, because the unions had claimed a major victory.

They had vowed to continue with the strike until their wage demands were met.

Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) national coordinator, Zakhele Sibeko, said commuters had asked the strikers to reconsider their action because they were suffering

"We come from the communities and if they ask us to reconsider, then we don't have a choice," he said

Sibeko said the unions would ask the Independent Mediation Services of South Africa to convene a meeting involving employers, unions, the Department of Labour and possibly the Department of Transport

"We are trying to set up the meeting with the employers because we are willing to settle. We will be happy if the meeting can take place today. We are prepared to meet throughout the night in order to resolve the impasse," he said

Barry Gie, president of the South African Bus Employers' Association (SABEA), said he had been informed by Sibeko that the unions were willing to resume

talks "We could not hold the talks on Wednesday because officials are scattered all over the country. He told me that he would talk to his colleagues and inform me when the meeting will take place," he said.

The TGWU, the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, and the Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union, represent about 18 000 workers

The unions are demanding an 11% increase while SABEA, which represents private bus companies in the nine provinces, is offering 6,5%

Gie said employers in Cape Town locked out employees to protect staff and property and no buses were running — Staff Writers and Own Correspondents

Union's new

look at strike

(1977) ~~(1978)~~
COMMUNITY protests may result in the Transport and general Workers' Union (TGWU) calling off its bus strike.

The strike, in which the unions have claimed major success, is being reconsidered "because the people are suffering" says Zakhele Sibeko, TGWU national coordinator.

In the Cape, roads have been jammed with the extra private cars and railway carriages have been crammed.

The national strike was called by the TGWU and allied unions, representing about 18 000 workers

The unions demand an 11% increase, while employers have offered 6,5%.

● See Page 3

ET 16/4/99

Bus strike brings minimal disruption

(152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE NATIONWIDE strike involving more than 18 000 drivers in the bus passenger transport industry reportedly caused minimal disruption in many centres

South African Bus Employers Association president Mr Barry Gie said the work stoppage by employees in 18 bus companies "did not receive universal support" and had only a limited effect in certain areas

He said the reciprocal arrangements between the association and Metrorail ensured that affected bus commuters could use their monthly clipcard bus tickets on trains during the strike

Western Cape Omnibus Staff Association spokesman Mr Ashley Jurius said the strike received 100

percent support in the Western Cape. He agreed it had not shown a major impact since commuters flocked to minibus taxis, trains and private cars

Metrorail spokeswoman Ms Nondu Rawana said there was slight pressure early in the morning as trains, especially those on Vereeniging and Johannesburg lines, were running at more than 40 percent their normal capacities

Alternative transport

Transport and General Workers Union spokesman Mr Zakhele Sibeko said the strike had a major effect in Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Province and Gauteng. Workers demonstrated outside bus depots in Dobsonville, Greater Soweto Putco depot and Commuta depot in Selby, Johannesburg

He said Nelspruit in Mpumalanga and Mayibuye Bus Services in

Eastern Cape were not affected as workers reported for duty.

Municipal buses in Johannesburg and Durban were not affected as they were not part of the SA Passenger Transport Bargaining Council Chamber of Commerce spokesman Charl Adams said commuters had made alternative arrangements to get to work after notices were placed in newspapers warning of the strike

The unions have tabled a proposal of an 11 percent wage increase plus improvements to other employee benefits. The SA Bus Employees Association has offered a 6,5 percent increase

Gie said the association's doors were always open if striking bus drivers wanted to pursue a negotiated settlement. Sabea's offer to submit the dispute to independent arbitration was rejected by the unions

16/11/99
Soweto



Queues of city workers wait patiently in a queue for transport to the city from Zola in Soweto. Commuters across the country suffered the consequences of a nationwide bus strike, aimed at resolving a pay rise dispute, which began yesterday.

PIC: MBUZENI ZULU

National bus strike cripples rural workers

By DOMINIC MAHLANGU,
WELCOMBE SKOSANA
and SAPA

THOUSANDS of workers in rural areas failed to report for work on Friday and yesterday as a result of the crippling nationwide bus strike which started on Thursday.

Less affected were areas in the Cape and Kwazulu/Natal where commuters used taxis and trains, as well as the metropolitan areas in all provinces.

Hardest hit were commuters who depend entirely on buses and travel distances of up to 100 km to their work places.

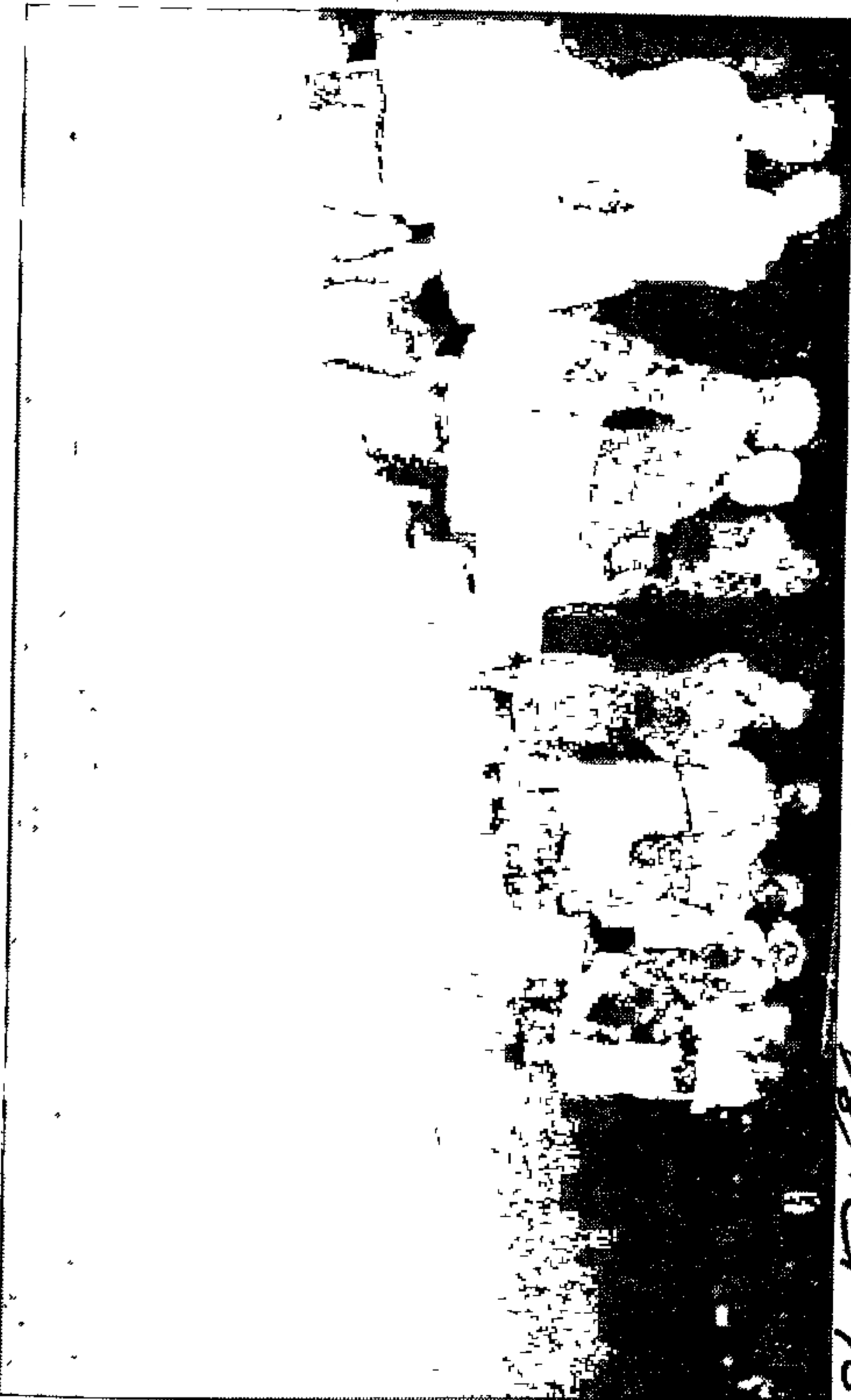
The Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) hinted yesterday that it would table a new offer at a meeting with bus owners and the department of labour tomorrow, saying it hoped this move would end the strike by its members.

Some 18 000 workers from 17 private bus companies went on strike at 1 am on Thursday, bringing services to a halt and stranding tens of thousands of commuters countrywide.

The strike came after workers declared a dispute on wage negotiations with the South African Bus Employers' Association (Sabea).

The most affected areas on Friday and yesterday were rural areas where there are no trams and fewer taxis on the roads.

Most workers decided to stay home on Friday and Saturday to



WAITING FOR THE BUS... Commuters wait at a bus stop in the futile hope for a bus as a nationwide strike by busdrivers took effect on Thursday.

avoid the long queues.

Chaos reigned on Friday afternoon when workers from the rural areas could not find transport to take them home.

Taxis did a roaring business on all the major routes normally swarming with buses.

Commuters from Hamanskraal, Ateridgeville, Mabopane, North

West and KwaNdebele found themselves stuck at the various bus points, and most of them had to resort to alternative transport.

Bus commuters claimed that they were not informed by bus companies about the pending strike and had bought tickets, some of which cost R60 a day.

Commuters who travel by mu-

nicipal buses in Johannesburg were not hampered by the strike as they did not participate.

North West Transport Services said since the bus drivers embarked on a nationwide strike on Tuesday few people turned out for work this week.

Vaal triangle taxis which were deployed in full numbers to deal

with the sudden rise of commuters were in most parts of Sebokeng, Sharpeville and Evaton unable to meet the demand.

In the early hours of Friday morning when City Press moved around the three major townships of the Vaal triangle, scores of passengers as early as 5 am were standing in groups waiting for taxis or any other transport that might take them to work.

At a bus depot between Evaton and Sebokeng, bus inspectors who spoke in low voices looking out of the windows, afraid that striking drivers might see them, said the situation was volatile.

"We are afraid that if we speak our minds out about the strike we might be killed," they said, avoiding answering further questions.

Simon Mphahlela, director of Ipelegeng Bus Services operating in the areas of Sharpeville, Sebokeng, Evaton and some parts of Orange Farm said his company was losing over R110 000 a day due to the strike.

Workers from Putco, Commuta and Ekangala bus services staged demonstrations in their bus depots demanding a 13 percent wage increase, 12 working hours and re-trenchment packages.

However their employers are only prepared to offer them a 4, 5 percent increase.

TGWU has rejected the 14 hours proposed by the Sabea, stating that it is a disgrace and workers cannot afford to work under those kind of circumstances.

(15A)
SEP 18 1999

End of bus industry strike in sight

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

PROSPECTS of resolving the nationwide passenger bus industry strike, which has cost millions of rands, improved yesterday when the trade unions and employers' representatives agreed to reopen talks

Putco bus company human resources general manager Mr Thys Heyns confirmed that all parties in the bus passenger transport bargaining council met under the auspices of the

South African 20/4/1999
Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration.

Major bus service companies have been hardest hit by the ongoing work stoppage by 18 000 workers since last Thursday in support of wage demands

Heyns said the companies had lost millions of rands in revenue, while workers had also lost millions of rands in wages. He could not give exact figures

"Hopefully the four trade unions have seen how important it is that we all come to a negotiated settlement

because of the realities of our situation," Heyns said.

Spokesmen for both the Greyhound and North West bus companies said that their companies were severely affected by the strike, although they could not disclose the financial losses.

Transport and General Workers Union spokesman Mr Zakhele Sibeko said the unions were keen that talks with the South African Bus Employers Association would find a solution to the impasse.

(152) (272)

Back to arbitration after bus-strike deadlock

SHARKEY ISAACS
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Labour mediators go back to the arbitration table today after talks to end the strike by 18 000 bus staff were deadlocked last night.

Meanwhile, Cape Town commuters again squeezed on to trains

and in to minibuses for the fourth working day running -- with wet roads and more cars making the journey to work a nightmare.

Unions and employers are at odds over wage increases, with the workers demanding a 12% increase and bus employers offering 6.5%.

Transport and Omnibus Workers Union president Mogamat Soeker

said there was no question of calling off the strike until a settlement had been reached.

He said: "We don't like it and we are sorry for the inconvenience to commuters, but we are fighting for the rights of workers. Union members have given us a mandate for a 12% increase and nothing less." Workers said they would have to

be consulted before the unions shifted from 12%, something they did yesterday as a negotiating ploy.

Arbitration will continue today under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

About 3 million bus commuters were affected by the national strike, said Metrorail's Riana Jacobs.

(172)

PRG 20/4/99



JOURNAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Bus strike rolls on as talks stall between union, bosses

COMMUTERS affected by the countrywide bus strike will have to make alternate transport arrangements again today after wage talks between labour and management representatives from the transport sector deadlocked late last night. Talks will resume at 11am today.

The talks, facilitated by the Com-

mission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, faltered after the union rejected the employers' offer of a seven percent hike — 0.5% up from their previous offer. The union lowered its demand from 11% to 10%.

The strike will go on until the unions and the employers reach an agreement, "even if it is going to last

for three or four weeks", a Transport and General Workers' Union official warned.

A city radio-taxi service reported an 80% increase in passengers yesterday, and though Metro Rail trains were more congested than usual, no overcrowding was reported. — Staff Writer, Sapa

CT 20/4/99

(152) (270)

Hopes fade for solution as bus strike continues

(157) (270)
BY EDDIE JAVIYA AND

HOPEWELL RADEBE

STW 20/4/99
Chances of ending the nationwide bus strike at a meeting last night were dashed when the meeting ended without any resolution in sight.

Transport and General Workers' Union national coordinator Zakhele Sibeko said no agreement had been reached and the meeting was adjourned to 11am today.

The employers last night offered the union a 7% increase, half a percentage point up on their previous offer, and the union moved from 11 to 10%.

Sibeko said the union had made considerable concessions over the increase and by lowering its figure had taken a chance which would probably have surprised and angered its members.

"We are slowly losing hope because we are failing to establish common ground," he said.

Workers warned that failure to reach agreement could lead to protracted industrial action.

About 18 000 workers embarked on a legal strike on Thursday, leaving millions of commuters stranded throughout the country.

Four transport unions - the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, and the Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union - are involved in the strike.

Maharaj steps in to stop collapse of bus drivers' wage talks

Simphiwe Xako

(152)



A TIMELY intervention by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj yesterday rescued the mediation process from collapsing after bus drivers represented by four unions threatened to abandon negotiations and continue with their six-day wage strike

BD 21/4/99

SA Bus Employers' Association president, Barry Gie, said Maharaj's intervention was "a blessing" as the drivers' withdrawal from the wage negotiations would further jeopardise the already financially depressed bus industry

"Although we cannot specifically give individual companies' revenue losses at this stage, we can certainly confirm that millions of rands have already been lost as we normally ferry more than 6-million passengers a week," Gie said

Maharaj was called in after negotiations, under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, deadlocked once more at yesterday morning's meeting. Bus drivers threatened to continue with the strike

By late last night mediation parties and management waited patiently outside the commission's offices while unions caucused further negotiation strategies and a possible

compromise. The two parties locked horns over a wage increase, with unions demanding a 10% hike against management's offer of a 7% increase in the pay package

Meanwhile, Sapa reports that according to a report released by a Johannesburg-based industrial relations and labour law consultancy yesterday, the first quarter saw a sharp drop in strike action compared with previous years

Andrew Levy & Associates said 25 000 man days were lost in the first quarter of this year — a marked decrease compared to figures for the same period during the past eight years

About 288 000 man days were lost last year, 78 000 in 1997, 175 000 in 1996 and 60 000 in 1995. The highest loss in man days recorded in the first quarter was in 1994 with 295 000

Company spokesman Jackie Kelly said the first quarter of the year was generally quiet as most wage talks did not get under way until the middle of the year. Several strikes in the mining sector and a lengthy strike at Toyota contributed to this year's figures.

Strikes at lowest level for eight years

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - Strike activity in the first quarter of this year was much lower than in the same period for the past eight years, Andrew Levy & Associates, the industrial relations consultancy, said yesterday

But the first quarter was generally quiet as most wage negotiations did not get under way until the middle of the year

A number of strikes in the mining sector and a protracted strike at Toyota, the car maker, meant that 25 000 man days had been lost during the quarter, well down on the 288 000 man days lost in the period last year

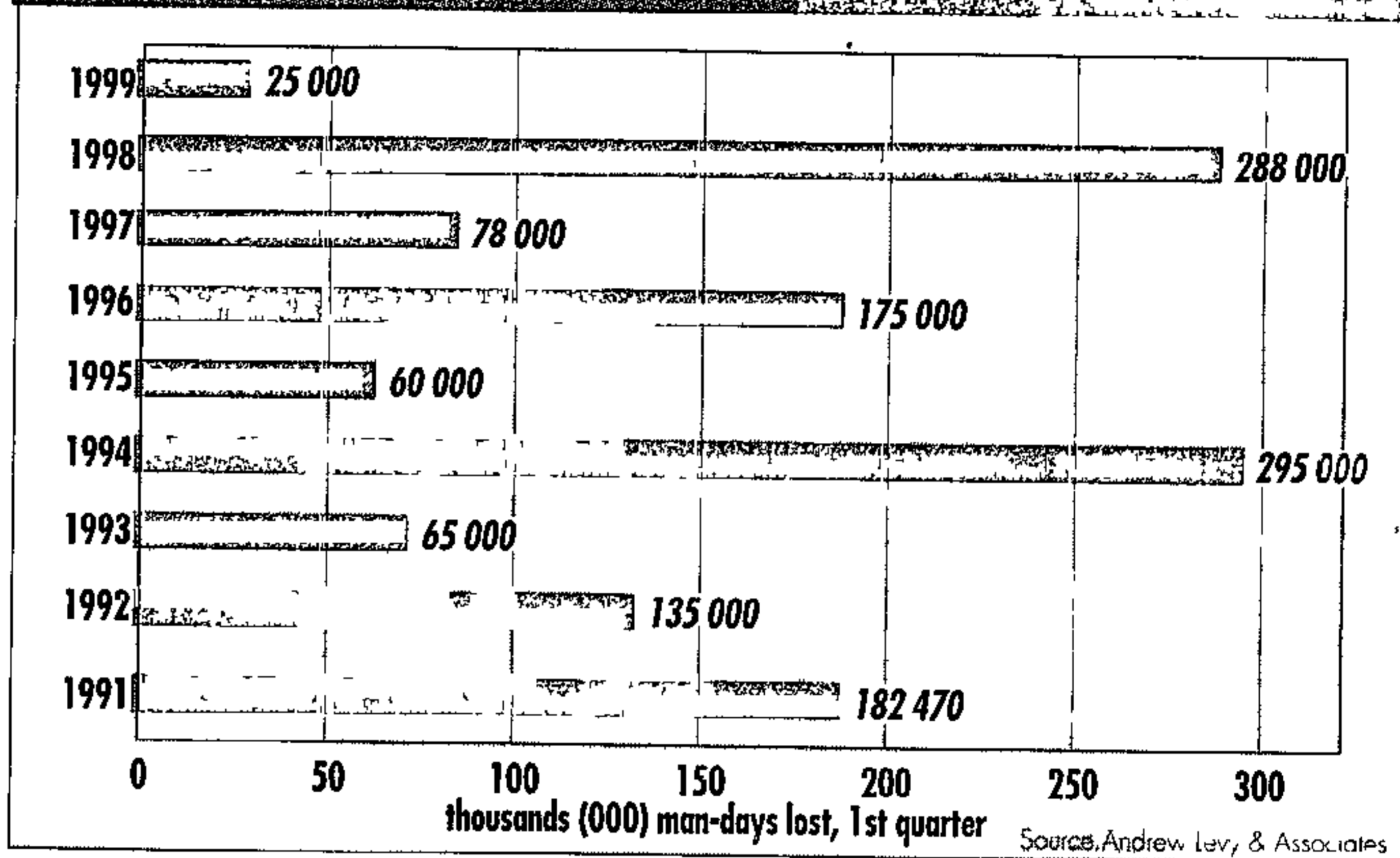
But Andrew Levy expected "increased activity when the major round of wage negotiations gets under way during the second half of the year"

A repeat of last year's devastating prolonged strike in the petroleum sector is looming

The main bargaining season this year coincides with the national elections. Andrew Levy believed this might have the effect of raising worker expectations and intensifying the negotiating climate

But the workplace could be

Man-day losses: the storm looms



used as a rallying point so some negotiations might be delayed until after the elections

"We anticipate that wages will again form the major strike trigger in 1999," the consultancy said "There is additional pressure on wage earners as formal sector job losses continue at alarming rates and inflation and high interest rates erode

workers' purchasing power

"Employers on the other hand are expected to push for lower increases based on trading figures for the previous 12 months. This scenario is likely to produce some hard bargaining during 1999, which will test the resolve of both sides"

Viewed against this background, wage settlements con-

tinued to fall from an average of 8,6 percent in 1998 to 8 percent by the end of March

The consultancy said with inflation expected to average 7 to 8 percent, it was predicted that wage settlements across most sectors of the economy would fall within this range

□ Ceppwawu, Page 7

(157) (157)

End in sight for bus strike

JOHANNESBURG: The wage dispute that has seen bus workers around the country out on strike and left thousands of commuters stranded was expected to be resolved last night.

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesperson Zakhele Sibego said in Johannesburg that a meeting with the SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) might go on all night, but the dispute would be resolved before morning.

The unions have lowered their demand from 11% to 10% and Sabea has offered a seven percent increase — .5% up from their previous offer.

Sabea president Barry Gie was unavailable for comment. — Sapa

CT 21/4/99

Minister at wage talks

Sowetan Reporter

TRANSPORT Minister Mac Maharaj, who is embroiled in the stand-off between four trade unions representing 18 000 strikers in the passenger bus industry and employers, yesterday paid a surprise visit to the conciliation talks in a bid to end the strike

Maharaj agreed to join the talks after a high-powered trade union delegation, negotiating with 18 bus companies under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration, appealed to the Minister to intervene

Department of Transport spokesperson Ms Didi Moyle said Maharaj

had decided to intervene as the talks were "falling apart" She said the Minister had urged both parties to continue negotiations in the interests of the country

The department was positive the impasse would be resolved, she said Transport and Allied Workers Union spokesman Mr Oupa Mbele said yesterday union delegates had felt the minister should be called in after talks had delivered only disagreements, accusations and counter-accusations from both parties Tawu and three other unions have revised their demands from 11 percent to 10 percent, while the SA Bus Employers Association had raised its offer from 4,5 percent to

seven percent

Members of the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union, the Transport and General Workers Union, the Western Cape Omnibus Staff Association and Tawu have been on strike for more than a week over wage grievances The talks will recommence tomorrow

Employers Association president Mr Harry Gie has blamed the unions for the protracted strike, which has cost the industry millions of rands in lost revenue

He has also blamed them for causing distress to millions of black township commuters and school-children who have been stranded by the strike

1329
Sowetan 22/1/99

Bus drivers' strike hits industry where it hurts

Simphiwe Xako (152) (222)

FIFTEEN bus companies have been seriously affected by the national bus drivers' strike, say industry officials, who are worried that the walkout may result in a loss of passengers over the long term

Thys Heyns, SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) vice-president, declined to report individual companies' revenue losses due to the current strike, but alluded to a loss of millions of rands. About 6-million passengers ride the buses every week

BD 22/4/99
Heyns said 15 bus companies around the country were seriously affected by the strike and that commuters were making for trains and taxis. "This is sad for the bus industry as passengers are never fully recovered once they decide to use other forms of transport," he said

A series of wage negotiations ended in deadlock over the past six days as both workers, represented by four unions, and management locked horns over a wage increase. Management has stuck to an offer of a 7% hike against the unions' call for a 10% raise

Sabea president Barry Gie said the latest talks continued until early yesterday morning and that management and unions would meet once again tomorrow

Transport and General Workers' Union spokesman Zakhele Sibiyi said the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act gave workers the right to strike

"The fact that many workers end up losing their jobs does not mean that we should stop striking and accept working under unacceptable conditions. It is the right of workers to ensure that they are satisfied with their working environment," he said

Sabea estimates that 3 000 jobs have been lost in the industry over the past four years as a result of economic contraction, passenger trends and strikes

New move to settle bus strike

(172)
ET 22/4/99

EDDIE JAYIYA
OWN CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG. While it appears likely that the week-long strike in the bus industry will end tomorrow, one of the companies affected said it would be prepared to consider offering a revised, higher wage offer.

The national co-ordinator of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Zakhele Sibeko, said the union did not want to prolong the strike beyond Friday.

The strike by about 18 000 workers enters its seventh day today and has affected millions of commuters, who have resorted to taxis, trains and private vehicles to get to work.

Great North Transport, one of the 18 companies in the SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea), has written to Sabea president Barry Gie informing him of the board's decision to propose a fresh mandate.

Great North's acting human resources manager Bogoshi Matlala, stressed that the new mandate was for centralised bargaining and not for plant-level negotiations.

"It must be noted that while we respect the constitution of the Bargaining Council, we would like to stress that the needs of the travelling community must be respected."

Sabea vice-president Thys Heyns said: "Our constitution precludes individual members from engaging in talks with unions outside the Bargaining Council. Appropriate action will be taken if the company is found guilty."

LABOUR

(273) (152)

Work stoppage delays five airline flights

A two-hour work stoppage at Johannesburg airport yesterday caused a delay for five local SAA flights. Victor Nosi, the vice-president for SAA communications, said yesterday Nosi said baggage handling employees of Apron Services embarked on a go-slow in sympathy with SAA employees who had received voluntary severance packages that had been negotiated with the unions. Andrew Maswanganye, the aviation secretary of South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union, said no agreement had been reached on the handling of those who had not been absorbed by the new structure when SAA "unilaterally and unprocedurally went ahead with retrenchments on Friday last week, effective immediately". - Zintle Filtane, Johannesburg

CT(BE) 22/4/99

BUSINESS

Page 5

Employer breaks ranks in bus strike

(152)

BY EDDIE JAVIYA

Star 22/4/99

One of the companies affected by the week-long strike in the bus industry indicated yesterday that it would be prepared to consider offering a revised, higher wage offer.

Great North Transport, one of the 18 companies which constitute the SA Bus Employers' Association (Sabea), has written a letter to association president Barry Gie informing him of the directors' decision to propose a fresh mandate.

In its letter, signed by acting human resources manager Bogoshi Matlala, it stressed that the mandate was for the centralised bargaining process and not for plant-level negotiations.

Sabea vice-president Thys Heyns said: "We are investigating whether the company has acted outside the constitution, which precludes individual members from engaging in talks with unions outside the bargaining council.

"We have told the unions that the company's position will not influence Sabea's mandate."

The national co-ordinator of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Zakhele Sibeko, said: "We will see what employers bring to the table on Friday. We have reported to our members and so far we have received a mixed response. We don't want the strike to be prolonged beyond Friday."

Sabea president Barry Gie said: "Discussions aimed at resolving the current wage dispute ... continued into the early hours yesterday.

"In the interest of commuters, the industry, business and the public, we requested labour to suspend the strike pending the outcome of ongoing negotiations. This request was regrettably rejected by labour, who indicated that the strike action would continue.

"The unions also rejected our proposal that outstanding issues be submitted to arbitration. We regret the inconvenience to commuters because of the continued industrial action."

Hundreds of schoolkids stranded by bus strike

(152) (235)

SIPHOKAZI MGUDLWA
AND SHARKEY ISAACS
STAFF REPORTERS

ARG 23/4/99

Hundreds of children have been unable to get to school since the national bus strike started nine days ago.

The strike has disrupted Zola Secondary School in Maitland, which has a contract with Golden Arrow to transport pupils from Khayelitsha.

Siphosihle Ngwame, a Grade 8 pupil at Zola Senior Secondary in Maitland, has not been to school since the strike started.

"I decided to stay at home until the strike was over, because I did not have money to buy a train ticket," said Siphosihle.

Principal Xolela Mjonondwana said the school had not been functioning since the strike started last week.

"Since Thursday last week, we have not had any classes and only a few pupils have shown up since then," said Mr Mjonondwana.

The staff had distributed letters with the school stamp and letter-head which would allow students to use trains.

"But, up to now only 20% of the pupils have shown up and I think most of them still think we are waiting for the strike to finish," said Mr Mjonondwana.

Tony Eaton, for the Western Cape Education Department, said Golden Arrow had a contract to transport 928 pupils from Khayelitsha.

If Golden Arrow had not provided transport to the school by today, the department would bring in another contractor.

Unions and employees were meeting in Johannesburg today to consider a new management offer of a 7% pay rise.

Transport pay dispute remains deadlocked

Star 26/4/99

(152)

Employers and unions blame each other for impasse

By EDDIE JAVIYA

Trade unions and employers in the transport industry traded harsh words yesterday, blaming each other for the failure to reach a wage settlement to end the ongoing strike by thousands of transport workers.

On Friday, employers and unions met at the headquarters of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), but again talks deadlocked. Unions have now

intervention by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj last week failed to resolve the impasse.

A last-ditch effort to end the strike on Friday failed, and unions later accused the big companies of arrogance and an unwillingness to offer workers the 10% increase.

Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union general-secretary Gary Wilson said Friday's negotiation with employers was a waste of time.

"The employers were arrogant and they just sat in their room, sending commissioners with their response to our demands.

"We will intensify the strike and it will be difficult for them to get us around the negotiation table again. We will not back down on our demands," he said.

Wilson claimed that certain employers with the South African Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) were privately offering workers 10%.

"We conveyed the latest overtures from the companies to Sabea through the commissioners.

"This makes a mockery of the bargaining system and it appears that big companies want the strike to go on so that small employers will be forced to close down.

"When the small companies fold, the big ones will take over their routes.

"We wanted to warn them that their big brothers had ulterior motives. But they did not want to talk to us," he said.

Sabea vice-president Thys Heyns dismissed the claim by unions that some companies - including Putco - had secretly made offers of up to 10% as a tactic by labour leaders to mislead commuters and the public. He said all companies wanted a speedy resolution to the strike and denied allegations that big companies wanted to elbow small employers out of the market.

Heyns is Putco's senior human resources executive and Sabea's chief negotiator.

Bosses were arrogant and labour will intensify demands

ruled out further talks with employers.

The four unions - Transport and General Workers' Union, Transport and Allied Workers' Union, Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union and Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union - are demanding a 10% increase, while employers are offering 7%.

Initially, the unions demanded 13% while companies offered 4.5%. The CCMA has been trying to help the two sides reach a settlement.

Employers want strike so that small companies have to close

"I reject claims that my company secretly promised unions a higher percentage.

"We fully supported the position of Sabea. The unions' demands do not take cognisance of the situation. We have the backing of all the 18 principals in the bus industry," he said.

"We are disappointed by their tactics. While still prepared to negotiate with them, we will not make any further concessions until they lower their demands," Heyns added.

Striking waste workers could lose jobs

Council says they provide an essential service, and as such should not have downed tools

By THEMBA SEPOTOKELE

Waste workers from Greater Johannesburg's Southern Council could find themselves without jobs after they downed tools demanding a wage increase last week.

Pat Nhlapo, spokesperson for Southern Council mayor Nandi Makhutha-Khoza, said yesterday that 313 contract workers, responsible for sweeping the streets and collecting refuse in Soweto, went on what was an illegal strike.

proper procedures. By not collecting refuse they were creating a health hazard, he said.

"The council is now considering terminating their contracts. It's been days without refuse being picked up and this is having a serious impact on residents.

"The council unfortunately has a financial problem (insufficient payment for services from ratepayers) and cannot afford the increase. It's unfortunate that they decided to down tools without consulting."

Each waste worker presently earned R45 a day, he added.

Council adviser Jimmy Oliver said

striking workers provided essential services and were thus not supposed to have embarked on a work stoppage.

"It is of course sad that they have not received an increase for the past 15 months. However, they are not supposed to strike because of their essential work," Oliver explained.

Meanwhile, Nhlapo said the council was in a dilemma because there were 350 former waste workers whose contracts were terminated last year and who were now demanding to be reinstated.

And on the other hand there were the present crews who had embarked on an illegal strike.

The workers, who had been hired by Wade Refuse and Wykom Waste companies contracted to the council, lost their jobs when the council terminated their contracts.

However, the council and former workers had reached an agreement that only six people of the original group would be rehired.

Nhlapho said some of the remaining 344 workers could be placed in other departments when and if any vacancies occurred.

Victor Sibuya, a representative of former council employees, said they would adhere to the council's decision.

(152)

Bar 26/11/99

(Sib)

(Sib)

Strike goes on as bus companies are hit by divisions

(152)
(200)
Sowetan 26/4/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

BUS commuters were dealt a severe blow at the weekend when the protracted strike involving more than 18 000 drivers could not be resolved as a result of divisions among bus companies

Senior managers of some of the 18 bus companies were reported to have secretly offered employees a 10 percent wage increase in an effort to break the strike

Talks stalled on Friday as a result of the altercations among employers at the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration

Transport and Allied Workers Union spokesman Mr Oupa Mbele decried the fact yesterday that senior managers had promised union members at Putco, Greyhound, Great North and Megabus in KwaZulu-Natal a 10 percent wage increases should they return to work

He said this had created problems for trade unions and other bus companies, since workers would never agree to settle for anything less than 10 percent. Bus companies were released to go and resolve the dissent among themselves first

South African Bus Employers Associa-

tion president Mr Barry Gie denied that Putco, Greyhound and Megabus had approached workers with 10 percent promises, stressing that it was a "shabby tactic" to forestall proper negotiations

Gie did say, however, that the association would be dealing with Great North Bus company at a separate meeting about the allegations linked to wage offers allegedly made to employees outside the passenger bus bargaining council

Dejected bus commuters also voiced dissatisfaction with both parties for failing to reach an agreement

Miss Esther Ndebele was upset because she was forced to spend a lot on taxi fares from Meadowlands, Soweto, to Sandton, while she kept her unused weekly bus clip-card coupon

Gie said they would do everything possible to resolve the wage dispute "once and for all" He indicated that parties broke to report back and seek mandates from their constituencies

Three other unions, Western Cape Omnibus Staff, Transport and Omnibus Workers Union and Transport and General Workers Union, had revised their offer from 11 to 10 percent while employers raised their offer to seven percent

Bus commuters face another weary week

SHARKEY ISAACS
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of weary bus commuters face another week of disruption today after talks aimed at ending the nationwide bus strike collapsed on Friday.

(152) (257) **ART 26/4/99**
Talks are due to resume on Wednesday and there is hope the strike may end by the weekend. Intervention by Transport Minister Mac Maharaj last week failed to resolve the impasse. Union members yesterday accused the employers of arrogance

and an unwillingness to offer work-ers the 10% pay increase demanded. On Friday, employers and unions met at the headquarters of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in Johannesburg, and, after the deadlock, the unions ruled out further talks. The four unions - the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, and the Western Cape Omnibus and Staff Union - are demanding a 10% increase and the employers are offering 7%.



Job losses loom as strike triggers bus company cuts

Khayelitsha children are ejected from school buses by drivers

BEAUREGARD TRONP AND
SIPHOKAZI MGDULWA
STAFF REPORTERS

The national bus strike is starting to bite. Golden Arrow Bus Services has cancelled a R30-million contract for 38 new buses and scrapped a R10-million project for a new electronic ticketing system next year.

General manager Hannes Grebe said he expected the strike to result in job losses.

"Many passengers who have been forced to make alternative transport arrangements for the past two weeks will not return to bus travel once the strike is over," he said.

"A declining passenger base in an industry which, before the strike,

expected only a 5% increase in revenue, bodes ill for its future viability."

He added: "There is no doubt that further job losses will occur in the industry and it is possible that some companies may have to close their doors."

Seventeen bus companies have been affected by the strike, with an estimated total of 17 000 workers.

The four unions involved in the strike are demanding an across-the-board increase of 10% and shorter working hours. Employers are offering 7%.

While strikers and the SA Bus Employers' Association members have been locked in negotiation, independent bus operators under contract to Golden Arrow have felt some sharp effects of the strike, with

several incidents reported this week alone.

About 5 30am today a Manuels Bus Service bus was shot at while transporting factory workers on Old Klipfontein Road, near Boys' Town.

No one was injured in the attack, and although Manuels is a sub-contractor of Golden Arrow, police are refusing to speculate on whether the shooting was related to the strike.

Hundreds of Khayelitsha pupils who depend on private buses to get to school were left stranded yesterday when Golden Arrow drivers prevented their Chitwan's buses from leaving the township.

Pupils at Harry Gwala Secondary in Belhar, Zola Secondary in Maitland and Thembelhle Secondary in District Six were mainly affected. "We were told to get out of the

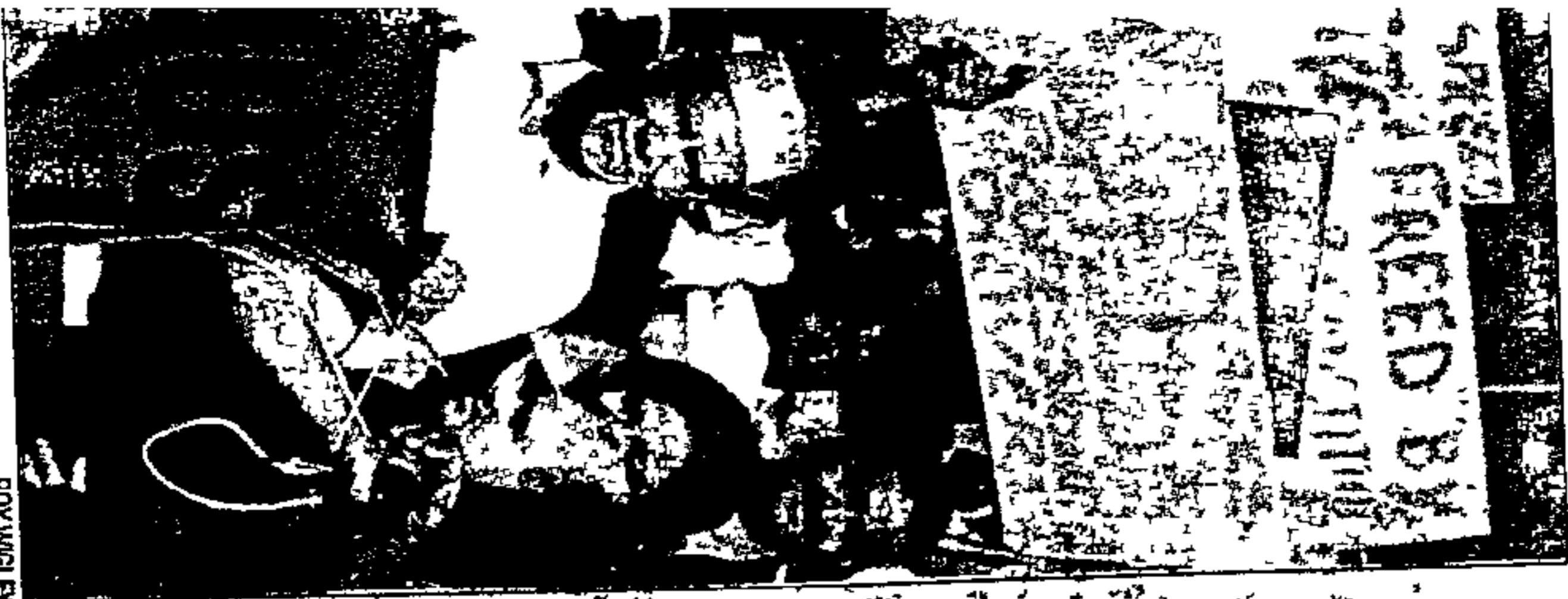
buses because they are not allowed to transport us while they are on strike," said Sammy Adams, a Grade 11 pupil at Thembelhle Secondary.

Thembelhle principal Bongani Mtshali said: "I was very disappointed and worried because some of the people who stopped the buses transporting the pupils have children in the same schools."

Western Cape Education Department spokesman Tony Eaton said the department had referred the matter to the police.

Mogamat Soeker of the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, one of the main unions at Golden Arrow, apologised to pupils, parents and the community for the action of the drivers.

"It was not our aim to stop the children getting education," he said.



ROY WALEY

protest against deadlocked wage talks



Bus unions, employers in new bid to end 15-day strike

SHARKEY ISAACS
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Further efforts will be made today to end the bus strike, which has now lasted 15 days.

Three of the four trade unions involved are prepared to talk again with employers, but the Cape Town-based Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu) will boycott what members have described as "an informal meeting to explore ways of ending the strike".

Towu general secretary Gary Wilson said his union would not attend the meeting at the offices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration in Johannesburg, because union delegates attending the talks would not be able to sign a binding agreement with the employers.

"It is just an informal meeting to explore ways of ending the strike. We will attend the meeting only if the employers are prepared to sign. We have informed the commission of our position, but we won't stop other unions from meeting the employers," he said.

South African Bus Employers' Association (Sabea) president Barry Gie said there was "always hope" for a settlement in any talks.

"We must now commit ourselves to the process and find ways of managing it. We are optimistic we will make progress this time around.

"It is unfortunate that Towu has decided to stay away from the talks. It would have been ideal to have all the stakeholders there," he said.

Sabea will meet representatives of

the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), the Western Cape Omnibus and Staff Union (WCOSU) and the Transport and Allied Workers' Union (Tawu).

The unions, representing 18 000 strikers, want a written undertaking from employers that they will grant a 10% pay increase and drop their demands for longer working hours.

The union demand has come down from 13%, while the employers have gone up from 4,5% to 7%.

WCOSU's Christopher Fredericks said he was confident a settlement would be reached.

He said: "We have new proposals we will discuss with other unions to come out with a unified mandate. I am optimistic we will resolve the impasse.

"I suspect that the talks will be lengthy, but we will reach a settlement by Saturday.

"If the parties are committed to finding a solution to the strike, we might make a breakthrough today."

TGWU national co-ordinator Zakhele Sibeko said his union wanted a speedy resolution to the problem, adding: "We cannot prolong the strike unnecessarily. We must find a way forward, and it is a pity that Towu is not attending the talks.

Meanwhile, bus workers yesterday marched to the Golden Arrow Bus Service head office in Bofors Circle in Epping Industria to protest at the deadlocked wage negotiations between unions and employers.

The strike has hit 150 000 commuters who use buses to get to work daily, and has worsened congestion on the city's roads.

Bus unions reject bid for longer working hours (197)

By EDDIE JAVIYA

Transport trade unions and the bus industry, locked in a crippling nationwide strike, are not only deadlocked on wage increases — two of the 18 companies involved also want to increase employees' working hours, claim the unions.

The strike by more than 18 000 workers enters its 12th day today, and unions have ruled out any further talks with the employers.

The unions are demanding a 10% across-the-board increase, down from their original 13% demand, and the employers are offering 7%, up from an original 4,5%.

The unions yesterday launched a scathing attack on two of the 18 bus companies involved, accusing them of holding the transport industry to ransom by demanding that bus drivers work two hours more per shift.

At the moment drivers work 12 hours. Now, claim the unions, Golden Arrow in Cape Town and Algoa in Port Elizabeth want drivers to work 14-hour shifts.

Three of the four striking unions — the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu), the Transport and General Workers' Union, and the Western Cape Omnibus and Salaried Staff Union — planned to march to the headquarters of Golden Arrow today to present a memorandum.

Speaking from Cape Town, Towu general secretary Gary Wilson said the unions rejected

any change in working conditions.

"We will not allow Golden Arrow and Algoa to hold the industry to ransom. They have been arrogant throughout the negotiations and it is amazing that the other 16 companies can allow Golden Arrow and Algoa to derail the process.

"We will not give away the benefits we have fought for over the years. We have made it clear to the employers that a 14-hour shift is out of the question. We are not going to back down on this issue," Wilson said.

"Our members have warned us against making any concessions to the employers. The strike goes on, and if the employers don't want to improve their offer, then they must face the consequences of their stubbornness.

"They are in for a rough ride. We are more than determined to continue with the industrial action."

SA Bus Employers Association president Barry Gie denied that Golden Arrow and Algoa were holding the industry to ransom. He said all the bus companies wanted the shift to be increased to 14 hours.

"It is not an issue for Golden Arrow and Algoa only, but an issue for all the companies. We totally reject the unions' claims that only two companies favour the 14-hour shift. It appears the unions are targeting certain companies to create confusion.

We have repeatedly told labour that employers are unified in their demands," Gie said.

PLM 28/11/99

Talks spur hope for end to bus strike

By EDDIE JAVIYA

Prospects for an end to the crippling national bus strike - in its 13th day today - improved yesterday with an announcement by three of the four unions that they would enter into fresh talks with employers

The Transport and General Workers' Union, the Western Cape Omnibus and Staff Union (WCOSU) and the Transport and Allied Workers' Union told *The Star* yesterday that they would meet the SA Bus Employers Association (Sabea) at the head-

(102) (scribble)
quarters of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

The fourth union, the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu), said it would not attend what it called "an informal meeting to explore ways of ending the strike".

The unions want a written undertaking from the employers that they will pay workers a 10% increase and drop demands for longer working hours

The unions, representing 18 000 strikers, are demanding a 10% across-the-board increase, down

from their original 13% demand, and the employers are offering 7%, up from an original 4,5%

Towu general-secretary Gary Wilson said his union would not attend the meeting. He added that unions at the meeting would not be able to sign a binding agreement with the employers

But WCOSU president Christopher Fredericks was confident a settlement would be reached.

Sabea president Barry Gie said there was always hope for a settlement in any talks, and expressed regret that Towu has decided to stay away from the talks

Star 29/4/99

Unions meet to assess bus strike

THE Transport and General Workers Union met yesterday to assess the 12-day-old national bus workers strike and to consolidate its position on a wage increase.

Speaking during a break from the meeting, TGWU spokesman Zakhele Sibego told reporters the union may decide to end the strike. The TGWU and three other unions were due to meet the SA Bus Employers Association (Sabea) in Johannesburg today.

The meeting would be facilitated by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

The other three unions are the Transport

and Allied Workers Union, the Western Cape Omnibus Staff Union and the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union.

Thousands of bus workers from 18 private bus companies have been on strike for 12 days in demand of a wage increase.

The unions and Sabea are deadlocked, with workers demanding 10 percent and the bus companies offering seven percent.

Sabea denied yesterday that the recent decision by two private bus companies to increase workers' hours from 12 to 14-hour shifts had been taken in retaliation for workers' demands for wage increases.

Association president Barry Gie said the Golden Arrow Bus Company and Algoa Bus Company decided in January this year to officially change their working day to 14 hours.

He said most private bus companies had wage determination schemes which allowed for 14-hour shifts. Gie said these were "spread over" the shift, with workers being given breaks of six or seven hours between early morning and late afternoon work.

Sibego said the unions would not agree to the companies' proposal as the union had previously fought the matter in court and won.

Sapa

27/4/99
Sowetan

(152)

(SAPA)



Bus strike hits hardest at Atlantis commuters

ET 29/4/99

RHODA DAVIDS

ATLANTIS is probably one of the areas worst affected by the city's bus strike

If it were not for the local minibus taxis, residents would have been stranded for almost two weeks. But using taxis has also doubled commuters' normal travelling expenses.

Carol Weyers from Atlantis says the bus strike took Atlantis commuters by surprise. "I bought my weekly clipcard on the Tuesday (April 13). It costs R56.30 and then on Wednesday we heard about the strikes and from the Thursday I had to travel by taxi."

"I wasted that money. I also need R20 daily for the taxi. It is R10 for a one-way trip. I now spend almost double on transport."

Weyers leaves her home just after 6am and arrives in central Cape Town at 7.45am, 15 minutes before she has clock in.

She says it takes a while longer to get to work in the morning because, instead of taxis taking the freeway route without stops, like the buses, the taxis have to stop in

Paarden Island and Woodstock to drop off commuters.

This mother of three, along with her husband, who also works in Cape Town, has been commuting by bus for nearly seven years. This is the first time she has experienced a bus strike.

She added, "Thank God my husband is on leave, because I don't think we can afford R200 a week on taxi fare."

Weyers says that since the bus strike, over 50 taxis leave Atlantis in the morning for the city. In two weeks the strike has affected over 150,000 local commuters.

New talks between the employer and the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) are set for this morning.

Schools say the strike is affecting pupils' education. One said 10% of 1,200 pupils had not been attending since the strike started.

Trade unions representing 18,000 strikers are demanding a 10% across-the-board increase, down from 13%.

Employers are offering seven percent, up from 4.5%.



NOT FARE: Carol Weyers is among many Atlantis residents forced to use minibus taxis because of the bus strike. **PICTURE JACK LESTRADE**

Mediators close to ending bus strike

By EDDIE JAYIYA

Mediators yesterday presented proposals separately to employers and three of the four striking transport unions in a bid to find a solution to the crippling national bus strike.

Unions at yesterday's mediation were the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union and the Western Cape Omnibus and Staff Union.

The Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union boycotted the mediation.

Both sides were tight-lipped about the proposals last night, but the unions were cautiously optimistic that the strike could be resolved.

The two-week industrial action by about 18 000 bus workers has forced millions of commuters to use trains and taxis.

Before negotiations began on wages and the contentious issue of shift length, the unions were initially demanding a 10% increase - a 3% compromise from their original 13% - while the employers had improved their offer from 4.5% to 7.5%.

Employers want to increase shifts from 12 to 14 hours - a plan the unions strenuously oppose.

Union sources said the mediators had proposed a wage or salary increase of between 8% and 8.5%, as well as possible solutions to shift lengths.

20/11/99
RUBEN

(152) (152)

Forum pleads for an end to bus strike

Sowetan 30/4/99

By McKeed Kotlolo

THE North West Transport Forum, concerned about the ongoing national bus strike and its negative impact on commuters, called for its immediate end yesterday

The Botlhaba area branch of the forum expressed its concern at the continuing bus strike and the effect it has had on thousands of commuters in the past two weeks.

Forum vice chairman Mr Aaron Maphosa has called on all the parties, including trade unions and employers, to reach a settlement before the weekend, "failing which, the forum will approach Metrorail to provide trains on the Hammanskraal, Radium and Pretoria route, as a relief measure", he said

Maphosa said they were not calling for an end to "undermine the strike action by the unions" The forum had a duty to serve the interests of commuters and, in a situation like this, alternatives had to be sought because the strike had been protracted and there was no indication that it might even be solved this week, he said.

According to the forum, the majority

of Botlhaba area commuters served by the North West Star bus company were living in rural areas where buses were the only affordable means of commuting.

The forum said since the strike started, people commuting to their workplaces in Pretoria and the Babelagi industrial area daily, were forced to use taxis which, "apart from being very expensive, cannot cope with the volume of people, especially at Hammanskraal's Kopanong Centre"

Legal positions

While the forum expressed its recognition of and respect for the legal positions and the right of parties involved in the dispute - in terms of the applicable labour legislation - it also highlighted the daily hardships experienced by thousands of commuters left stranded by the strike

"We therefore say that the people have suffered and it is now enough. Please, reach a settlement for the sake of your brothers and sisters who are caught in the middle of this dispute.

"If you cannot agree (on the increment) why not settle for a compromise and bring this to an end," the forum pleaded

Bus strike called off as unions reach settlement

(152) (878)
TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARING

ART 115 199

Good news for bus commuters is that the two-week long nationwide bus workers' strike has finally been called off after a wage settlement between the unions and the SA Bus Employers Association.

In a statement yesterday, the Golden Arrow Bus company said a wage increase of 8,5% had been agreed upon nationwide.

A Golden Arrow spokesman said buses were expected to start running again by Monday.

But late last night Mogamat Soeker, president of the Transport and Omnibus Workers Union, said this union did not have a mandate to accept an 8,5 percent increase and its members would not be working on Monday. This means bus services in Cape Town may still be disrupted.

Commuters whose clipcards expired during the strike will be able to use them until all their unclipped rides have been used up.

Scholars' term passes will be refunded on a pro rata basis for the period of the strike if scholars submit them to the company at the end of term.

Financial losses as a result of the strike have forced the bus company to cancel a contract for 38 new buses.

Striking bus workers back in the saddle

By EDDIE JAYIYA

(152)

The two-week-long national bus strike is over and more than 18 000 striking workers will return to work on Monday.

At the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration headquarters yesterday, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Transport and Allied Workers' Union, the Western Cape Omnibus and Staff Union, and the SA Bus Employers' Association reached an agreement on an 8,5% increase across-the-board which would be backdated to April 1 this year. The fourth union, the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union, boycotted the talks.

Compromise

The unions had demanded a 10% increase - a compromise from the initial 13% - while employers improved their offer from 4,5% to 7%. The contentious issue of shift work for bus drivers is to be referred to binding arbitration, in terms of the Bargaining Council's constitution.

The parties will draft separate terms of reference for the arbitration, which will take place within two to four weeks.

The signed agreement will be taken to the Minister of Labour, Membathisi Mdladlana, and the parties will apply for it to be extended to any non-parties to the collective agreement that are within the registered scope of the Bargaining Council in terms of section 32(1) of the Labour Relations Act.

The unions have agreed to suspend the strike action, pending the signing of this agreement, after reporting back to their constituencies and members. All employees are expected to return to work by the first shift on Monday.

Putco senior human resources executive Thys Heyns said commuters who did not use their coupons during the strike would get a discount when buying new tickets. "Only commuters with old tickets will get the discount," he said.

Phar 1/5/99

Cape Town buses back on road

BEAUREGARD TROMP AND SHARKEY ISAACS
STAFF REPORTERS

ARG 3/5/99

(152)
(150)
The city's biggest union has called off the 19-day bus strike, which has affected thousands of commuters.

This morning a few buses were back on the streets, driven by members of the three unions that settled with the South African Bus Employers' Association on Friday

But the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union (Towu), which represents more than 900 workers, held out until a meeting in Guguletu today, where members unani-

mously decided to end the strike

They will return to work at midnight tonight

Towu general-secretary Gary Wilson said the union had been unwilling to accept Friday's settlement until it had consulted its members.

"The agreement is there in principal but it is still up to those unions to ask their people if they accept," he said

The workers had accepted "under duress" the agreement for an increase of 8,5% - and only as part of a larger bargaining body

Bus strike is over at last - at a cost of millions

Sacrifice worth it, say drivers

SHARKEY ISAACS
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ART 4/5/99

Bus workers claim their 19-day work stoppage for higher wages has emphasised the value of the bargaining council in the transport industry.

They said the strike, which caused their families hardship and may have severely damaged the bus industry, was worth the sacrifice because it had forced the SA Bus Employers Association to double its initial wage offer.

They believed that in spite of the loss of nearly three weeks' pay, they would ultimately benefit. Tracing salary negotiations, they said their bosses had been pushed to increase their offer from 4,5% to 6%, 7% and then finally to a 8,5% across the board.

Golden Arrow bus driver Vuyani Kedama, a shop steward with the Transport and General Workers Union, said he, like many others, were satisfied with the end result. He has been a bus driver for 12 years and his present earnings before tax are R679 a week.

"Although the final settlement was not the 10% increase initially demanded by the four trade unions it is still above the current inflation of 6%."

He said he was lucky in that he was married to a teacher on whose income the family was dependent.

"Without her money there would

have been no food for our children. Naturally we also had to make sacrifices and budget and it was difficult to make ends meet"

Fuad Inglis, 52, a bus driver for 30 years and father of two, said the financial side of the strike had called for sacrifices from everyone. "Every worker had wonderful support from their families. But every sacrifice is worth it if you have dignity and principles"

He has been a shop steward for the Transport and Omnibus Workers' Union for 10 years.

Yesterday Towu, which represents more than 900 workers, decided at a meeting in Guguletu to accept Sabea's 8,5% offer and end the strike. The other three unions involved in the strike had voted to settle on Friday.

Towu president Mogamat Soeker said members of the city's biggest bus driver union had been forced to accept the settlement only "under duress" as part of the larger bargaining body.

"This was first ever legal bus worker strike under the ANC government. In the previous pro-apartheid regime bus operators were regarded as an essential service and its workers were forbidden to strike under the old Labour Act"

■ The strike cost Golden Arrow millions of rands and the company also had to cancel two contracts amounting to more than R40-million.

Municipal dispute goes to arbitration

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE SA Local Government Association and trade unions representing 230 000 municipal workers, have agreed on a minimum salary of R1 335 but have failed to break a stalemate on other wage-related demands.

Salga chief negotiator Mr Patrick Flusk said yesterday the association had agreed to the unions' demand for a minimum salary after ensuring that all 800 local authorities could afford it. But they could not reach a settlement on the 7,9 percent wage increase demanded by the unions.

The SA Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu) and the Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union had originally demanded 11,1 percent, which was later reviewed to 7,9 percent, or an increase of R250.

Salga had improved its offer from a paltry 2,5 percent to 5 percent or a R200 increase, Samwu negotiator Mr Dale Forbes said yesterday. The matter has been referred to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration for a hearing next Thursday.

Forbes said the employers' offer was "insufficient to meet the unions' bottom line". He said it was up to union members to decide whether to accept the offer or refer the matter to arbitration.

Salga has maintained that the unions' demand was "completely unaffordable" since the 7,9 percent increase was an increase of 11 percent "in real terms". Flusk also pointed out that the current municipal wage bill amounted to R8 billion a year, which meant that if the demands were acceded to, it would translate to a national bill of R9 billion.

Twelve public service unions, mostly aligned to the Congress of SA Trade Unions and the Federation of Unions of SA, have declared a wage dispute with government.

26/1
15/2

Sowetan 4/5/99

Protracted bus strike

Southern 4/15/99

Cost R115-m

(152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE crippling two-week national strike by 18 000 workers, which ended at the weekend, has cost the bus companies a staggering R80 million in revenue, a spokesman for the employers' association said yesterday.

Putco human resources general manager and South African Bus Employers Association deputy president Mr Thys Heyns said striking workers at 18 bus companies also lost about R35 million in wages.

Heyns said operations returned to normal yesterday after the parties agreed on an 8,5 per cent wage increase brokered by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

He was happy that the workers and employers had accepted the realities of the current economic situation.

The industry was going through difficulties caused by current changes in transport policies.

"Both the employers and employees took cognisance of the difficult situation the industry is going through," Heyns said.

Transport and General Workers Union spokesman Mr Zakhele Sibeko said the agreement to end the strike took immediate effect at the weekend, while the outstanding issue of working hours was referred for further arbitration.

Transport and Allied Workers Union spokesman Mr Oupa Mbele said the current 14-hour work shift was "problematic for the workers" because management persistently resisted changes as laid out in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, which stipulates shifts no longer than 12 hours.

Mbele said the workers were still meeting over the 14-hour shift to reach a settlement with employers through an independent arbitrator.

Organised labour has rejected the appointment of an arbitrator, claiming he/she would be biased against the trade unions.

Four unions - the Transport

and General Workers' Union, Transport and Allied Workers Union, Western Cape Omnibus Staff Association and the Transport Omnibus Workers Union - went on the strike on April 15 after declaring a wage dispute.

Bus companies reported earlier that they were severely affected by the strike, each suffering revenue losses estimated at more than R2 million a day.

On the Cape Peninsula most bus services were also reported to be back to normal yesterday. However, some members of the Western Cape Omnibus Staff Association were still holding meetings before reporting for work.

In Pretoria and in areas around the North West, bus services were also running normally yesterday. The KwaZulu-Natal Transport Services reported that buses were running on normal schedules.

Only buses from the Great North Transport Company in Northern Province were reported not to be operating, despite the agreement reached at the weekend.



The two-week bus strike, which affected millions of commuters throughout the country, cost bus companies and employees R115 million. PIC MBUZENI ZULU

Lockout at Mondipak continues

ET (MR) 7/5/99

(152)

(114) (113)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The three-week lock-out of hundreds of workers allied to the Chemical Energy Paper Printing Wood and Allied Workers Union (Ceppwawu) and the Media Workers' Association of South Africa (Mwasa) at the Mondipak Alrode plant continued yesterday with demonstrations outside the factory

Mondipak was adamant it would not accede to union demands

At issue is the introduction of a three-shift system that requires employees to work until 6am

The unions wanted the company to provide their members working from 6pm with transport, in line with the new Basic Conditions of Employment Act

Investigations by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) had shown that transport was broadly available at these hours. This interpretation has made the task of breaking the deadlock difficult.

It would seem the CCMA read the provision to mean that while transport had to be available, it did not necessarily mean that the company had to provide it. Available transport could mean available public transport

Mondipak has held to that interpretation and said it offered several permutations of shift hours to address "perceptions" by employees that transport difficulties would occur

Vernon Morton, Mondipak's human resources manager, said. "Throughout the discussions and negotiations, the unions and

their members have demanded a transport subsidy in addition to the several improvements in pay and conditions of service offered by the company"

He said Mondipak had not acceded to the demand for transport subsidies. Research showed that transport was available at all proposed shift changes. The onus was not on the company to provide transport.

Morton said the company had offered a 3,2 percent reduction in working time and introduced a 15 percent shift allowance for the three shifts, an arrangement that had exceeded the requirements of the act. This had resulted in a 3,6 percent increase in basic salaries.

Mondipak has employed scab labour and applied the principle of no work no pay, but workers have vowed to continue the strike until their demands were met

"We won't go back to work without transport," said Johnson Mkhize, a Mwasa shop steward.

At issue is the introduction of a three-shift system that means staff work until 6am

Seven guilty of public violence over strike clash

MYOLISI GOPHE
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ARG 14/5/99
(182)
Seven people who attacked two African National Congress councillors during a municipal strike, have been convicted for public violence.

Two of the accused were also convicted in the Mitchell's Plain court yesterday of assault with intention to do grievous bodily harm.

Former Khayelitsha mayor Vuyani Ngcuka and Mbulelo Ncedani were severely beaten by a mob of South African Municipal Workers' Union in the municipal offices during a strike in 1997.

Mr Ngcuka was in hospital for three days after the attack and Mr

Ncedani was slightly injured. Mr Ngcuka was recently appointed Western Cape Reconstruction and Development Project manager for the Post Office last year.

The clash between the authorities and workers, who were refuse collectors, erupted after a disagreement over services to the Khayelitsha area.

Fifteen people were arrested, but eight of them were discharged.

Michael Makana, Alton Mca-mazana, Nolitha Thungana, Gcobani Mlindi and Gillpin Bottoman were found guilty of public violence while Vusumzi Mbola and Zalisile Joyisa were convicted of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

All had pleaded not guilty. They will be sentenced on Thursday.

Metalworkers plan to strike at Delta today

Port Elizabeth - More than 3 500 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA will go on strike at Delta Motor Corporation's Port Elizabeth plant today because of a disagreement over the company's restructuring process.

Numsa spokesman Dumisa Ntuli said 350 workers were put up in a labour pool and had not been relocated to the new Struandale plant because the company said they did not have the skills required to perform work there.

Delta said the issue of manpower use and the deployment of employees was governed by a collective agreement entered into between the union and the car manufacturers. - Sapa

ARG 26/9/99

Numsa suspends strike against ~~(152)~~ steel producers ⁽¹⁵²⁾

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria - The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) said yesterday it had suspended its proposed industrial action at Ferrometals and Columbus Stainless, the joint venture between Highveld Steel, Samancor and the Industrial Development Corporation, following a meeting with the management of the companies.

Wilhelm Prinsloo, the general manager human resources at Columbus, confirmed that the threat of strike action had been withdrawn after management and Numsa had agreed to refer allegations of unfair practices to arbitration.

"We feel that it is extremely irresponsible of Numsa to threaten industrial action with total disregard for the Labour Relations Act and the financial position of Columbus," he said.

Columbus Stainless, South Africa's only stainless steel pro-

ducer, had made a loss of R323 million in 1998 and was projecting another loss in 1999.

On Monday Numsa said over 2 500 workers intended to embark on industrial action following the refusal by Ferrometals and Columbus Stainless to address racism, their failure to prepare for the implementation of the Employment Equity Act and the announced intention to close the furnaces divisions.

Stephen Nhlapho, Numsa's national sector co-ordinator for light engineering, said yesterday that an independent commission would look at issues such as racism and the different treatment in disciplinary hearings of white and black workers.

A spokesman for Samancor, the owner of the Ferrometals plant and a joint venture partner in Columbus Stainless, said that two furnaces would be closed for maintenance but no retrenchments were foreseen.

65/9/92 (152)

Talks continue as Delta strikes are called off

CT(BR)27/5/99 (192) (192)

ROY COKAYNE

Pretoria - The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) had agreed to withdraw the threat of a strike at Delta Motor Corporation's two manufacturing plants in Port Elizabeth, said Ed Emmett, the communications manager for Delta, the motor manufacturer, yesterday Emmett said Numsa had also undertaken to follow a facilitation process in an effort to resolve the matter

"Therefore, no strike will be entered into, and in the event of failure of the process, the matter will revert to the Labour Court for a ruling," he said

More than 3 500 Numsa members at Delta were prepared to embark on a strike at 2pm yesterday. Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for Numsa, said on Tuesday the proposed strike followed Delta's failure to resolve "an impasse" in discussions over a company restructuring process called the Delta Production System

Ntuli said in terms of the process, 350 workers were to be put into the labour pool and not relocated to Delta's Struandale plant

Delta sought an urgent interdict from the Labour Court to declare the strike unlawful, but Numsa said it would contest the interdict application

Yesterday Emmett said the court interdict was averted "by an approach by Numsa to secure an alternative arrangement" He said, as far as he knew, Numsa had obtained a certificate from the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), but he indicated he was unsure what it would enable

Numsa had claimed the certificate would enable its members at the Delta plants to go on strike

Emmett said there was some confusion at Delta's plant yesterday because the avoidance of the strike was finalised "pretty close to the intended commencement time".

However, he said Numsa shop stewards had helped convey to their members the outcome of the meeting between management and the union Emmett said the confusion had not lasted long and he did not believe it had had a significant impact on production

He said earlier yesterday that the issue of manpower utilisation, and the

deployment of employees within Delta's production facilities, was governed by a collective agreement entered into between Numsa and all car manufacturers, including Delta.

"Acting in accordance with this agreement, Delta has held numerous discussions with shop stewards over the past few months during which matters pertaining to the company's staffing plan have been extensively discussed and dealt with," he said.

"In these meetings, Delta has indicated its anticipated manning requirements In addition, numerous communications have been issued to both the union and to employees, confirming our intent that no employees will be displaced from the company, solely as a result of changes in work organisation and efficiency improvements"

Emmett added Delta had expressly pointed out to Numsa that, provided Numsa gave effect to the flexibility provisions of the agreement, no threat to job security was envisaged

He said it was also emphasised that no employee's grade or rate of pay would be adversely affected as a result of any alternative assignment.

"The services of all employees at Delta's two factories are currently fully utilised. Numsa has refused to acknowledge this," he said.

Emmett said Numsa had instead planned to initiate a strike, which not only had the effect of placing job security under threat but was also unlawful in terms of the Labour Relations Act.

It was also contrary to the commitments that were made by Numsa under the agreement with motor car manufacturers

He said Delta had invited Numsa to withdraw the threat of a strike and comply responsibly with the provisions of the agreement while again confirming the undertakings given by the company about job security.

Emmett said Delta also confirmed that if there were a legitimate dispute which Numsa wished to pursue, the company was willing at all times to deal with the dispute in terms of the procedures agreed upon by the parties, which specifically excluded strikes

Numsa had again ignored this invitation

Threat by road workers

ALMOST 1 000 striking labourers threatened to dig trenches across the R2-billion Maputo Corridor toll road on Friday after their demands for higher salaries were rebuffed (152)

The labourers — contracted to a Stocks & Stocks, Basil Read and Bouygues construction consortium — are threatening to rip up portions of the new superhighway between Kaapmuiden and Komatipoort in Mpumalanga.

The workers embarked on an illegal strike on Friday after the consortium refused to increase their minimum wage from R4,15 to R5,58 an hour. ST 2016/99 (152)

A spokesman for the workers, Zacharia Silawula, said the consortium had also failed to provide safety equipment — such as boots and overalls — for workers on the road and failed to pay bonuses even when construction moved ahead of schedule.

Silawula said: "We work right through public holidays and weekends to ensure that this road stays on target, but we are not protected from injury or paid a decent wage. Who can live on R4,15 an hour? That's about R336 for two weeks of back-breaking work."

The consortium's site manager for the affected portion of road, Marius Nel, confirmed the strike and sabotage threats, but said the consortium could not increase the minimum wage without affecting the entire country's construction industry.

Nel also confirmed that the consortium employed Mandla Mtshali as a public relations consultant to handle worker dissatisfaction but refuted allegations by strikers that Mtshali had represented himself as an ANC official and had ordered them back to work.

Strikers torch equipment (152)

CONSTRUCTION workers at the Maputo Corridor toll road torched a large grader and an excavator on Tuesday, the third day of their illegal strike.

This occurred shortly after an agreement was reached that workers would be paid R4,15 an hour. The workers were demanding R5,58, African Eye News Service reported.

Project manager Luc Messiera said the strikers agreed to the terms late on Tuesday afternoon. Police spokesman Thabisile Gama said the agreement may not have been communicated to all strikers — Sapa

BD 24/6/99

Wages, retrenchments and grievances the main triggers

ET (NR) 11/7/99

Surge in man-days lost

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The number of man-days lost to strikes this year rose from 25 000 at the end of the first quarter to 410 000 at the end of June, according to an Andrew Levy & Associates strike report released yesterday.

Jackie Kelly, the research consultant, said the main strike triggers in terms of man-days lost were wages at 98,6 percent, retrenchment at 1,1 percent and grievance, which accounted for 0,2 percent.

Kelly said compared with a figure of 88,5 percent at the end of June last year, the wage trigger was at its "highest point ever, and a strong indicator of the tension around this crucial aspect of labour relations.

"This sharp increase in the wage trigger can be attributed to continued downward pressure on wages due to reduced production demand across

major industries linked to this is the steady decline in inflation, which in turn impacts on settlement levels."

The number of man-days lost for the six months of this year was in line with the general trend for the same period over the previous eight years, but showed an increase of 32 percent on the 1998 level of 310 000 man-days lost.

The overall number of man-days lost last year was 2,3 million, against 650 000 in 1997, 1,7 million in 1996, 1,6 million in 1995 and 3,9 million in 1994.

"The bulk of the action (81,3 percent) was concentrated in the transport sector as a result of the 18-day nationwide wage strike involving some 18 000 workers of the Transport and General Workers' Union and the South African Bus Employees' Association.

"A number of strikes in the mining sector, including a one-day strike at Amplats involving 18 000 workers, accounted for 6,9 percent of the total.

"A prolonged wage strike between

the South African Commercial Catering and Allied Workers' Union and Southern Sun (which was still in progress at the time of this report) accounted for 4,2 percent of man-days lost, and strikes at car manufacturers Toyota and Delta Motor (accounted) for 3,1 percent of the man-days lost during the first six months of this year," Kelly said.

She said the recently concluded two-year metal industry wage settlement - especially the agreement to gradually reduce working hours to a 40-hour week by 2002 - constituted "the first major move towards averaging and annualising hours of work in order to avoid excessive overtime payments during peak periods and lays offs during slack periods."

In essence, workers would be able to bank overtime hours worked to compensate for short-time during a period of 12 months.

Man days lost to SA wage strikes grow

(152) BD 1/7/99
Reneé Grawitzky

MAN days lost to strikes increased by 100 000, or 32%, during the first six months of this year over the 310 000 days lost in the same period last year, says a strike report compiled by Andrew Levy & Associates

Wage demands continued to act as the major trigger of strikes during the period under review. The report warned that this trigger had reached its highest point ever with 98,6% of strikes linked to wages

The rise in pay-related strikes could be attributed to the continued downward pressure on wages due to reduced production demand across the major sectors in the economy

At the same time wage settlements were averaging at 8,1%, indicating that double-digit increases could be a thing of the past

Andrew Levy & Associates research associate Jackie Kelly said the steady decline in inflation in turn was affecting settlement levels

Kelly cautioned, however, that the rise in wage-related strikes was not necessarily an indication of an increase in the number of wage strikes but rather a

change in the distribution of strike triggers generally

This was largely as a result of the new Labour Relations Act which had "codified issues such as dismissals, re-trenchments etc".

Hence, workers could no longer strike over these issues or if they did strike, such action would not be protected

The strikes contributing to man days lost during the first six months included the bus strike involving 18 000 workers, the strike at Southern Sun and various small strikes in mining and vehicle manufacture

Progress

Meanwhile, wage negotiations are continuing between the National Union of Mineworkers and the Chamber of Mines with indications that some progress is being made

Talks are also continuing today between the union and Impala Platinum mines and refinery

The union indicated that the company had tabled a 9% increase for the majority of workers and 10% for those in the lowest job grade

Increase in lost mandays

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

(152)

A RECENT protracted strike in the transport industry has pushed the number of mandays lost from 25 000 – the lowest level in eight years – to 410 000 days in June, a mid-year strike report revealed yesterday

According to labour law and industrial relations consultants Andrew Levy and Associates the strike action by 18 000 workers in the passenger bus service accounted for 81 percent, while the current nationwide strike involving Southern Sun Hotels and the South

African Commercial Catering and Allied workers Union has already accounted for 4,2 percent.

An upward slope slightly up from 310 00 days reported in June 1998, has been pushed up by the number of strikes in the mining sector, including a one-day strike at Anglo American Platinum Mines by 18 000 workers, research consultant Ms Jackie Kelly said

The strikes at the Toyota and Delta motor manufacturers also propelled the rise of the industrial action during the last six months, with wage disputes and large-scale retrenchments reported to be main triggers of the action

This could be attributed, she said, to continued downward pressure on wages due to reduced production demand across the major industries

“Linked to this is the steady decline in inflation, which in turn impacts on settlement levels

“This should not be construed to indicate an increase in the number of wage strikes, but rather a change in the distribution of strikes generally,” she said

Increased strike activity could be expected in the third quarter, Kelly pointed out, as the bulk of negotiations were finalised in various sectors of the economy

Sewetan 2/7/99

Half a million public sector workers to go on strike

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - Labour was in turmoil yesterday when more than 500 000 public sector union workers decided to go on strike, while Cosatu called for an extraordinary special congress this Friday to fight back against widespread retrenchments by the private sector.

A critical component of

Cosatu's programme of mass action would be to force the government to amend section 189 of the new Labour Relations Act to make negotiations on retrenchments mandatory rather than wait for a consultative process as promised by Memphathi Madlala, the labour minister.

Zwelinzima Vavi, the acting general secretary of Cosatu described the planned Vavi mass action as tough. "This meeting will emerge with a tough mass action programme directed at those industries that want to make the living conditions of the majority of South Africans more nightmarish by retrenching workers."

Vavi said more than 20 000 jobs were at stake, with Telkom threatening to lay off 12 000 workers, East Rand Proprietary Mines shedding 5 000 and Old Mutual

leaving another 5 000 in the cold. "Last year alone, our economy lost more than 180 000 jobs, while unemployment stands at a staggering 30 percent. In this context, the need to protect existing jobs cannot be over emphasised. Vusi Nhlapho, the president of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, said "We hope our mass action will be sufficient to show the seriousness of our demands."

GOVT ACCUSED OF 'BAD FAITH'

500 000 public servants to strike

ET 7/7/99

(250) (172)

A DEADLOCK in salary negotiations will see more than 500 000 public servants from three major unions aligned to the Congress of South African Trade Unions embarking on mass action from next week. **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports.

PROTEST action called for by three key Cosatu affiliates — the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu), the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) — has been instigated in a bid to end the government's stony silence on salary negotiations.

And Cosatu president Zwelinzima Vavi says his organisation will throw its full weight behind Sadtu, Nehawu and Popcru.

There will be lunchtime protests over three days, beginning on Monday, reinforced by a day-long work stoppage on July 23, which could cost the country millions and affect key services within the police services, prisons, hospitals and schools.

If the government does not budge from its offer of 5,7% towards the unions' demand of a 10% across-the-board increase, a full-blown strike will be called on July 29.

In a joint statement, the unions said there had been six months of "bad-faith bargaining" on the part of the government.

This was compounded by the Com-

mission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration declaring a deadlock in terms of the Labour Relations Act, paving the way for the unions to embark on a legal strike.

Despite this, the government has maintained its silence and the deadline for wage increases by July 1 has been ignored, the statement said.

Sadtu president Willy Madisha said: "This has caused anger and distress. Members do not know whether they will be paid at the end of July."

Nehawu president Vusi Nhlapo said he hopes the protests will be enough to galvanise the government into negotiating further.

"We understand the climate in which we operate. However, as public servants we are working under serious conditions."

"The public service, through natural attrition, shed 180 000 posts last year. There is still a moratorium on employment, so the remaining public servants are carrying the extra load."

"You can see it in the hospitals and clinics, where doctors and nurses are overworked. The police are also not without their problems," Nhlapo said.

Finance Minister Trevor Manuel, in

his budget allocations for the public service, set aside R3 billion for salary increases. The unions are demanding that this be upped to R3,75bn.

Nhlapo continued: "There is a lot of anger among members. We put off mass action because of the election and many members worked hard for an ANC victory."

"The least the government can do is meet our demands."

"Since the days of the National Party, there has been a dispute over salary negotiations every year. There is no wage policy and we negotiate out of a vacuum. There is also no fair assessment of employees," Nhlapo said.

Popcru's Jafta Siyavuya said at least 71 000 members representing police, correctional services and traffic officers would take part in the mass action.

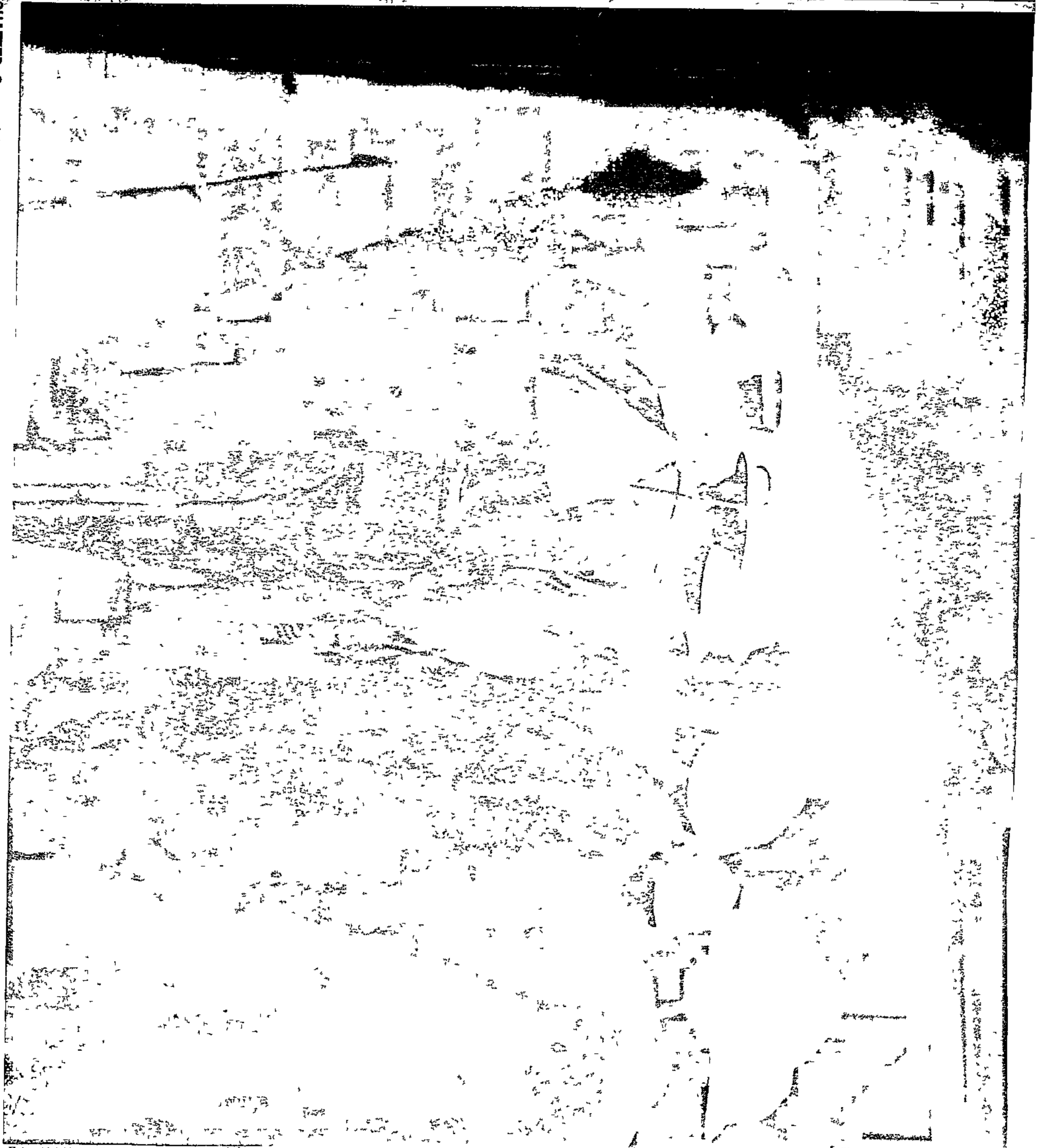
On July 23, marches are set to take place in the major centres. A march planned for Pretoria will give seven days' notice of a full-scale strike from July 29 unless the government responds positively.

The demands of the unions are:

- That the government tables proposals for a wage policy and a new system for negotiation with the unions
- That the government stops using Parliament to announce salary increases before the start of negotiations
- That the government resolves the wage dispute by instituting a graduated wage increase of 10%

20.7 Once the Exemptions Board has decided to grant an exemption, it issue a certificate and advise the applicant(s) within 14 days of the its decision.

20.8 When the Exemptions board decides against granting an exemption of an exemption request, it shall advise the applicant within 14



clause 22.1 hereof in any contribution which it may from time to time introduce.

22.5 Any employee not belonging to any of the trade unions that ar

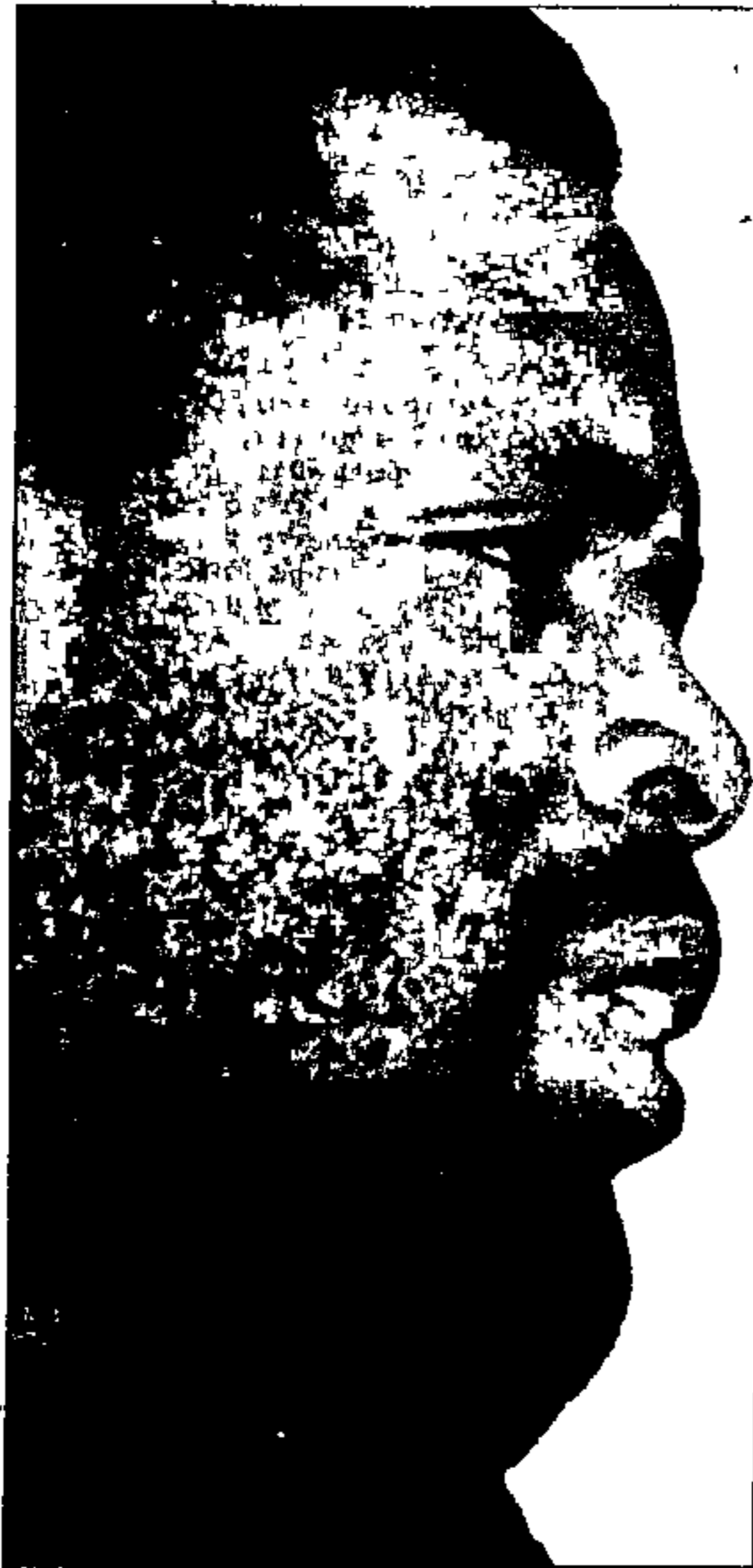
SHAFTED: Some of the 5000 shares and its listing of ordinary shares

PICTURE THE STAR

Civil servants strike

Action by 500 000 workers after talks with government fail

(152) (250)



Sadtu president Mr Willie Madisha

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

MORE than 500 000 public sector workers start their strike today after wage talks between their unions and government collapsed

The unprecedented strike is arguably the biggest in the country since 1994 and is expected to cripple schools, hospitals, police stations, prisons and the courts

The Government has warned that the principle of no work, no pay will apply for as long the strike continues

Speaking for the three Congress of South African Trade Unions affiliates which start their strike today, Mr Makoko Lekola said the entire leadership of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, the South African Democratic Teachers Union and the Police and Prisons Civil Right Union were still in discussions late last night but said the strike would go ahead

The Government yesterday endorsed a firm position that it would not be pressured by the unions to increase its latest offer saying financial constraints would render service delivery impossible

Public Service Administration Affairs Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi promised instead to review service benefits and urged the unions to seek a solution to the new wage policy

She said basic and essential services would be available during the strike as provided for in the legislative policy framework agreed with the unions

Fraser-Moleketi was confident that disagreements that had led to the

strike would be resolved within days as the Public Sector Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC) offered to facilitate further meetings

She said Government's new offer was quite considerable, with the minimum increase of R270 a month for lowest paid teachers, effective from July 1

"For instance, a person employed as a cleaner in 1994 earned an average salary of R900 a month excluding housing subsidy, medical and pension benefits but today earned an average of R1 600 a month and has access to benefits such as R837 medical aid, R837 a month housing subsidy and R240 pension contribution from the Government

Erosion of service quality

Any further increases in personnel costs beyond the levels budgeted for will result in erosion of service quality, she said

● Meanwhile KwaZulu-Natal health MEC Zwelli Mkhize urged health workers yesterday to consider their moral obligation to patients after news of the strike

Mkhize was referring to a threat to strike by civil servants after 12 public service unions rejected a pay offer tabled by the Government in Pretoria on Tuesday

Mkhize said in a statement that his department was concerned for the impact the strike would have on the health sector

"I would like to appeal to health-care workers to consider the consequences of neglecting sick and helpless people," Mkhize said

He added that contingency plans would be implemented if the threatened strike impacted on the lives of patients



Public Administration Affairs Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi

Sowetan 29/7/99

Cops ready to monitor public workers' strike

(152)

Sowetan 29/7/99 (250)

By Justice Mohale, Bhungani Mzolo and Sapa

POLICE yesterday said they had contingency plans in place to deal with any eventuality that might arise during the strike by thousands of civil servants

Police spokesman Director P Tlomsana said police had had talks with the relevant trade unions about routes to follow if their members decided to converge on Pretoria

He said although some of the policemen would participate in the strike, there was enough manpower to deal with any eventuality

The Gauteng health department said the no work, no pay rule would apply to those who will take part in today's expected strike

Spokesman Mr Popo Maja said while the strike was protected, which means that workers may not be dis-

missed, this did not mean workers absenting themselves without a valid reason would be paid

"And the strike is not one of the valid reasons," he said

Public institutions that will be adversely affected by the strike include police stations, hospitals, schools and prisons

"As a result of talks with union representatives, we believe that all essential services will continue to operate and will be adequately staffed by workers in essential categories, which cover not only doctors and nurses, but support service workers such as cleaners, laundry and kitchen staff," Maja said

He said health authorities were hopeful the dispute would soon be brought to an amicable conclusion

Sowetan learnt that the superintendents of major hospitals, including

Chris Hani-Baragwanath Hospital, met yesterday to discuss the expected strike

Meanwhile, municipalities said they would not be affected by the possible strike by public sector workers

Transformation manager for the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council Mr Pascal Molo said local government had a separate bargaining council to deal with issues such as conditions of employment and wage negotiations

"We are giving the people an assurance that municipal services will be rendered effectively and uninterrupted because our workers are not involved in the pending strike," Molo said

He said the council had just concluded wage negotiations with the unions representing the municipal workers and it was not worried about the threats of a strike

BT (BT) 11/7/99
(152)

Strikes mount as retrenchments loom

A WAVE of strikes hit SA this week, and look set to continue, as more than 40 000 workers faced up to joining the unemployment queue and adding to SA's high jobless rate

About 40 000 SA rail workers began mass protests on Friday against planned Spoornet retrenchments, following the example of public sector workers striking against layoffs

Minister of Public Enterprises Jeff Radebe is expected to announce a massive retrenchment of 27 000 workers from

UNEMPLOYMENT
By THABO KOBOKOANE

Spoornet, a decision insiders say has been on hold since 1996. This is likely to be SA's single biggest retrenchment

Spoornet's announcement comes just days after the provisional liquidation of East Rand Proprietary Mines, a decision that puts about 5 000 jobs on the line. About 11 700 jobs are set to go in the mining sector as the gold crisis intensifies. Telkom has announced

layoff plans, and government is also expected to announce more public sector retrenchments

Labour Minister Membathisi Mdladlana appealed for every effort to explore alternatives to ensure the prevention of further losses. Mdladlana says business has a particular obligation in preventing further job cuts and called on employees to abide by the decisions of the Presidential jobs summit

● See Page 8 and Appointments, Page 1

SA NEWS DIGEST

LABOUR RELATIONS

(172) (189)

Numsa starts rolling mass action at Columbus following wage dispute

More than 1000 workers members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) will embark on a rolling mass action today at the Columbus steel company in Mpumalanga after the union gave the company a 48 hour notice to take industrial

action. The Numsa spokesman said the strike followed a dispute resolution meeting that ended in dispute at the industry bargaining council. Numsa accused employers of "refusal to meet their demands and a negligible wage increase."

Numsa demands a guaranteed inflation rate-linked increase of 7.5 percent, an improvement factor of not less than 2 percent and a 7.5 percent increase on terms of the present consumer price index and a performance based increase of 0.5 percent. - *Pratt's evaluation, Johannesburg*

CT (BR) 12/7/99

TECHNOLOGY

Y3K makes first IT acquisition for R9m

Y3K, the recently listed technology company, said yesterday it had completed its first acquisition of an information technology (IT) solutions company called Micro Angelo for R9 million.

The acquisition was expected to add about 11 percent to its earnings for the next year but added that other significant benefits were also expected from synergies between the companies.

The R9 million payment is subject to profit guarantees. This amount will be paid in cash and includes an option to pay the balance in cash or shares upon confirmation of performance.

Timothy Gilman, the chief executive of Y3K, said the company had decided to do everything down after the listing and produce its first results, which it did in the first quarter, hitting the acquisition trail. - *Rene Bonorris, Johannesburg*

Unions gear up for wage strike

By Russel Molefe

THE National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) believes the Government has enough resources to meet its 10 per cent wage increase demand and still operate with the existing public service

This was the reason Nehawu, together with the South African Democratic Teachers Union and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union, has warned of a full-scale strike, which may start on July 30

The strike will be preceded by a "rolling mass action" involving demonstrations, pickets and marches, which are to start today

Public Service and Administration Minister

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi announced last week that the Government would not meet the unions' demand and would stick to its offer of 5.7 per cent.

Spent on salaries

Briefing journalists at the end of its national executive committee meeting in Johannesburg yesterday, Nehawu president Mr Vusi Nhlapo rejected the Government's argument that the public service was bloated and that the bulk of the money was spent on salaries

"The public service is not bloated. In the past five years, there has been downsizing and the public service was reduced by 13 per cent

"The public service is a labour-intensive

industry. You can get computers in classrooms but you still need a teacher in those classrooms. You can have the best intensive care units but you will still need nurses," Nhlapo said

Chris Ham-Baragwanath and Johannesburg hospitals, the Johannesburg High Court, Johannesburg Central Police Station and Johannesburg Prison have been identified as the first targets to be hit by the strike if it materialises on July 30

In a declaration also released yesterday, Nehawu said workers were experiencing retrenchments, privatisation, de-industrialisation, downsizing and flexibility, which were "an attack on them and their communities".

Source: Star 15/7/199 (152)

(250)

Strikes hit public and private sector

Efforts continue at ERPM to save the jobs of its 5 000 miners

(152) 00 12/7/99

**Reneé Grawitzky,
Pule Molebeledi and Sapa**

AS THOUSANDS of public and private sector workers embark on strikes or protest action in their demands for higher wages, attempts are continuing to save the jobs of 5 000 miners at East Rand Proprietary Mines (ERP) Limited.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) was expected to meet last night to discuss various options to save ERP while the liquidators said no final decision had been taken on the future of the mineworkers who had been placed on one-week fixed-term contracts.

Meanwhile, thousands of members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) plan to embark on a secondary strike in support of 900 workers who are on a wage strike at Columbus Stannell in Middelburg. Columbus is a joint venture between Samancor, Highveld Steel and the Industrial Development Corporation. The union has served seven days' notice on the two companies of planned secondary action.

Columbus said the union had refused to discuss picketing rules as required by the Labour Relations Act. A number of strikers were arrested yesterday morning for attempting to interfere with workers wishing to come to work, the company said.

The union has also threatened industrial action at McCarthy Motors in the Western Cape in protest

against the dismissal of a Numsa shop steward. The union claims that 9 000 members will participate in demonstrations. This action, according to the union, was triggered by the company's decision to discipline 21 shop stewards who participated in the Congress of SA Trade Unions' protest action against the alliance of the New National Party and the Democratic Party in the Western Cape.

Numsa and Cosatu planned to campaign to fight in support of the reinstatement of the shop steward who was dismissed and the withdrawal of the final warnings for the 20 other shop stewards.

Hundreds of members of the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union yesterday embarked on a wage strike in the footwear sector in support of a 10% increase. The strike started in Martzburg and is expected to target other regions. Employers have offered 5,5% for the first six months of the two-year deal and 6% for the next six months. Increases in year two would be linked to inflation, but a minimum 6% increase would be guaranteed.

The majority union in the industry, the National Union of Leatherworkers, is expected to sign the agreement. The industry has lost close to 6 000 jobs this year, partly as a result of companies relocating to neighbouring states and the growing informal sector.

The Cosatu-aligned public service unions are expected to em-

bark on lunch-time demonstrations around the country today in support of a 10% wage increase.

Also, the SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union's strike against Southern Sun enters its second month this week.

Speaking at the union's national congress in Durban yesterday, SA Communist Party secretary-general Blade Nzimande called for an immediate moratorium on retrenchments in SA until structures created by last year's presidential job summit were convened to deal with the situation.

Nzimande said 90 000 miners lost their jobs last year and the same number of miners currently faced the same fate.

Cosatu acting general-secretary Zwehinzama Vavi said if the plight of workers threatened with job losses could not be addressed, the job summit would have been in vain.

Meanwhile, Mozambique is set to launch high-level discussions with the SA government to try to stave off the social and economic impact of the gold crisis.

Mozambican Deputy Labour Minister Adelaide Amurane said yesterday Mozambique did not have the resources to absorb or provide alternative employment for 2 500 Mozambican miners retrenched last week from ERP.

No date has yet been set for a proposed African foreign mission aimed at persuading developed countries, including Britain, not to sell off their gold reserves.



Reserve Bank deputy governor Tim Thahane addresses the media at the launch of the 1999 Human Development Programme yesterday. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

Public service workers in countrywide protests

sewerers 13/17/19 g

(2nd) (1st)

placards, some of them proclaiming, "We are killed on a daily basis" and "10 percent or nothing."

Yesterday's protest was the front-runner to nationwide mass action on July 29, should their demands not be met.

In Middelburg, Mpumalanga, four striking steelworkers were arrested for alleged intimidation during a National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa picket outside Columbus Stainless Steel.

Police spokesman Senior Superintendent Theo du Bruyn said the four were allegedly preventing workers

from entering the steel producer's premises and about 20 public order policemen were asked to intervene.

About 30 workers picketed against retrenchments outside Transnet's Parktown, Johannesburg, headquarters while directors were digesting a R426 million loss brought about mainly by retirement bonuses and the cost of retrenching about 2 000 people last year.

Spoornet suffered a R136 million loss last week, several transport workers' unions said they were told that at least 27 000 workers would lose

their jobs over the next three years during the restructuring of Transnet's subsidiary Spoornet.

A small march proceeded past the Durban Supreme Court yesterday afternoon, while earlier police spokesman Captain Vish Naidoo reported clusters of picketers standing on street corners lobbying for a 10 per cent increase.

Meanwhile, the Congress of SA Trade Unions, faced with over 50 000 impending job losses, has announced plans for radical forms of protest including a "rolling mass action" to

resist the spate of retrenchments.

Cosatu acting general secretary Mr Zweluzima Vavi disclosed yesterday that a briefing with the movement's affiliates painted a bleak future as more retrenchments were taking place "quietly in the service industry".

Strategy

He said a coordinated and coherent strategy on the protest action would be finalised at a meeting tomorrow.

Vavi said thousands of workers were being quietly retrenched in coalmines.

He warned of further job losses in the energy sector and said at least 90 000 jobs were lost in the industry over the past two years.

The Building Industries Federation of South Africa has also announced that a further 30 000 jobs would be lost in the current year.

Thousands strike for 10% hike

OWN CORRESPONDENT

JOHANNESBURG: Thousands of public servants yesterday took to the streets across South Africa in lunchtime demonstrations to pressure government into giving them a 10% salary increase

Toyi-toying members of three public service unions — the SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu), the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Unions (Popcru) — disrupted midday traffic.

Sadtu president Willie Madisha said the protesters were left with no option but to "down tools" to drive their point home, that they would not accept the government's 5,7% increase offer

"So far the government has shown that they are not interested in resolving the dispute," he said

"The fact that we have had so many teachers out in the streets when they are supposed to be enjoying their holidays at home tells us that the people are not happy," he added

Madisha said if the government did not revise its offer, the unions were ready to go on a full-blown strike at the end of the month

"Since we announced our mass action programme (last week) we have not had any word from the government and that means they simply have no interest in seeing this matter sorted out," he said

The wage dispute had been referred to Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration but ended in a deadlock.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said earlier that the unions' demand was "inappropriate", considering the limited funding available for social services

She urged unions to return to the negotiating table, saying a solution could still be found which would satisfy state employees without undermining social spending

Madisha said the three unions' members were expected to converge at Pretoria today for another round of demonstrations

Sadtu members are to meet outside the National Education Department's offices, Popcru members at the Safety and Security Department and Nehawu at the Public Service and Administration Department offices

2000 footwear workers go on strike

RAVIN MAHARAJ

Durban — About 2 000 footwear workers aligned to the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) embarked on a strike in Pietermaritzburg yesterday after rejecting management's new wage offer

Martin Poulson, the national leather co ordinator of Sactwu, said the shop floor had rejected the "poverty wage" offer because it was below the inflation rate "If we accept management's offer our workers will be poorer than before," he said

Sactwu still wanted a wage increase of 10 percent, but was prepared to be flexible if settlement was reached closer to the inflation rate of 7,7 percent.

Poulson said management and Sactwu would meet again next week to try to renegotiate a wage settlement. In the meantime, the strike would continue in "strategic" locations

But the National Union of Leather and Allied Workers, the majority voice in the footwear sector, confirmed it had accepted a two-year wage deal

The Southern African Footwear and Leather Industries' Association (Safli), which represents employers in the sector, last week offered a 5,5 percent increase with an extra 0,5 percent from January 2000

Strike suffers major setback

(172) (189)
By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE week-old strike by National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa members at Columbus Stainless in Mpumalanga suffered a major setback when the Labour Court ordered the union to stop its members from picketing near the company premises.

Columbus Stainless communications manager Mr Laing Geldenhuys had charged that striking Numsa members disrupted access at the main gate and prevented people from going to work. Several strikers were arrested for engaging in illegal activities.

The court ruled last week that union members should not picket within 55 metres of the company premises and should stop engaging in unlawful activities during the legal strike. The union was also ordered to pay costs.

Numsa spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli denounced the arrest of eight unionists who were protesting for wage increases. Numsa is demanding 7,7 percent plus a two percent improvement factor, while management has offered 7,1 with a fur-

ther 0,5 percent based on individual performance.

An estimated 4 000 workers at Highveld Steel, also in Mpumalanga, have reportedly embarked on a legal strike after a deadlock over wage talks was referred to the bargaining council.

Ntuli said they were infuriated by the management's insistence on giving a R700 housing subsidy to whites, while blacks received R237. The union also demanded that the company implement the Employment Equity Act.

Meanwhile, the strike at Gold Fields' Oryx mine in Welkom continued after attempts to persuade the National Union of Mineworkers to find a solution failed at the weekend.

Oryx managing director Mr Brendan Walker said it was not in the interest of employees or the company that the strike continues. He believed there is sufficient common ground for an agreement to be reached.

The dispute centres on the contents of a proposed retrenchment agreement for the mine. Oryx has notified the Gold Crisis Committee of its intention to reduce the workforce by 900 people.

Newsfile 19/11/91

Strike action - two hurt

TWO striking workers were hospitalised and at least 150 others arrested after a clash with police at a Columbus Stainless plant in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, yesterday

The workers, who have been on strike over a wage dispute since last week Monday, allegedly defied an interdict barring them from the premises of Columbus Stainless.

Police spokesman Captain Izak van Zyl said the workers appeared in the Middelburg Magistrate's Court on charges of public violence and failing to comply with the interdict. Eight were also charged with malicious damage to property

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA accused police of provoking its members while they awaited the arrival of picketing rules. It labelled the police action "barbaric"

But Van Zyl said police had fired rubber bullets only after the strikers became "aggressive" and began hurling stones at policemen and their vehicles

One of the injured workers sus-

tained a fractured skull and was in a serious but stable condition, a spokesman at Middelburg Hospital said. The other had a blue eye and lacerations to the head.

Van Zyl said the two sustained head injuries after being hit by stones

The union, however, which claims a total of 200 strikers were arrested, said they had been shot with rubber bullets by police.

Van Zyl said the arrested workers were due to appear in court again on Friday. They did not apply for bail and remained in police custody.

Columbus Stainless backed the police version of events. "The Numsa members were asked to leave the premises. They refused to do so in the allotted time and the police arrested them," the company said.

"Some of the strikers attacked the policemen. Stones were thrown and vehicles were damaged.

"The police retaliated - under the Regulation of Gatherings Act 205 of 1993 and in terms of the interdict - with rubber bullets" - Sapa

189 (152)
Sowetan 20/7/99

Unions vow to cripple labour market in national strike

ARGENTINE CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - Labour unions have vowed to intensify their industrial action this week, culminating with a one-day national strike on Friday. In their second week of lunch-

hour pickets and demonstrations, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu), South African Democratic Teachers' Union and Police, Prisons and Civil Rights Union predicted chaos on the labour market.

The unions are demanding a 10%

increase while the Government is offering 5,8%. Six months of negotiations have failed to break the deadlock.

Nehawu president Vusi Nhlapo said the public service unions were still waiting for the Government to set up a date for a further meeting on

the wage dispute

"The Government has to respond now because we are bracing ourselves for a protracted industrial action," he said.

"The public service will be disrupted and there is no way we can accept increases that are below infla-

tion. The Government is cutting jobs, retrenching workers and paying exorbitant packages to the apartheid civil servants."

Mr Nhlapo said the unions had sent notice to the Government and public service bargaining council about their planned strike.

APRIL 20 17 1999 (152)

Over 200 striking Numsa members arrested

FRANK-NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - Columbus Stainless erupted again yesterday when close to 200 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) on a legal strike were arrested and refused bail for being a "danger to society", the union said yesterday.

Numsa said two workers were admitted to an intensive care unit after being allegedly shot by police.

Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for Numsa, said. "It seems to us that the traditional methods of dealing with strikes are still being used by the police despite the changes in the country."

Laing Geldenhuis, a company spokesman, said Numsa members ignored several police warnings to



'DANGER TO SOCIETY'
Columbus Stainless workers at a strike that ended in arrests and a refusal by the court to grant bail

PHOTO
JOHN WOODROOF

vacate the premises and started throwing rocks at the police, damaging vehicles and injuring some of their own members in the process. Police retaliated by firing rubber bullets and apparently injured some of the employees.

Geldenhuis would not be drawn into revealing whether the company was prepared to move on its offer of 7,1 percent plus a 0,6 percent individual performance-based increment against union demands of a 7,7 percent

inflation-linked increase plus an improvement factor of not less than 2 percent.

The company has already settled on its offer with three other recognised unions, including the all-white Mine Workers' Union



Columbus strike turns violent

(189)
(172)

BD 20/7/99

Reneé Grawitzky
and Sapa

THE week-long wage strike at Columbus Stainless Steel in Middelburg, Mpumalanga, turned violent yesterday as police used rubber bullets to disperse strikers

Two strikers were admitted to hospital and at least 150 were arrested. Police spokesman Capt Izak van Zyl said those arrested had appeared in court on charges of public violence, failing to comply with the interdict and malicious damage to property.

Marches and demonstrations by private and public sector workers continued across the country in protest against wage disputes, retrenchments and the lowering of trade tariffs.

Columbus said 150 strikers were arrested after members of the SA Police Service tried to disperse workers who occupied a building, contravening a Labour Court interdict obtained last week prohibiting workers from picketing on the premises.

The company said strikers attacked police, who reacted by firing rubber bullets. Two workers were injured during this incident.

The National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) said close to 200 workers were arrested and two were admitted to intensive care after being shot.

The union launched a scathing attack against police, saying they had provoked workers who were awaiting picketing rules from the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Numsa said police had been intent on breaking the legitimate and legal strike from the outset.

The union did not believe workers had engaged in unlawful conduct.

The company said there had been several incidents of stone-throwing and attempts to break down the gate to the premises since the strike began.

At Oryx gold mine in the Free State another strike went ahead despite Gold Fields' attempts to obtain an interdict declaring the action unprotected.

The company applied for an urgent interdict yesterday, arguing that the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) had failed to comply with the requirements of the Labour Relations Act and did not act in the best interests of employees or the long-term survival of the mine.

The strike was sparked by the mine's decision to retrench 900 workers.

Oryx is one of six mines which have notified the gold crisis committee of its intention to retrench.

The NUM said yesterday the company had argued that the union was camouflaging the real intent of the strike, which was to stop the retrenchments. The strike was triggered by the company's failure to negotiate a retrenchment agreement, the union said.

Gold Fields said it had acted in good faith, offering a fair and reasonable package under the circumstances. "Our offer aims to balance the needs of potentially retrenched employees with the long-term survival of the mine and almost 4 000 associated jobs," it said.

The law provided for one week's severance pay, while the union was demanding 16 weeks' severance pay plus a six-month notice period.

Gold Fields said the union's demands were unaffordable and inconsistent with concern about the mine's future and workers' job security.

NUM general secretary Gwede Mantashe said yesterday that the union was willing to engage management to resolve the misunderstanding.

As gold closed at a fresh 20-year low of \$252,15 in New York yesterday against Friday's \$253,65, there were indications that the parties could meet today to continue negotiations.

Meanwhile, thousands of members of the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) marched in major centres around the country to protest against continued job losses in the clothing, textile and footwear sectors.

Job losses have been attributed to the lowering of tariffs and the subsequent increase in cheaper imports.

The union is demanding that government freezes tariff reductions on clothing and textiles. The union said the general agreement on tariffs and trade gave SA 12 years to phase in tariffs, but government had decided to phase them in over eight years.

In the public sector, protest action is expected to continue to put pressure on government this week to revise its wage offer. The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union denied reports that it had suspended its protest action. A one-day strike is planned for Friday, with workers participating in countrywide marches.

VW caught in dispute: Page 3
Comment: Page 11

Row among workers leads to VW strike

Reneé Grawitzky

(192) (172)

VOLKSWAGEN has been caught in the middle of an internal dispute within the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa).

Workers went on strike yesterday, allegedly demanding that the union reinstate eight shop stewards who had been expelled from the union. It is not clear why the shop stewards were expelled.

The union said its national leadership would go to Volkswagen today to try to resolve the matter.

Numsa acknowledged that the union had been approached by the company in recent weeks to intervene in the matter.

Volkswagen's communications GM Matt Gennrich said the company had appealed to the union to resolve the problem as deep divisions had developed between Numsa officials at local level and a group of shop stewards. He said the company had appealed to the union to intervene before it led to conflict on the shop floor.

After the expulsion of the eight shop stewards the company asked that they resume their normal duties.

After a meeting yesterday supporters of the eight shop stewards embarked on an unprotected strike. As a result the company had to close its plant.

Volkswagen will consider applying for an interdict if workers do not return to work today. Various attempts are being made to resolve the conflict.

BD 20/7/99

Court interdict terminates Volkswagen strike

Reneé Grawitzky
and Sapa

Impala Platinum and NUM reach agreement on wages and working conditions

(19A) (152) B8 21/7/99

PRODUCTION at Volkswagen is expected to resume today while strikes continue at Columbus Stainless Steel in Mpumalanga and the Oryx gold mine in the Free State.

Workers were demanding that the union reinstate the shop stewards.

Wage strike at Columbus Stainless Steel continued despite renewed attempts to resolve the disputes.

Week-long strike against retrenchments as the gold price continued to fall.

ment averaged 9.7% and was on a declining scale of 5% for skilled workers and 10% for the lowest-paid workers.

Other issues were referred to various forums for resolution. They included job grading and evaluation, the issue of a housing allowance, the negotiation of the retrenchment agreement, a formula for a two-year wage agreement, unpaid leave and other conditions of employment.

Comment: Page 11

Work resumes at VWSA as Numsa stewards settle

Roy Cokayne

Pretoria - About 4 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) employed by Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA), the motor manufacturer, had agreed to resume work, Dumisa Ntuli, a Numsa spokesman, said yesterday.

Ntuli said Numsa's leadership had agreed to lift the suspension of eight shop stewards, which had triggered the strike on Monday, on the "amicable understanding" that all shop stewards in the plant would abide by certain conditions.

The conditions were stated as follows:

- All shop stewards should accept the authority of the union in respect of decisions, policies and the constitution of the union.
- Numsa would not tolerate any unprocedural conduct and/or act against its policies and would take disciplinary measures against those members transgressing its constitution.

The shop stewards refused to accept their suspension and mobilised the workers at the plant in support of their reinstatement.

On Tuesday VWSA obtained a Labour Court interdict that in effect prevented its employees from striking or refusing to work.

The company confirmed that production at the plant would now return to normal.

CF (PR) 22/7/99

(192)

Strike threat first big test for Thabo

ARG 22/7/99

(172) (250)

ADRIAN HADLAND
POLITICAL EDITOR

President Thabo Mbeki faces his first major test as more than a million public servants prepare for a national strike tomorrow.

Many of the strikers belong to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), one of the African National Congress's coalition partners in Government.

The strike, which follows six months of negotiations and escalating protests, was called yesterday after five public service unions, including the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, the SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) and the Police, Prisons and Civil Rights Union, rejected the latest wage offer.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, who is facing a baptism of fire in her second month in office, announced yesterday the state had raised its earlier offer of a 5,7% pay rise across the board to 6% for most public ser-

vants. But the offer was laughed off by the unions, who called it "pathetic" and argued Ms Fraser-Moleketi was simply re-arranging the figures.

"There is nothing new about (the) offer," Sadtu general secretary Thulas Nxesi said after a deadlocked meeting in the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council this week.

The unions, which are demanding a 10% increase across the board, have warned they are bracing themselves for "protracted industrial action".

ANC officials played down the impact of the strike on the relationship between them and their Cosatu ally.

"This is not the first time the public service unions have taken this kind of action against the Government," said a high-ranking party official. "There is no reason for us to believe there won't be a solution."

A Cosatu spokesman said yesterday a "full-blown strike" would begin next Thursday if the Government did not "come up with anything serious".

Rising oil costs push up consumer price index

DDM 7-199
(178)

Jonathan Katzenellenbogen

HIGHER oil prices pushed up headline and core consumer inflation last month after increases in May

Consumer annual headline inflation rose to 7.3% (qoq) 7.1% in May

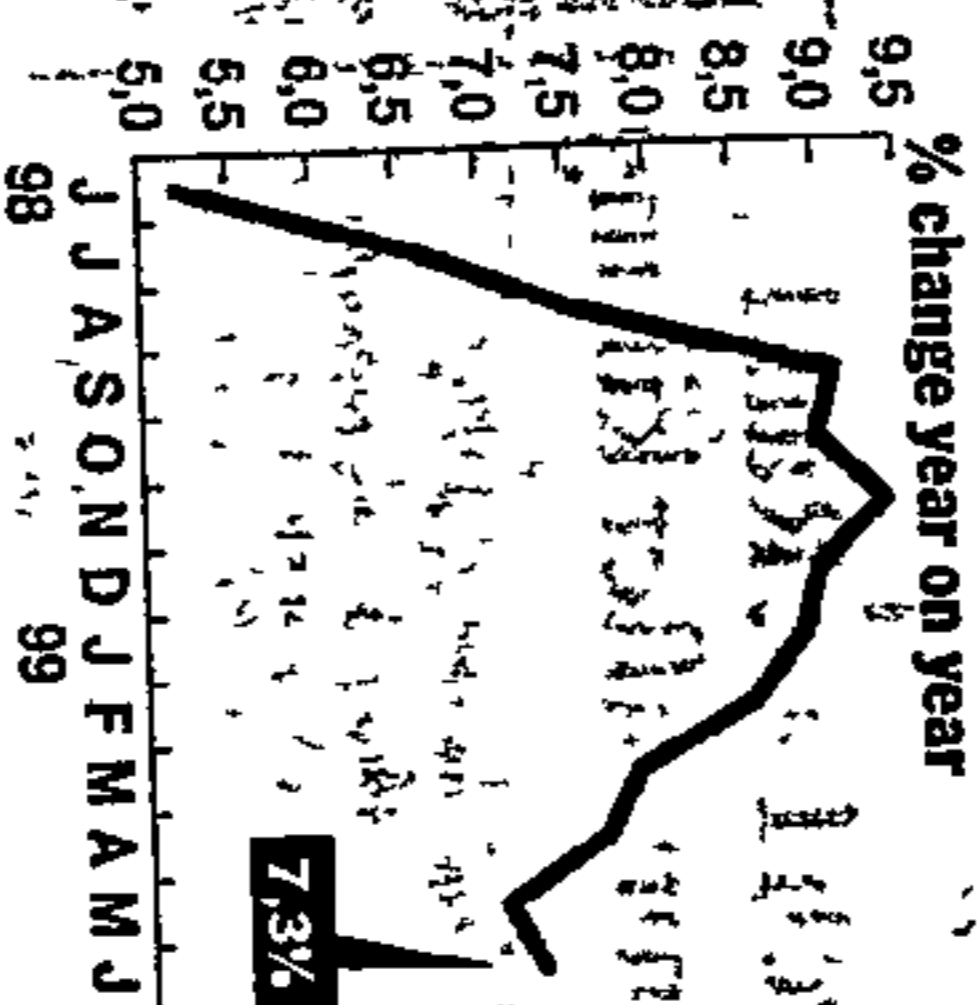
This rise is in line with market expectations, but economists are predicting a gradual decline in the inflation rate over the next few months. They say the rise in June inflation will not stall the drop in the repo rate

Dealers say the market shrugged off the figures and yesterday's 58-point drop in the Johannesburg Stock Exchange's all share index was largely the result of Wall Street's weak opening and continuing emerging market worries

On a month-to-month, seasonally adjusted basis, the consumer price index (CPI) rose 0.5%. The core rate, which aims to capture underlying inflationary pressures in the economy, rose to 8% in June on an annual basis from 7.8% in May. It rose 0.6% month on month, compared with the 0.7% month-on-month increase in May

The core rate excludes volatile items such as fresh food, as well as

Consumer price index



KAREN MOOLMAN Source: STATS SA

changes in interest rates

One reason for the greater rise in the core figure is the higher weighting given to oil in the index used to measure this rate. During June the petrol price rose 12c/l

The decline in the prime overdraft

rate on June 21 to 18% is not reflected in the June headline figure as the prices which make up the index are taken during the first week of the month

Kevin Lings, senior economist at Nedcor, expects the CPI year-on-year figure to drop to about 5% in July, largely due to the declines in the mortgage interest rate. He says the increases in the headline and core numbers in the past two months do not suggest renewed inflationary pressures. Manufacturing is operating at well below capacity and retail sales have been in a slump for some time. He does not foresee a retail shock effect from the oil price increase. For the year he expects a CPI rise of 5.8% and a core rise of 6.5%

Nico Czyponka, director of economics and strategy at SG Frankel Polak, said yesterday's maize production estimate, which raised the expected production figure by half a million tons, would also help reduce inflation. Earlier forecasts by the national crop estimates committee had expected crops to be hit hard by drought

Traders said that on the basis of the new estimates, maize futures should trade down today

Talks over cop's actions

UNION officials will meet Mpumalanga safety and security management this week to discuss concerns that police monitoring the 10-day-old strike at Columbus Stainless in Middelburg acted in a heavy-handed manner.

National Union of Metalworkers of SA spokesman Mr Dumisa Ntuli said yesterday: "Our members in Middelburg are treated harshly whenever there is a strike... there is an element of racism in this."

The provincial safety and security department confirmed that its head, Advocate Stanley Soko, would meet union president Mr Mtutuzeli Tom and assistant general secretary Peter Dantjie on Friday.

Two people were hospitalised with head injuries on Monday when workers on a legal strike over a wage dispute clashed with members of the public order policing unit at the Columbus plant in Middelburg.

Police fired rubber bullets and teargas at the group of strikers, allegedly after they refused to leave company premises in line with an interdict obtained last week, and started throwing stones.

Police arrested 151 Numsa members on charges of public violence, failing to comply with the interdict, and malicious damage to property. The workers remain in custody pending a court appearance on Friday.

A meeting has been scheduled for Thursday between Columbus Steel management and the union under the guidance of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Ntuli was not optimistic about the outcome of the talks.

"They must release workers before we can have amicable talks. The company also wants the 900 workers on strike to go back to work first, which is not acceptable," he said.

Highveld police Commissioner Ben Groenewald dismissed the charges of racism levelled against police.

He told Sapa that the Middelburg Magistrate's Court granted bail of R1 000 each to the strikers.

However, it had not come into effect because they refused to provide their names and addresses, he said.

Ntuli insisted that bail had not been granted.

He also alleged that Columbus had instructed Midmed, a private hospital to which the two injured strikers were admitted, to transfer the patients to a public hospital in Middelburg.

"They (Columbus Stainless) hate these workers," he charged. He said the two were transferred back to Midmed after the union's intervention.

The company's communications manager, Mr Lang Geldenhuys, said Columbus sent the workers to Midmed but that the hospital management had referred them to the provincial hospital.

The union is demanding a 9,7 percent wage increase, while Columbus is offering 7,1 percent plus 0,6 percent based on individual performance. — Sapa

Strike may be averted

Sowetan 27/7/99 (250) (152)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A CRIPPLING nationwide strike by more than 500 000 public service employees planned for Thursday is likely to be averted at the crucial public service bargaining council meeting in Pretoria today

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi expressed confidence earlier that a settlement would soon be reached

She said yesterday she was engaged in meetings in preparation for today's talks and that the unions should avoid disruptions to services

The leadership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions' three public sector unions indicated that nothing less than an inflation-related salary offer would persuade public servants to suspend strike action.

Police Prisons and Civil Rights Union president Zizamele Cebekhulu said he was positive that a settlement was imminent, but intimated that they expect nothing less than inflation rate, which stood at 7,4 percent

"Today's meeting will give the Government a last chance to avert the disruptive strike by public servants," National Education Health and Allied Workers spokesman Joe Lekola said

Despite a 13 percent decline in the number of public servants from 1,27 million to 1,1 million, personnel spending rose from 37 percent in 1994 to 52 percent today, the minister said

"Record payment for pensions, homeowner allowance and medical aid rose by over 60 percent, while over the past four years government



**Public Service and Administration
Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.**

had substantially improved the conditions of service, to be enhanced further by the new wage policy that addressed pay progression, the structure of negotiations on salaries and overtime

Meanwhile, the Council of Education Ministers yesterday condemned the threats of a teachers' strike, saying the state had done much to meet their salary demands

The council, comprising Education Minister Kader Asmal and his provincial counterparts, reiterated a policy of no-work no-pay would apply for teachers who had taken part in a mass march in Pretoria last Friday

Smelter sector may feel heat of Columbus strike

FRANK NXUMAIO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - More than 60 000 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) threatened yesterday to embark on a sympathy strike if the three-week Columbus Stainless strike was not resolved within a week

"The national leadership of the union has agreed that .. tough action must be taken against the company," said Dumsa Ntuli, Numsa's spokesman. "The union will call for interspersed solidarity strikes in all major smelter companies in support of the Columbus Stainless workers." He said such companies included Alusaf, Iscor,

Hulett's Aluminium, Samancor and Highveld Steel

"The union will also be approaching the Industrial Development Corporation, as the shareholders of the Columbus company, to speak to Columbus management," he said. "We definitely want all the shareholders to intervene speedily to resolve the impasse."

Columbus Stainless could not be reached for comment, but industry analysts believed the company would find it difficult to meet Numsa's demands of an increase of 7,7 percent across the board plus an improvement factor of not less than 2 percent. The company's revised offer is a flat 7,3 percent plus a 0,6 percent performance bonus

CF (BR) 28/7/99 (189) (152)

It's still no deal

(250) (152)

Sowetan 28/7/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

AWAY to avoid the planned nationwide strike by more than 500 000 public service workers had still to be found; this less than 24 hours before the mass action was due to kick-off. The impasse was confirmed by Government and union wage negotiators yesterday.

The Government had offered an additional R200 million in addition to the R3 billion already on the table, in a show "of commitment to settling the long-standing dispute", but this was rejected out of hand by all 12 public sector trade unions.

The latest offer amounted to 6,3 percent for the majority of public service workers currently earning a minimum wage of R1 500 a month and 6,8 percent for teachers.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi indicated earlier that a media briefing would be convened later today after the weekly Cabinet meeting had discussed the unions' rejection of the latest offer.

Fraser-Moleketi said the latest offer had once again demonstrated the Government's commitment to resolve the impasse amicably. She expressed disappointment with the unions' rejection and urged them to review their positions.

A strike in the current climate would be counter-productive and impact on services offered, Fraser-Moleketi said, pointing out that the latest offer, with automatic increases provided

in "rank and file promotions", would enhance health workers and police personnel remuneration to well above the inflation rate.

South African Democratic Teachers Union president Mr Willie Madishe, on behalf of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union and the Police Prisons and Civil Rights Unions urged the Government to reconsider seriously their offer before tomorrow since the unions were keen to see negotiations continue and thereby avert the planned strike.

He said the decision to embark on a strike was taken three weeks ago and, as responsible unions, they would "be happy to call off the strike" before it started "It is clear that an urgent resolution of this matter will be in the interest of the country as a whole and not as unilaterally projected by the employer in the pockets of the public servants," Madishe said.

Police union president Mr Zizamele Cebekhulu emphasised the unions' interest in "unlocking the deadlock" through preparations to provide skeleton staff in various essential services, if the strike began tomorrow. "That's why we give them 24 hours to come with a reasonable offer," he added.

Two independent unions, the National Public Servants and Allied Workers' Union and the Institute of Public Servants had staged a walkout earlier, objecting to the Government's proposal to replace the rank and file promotions system with a comprehensive new wage policy, the unions' spokesman Mr Mike Tihapane said.

'80% heed strike call'

Teachers and health workers among thousands taking action

APR 29/79 (250) (15a)

STAFF REPORTERS

The Congress of SA Trade Unions has hailed today's strike as a big success - and says 80% of workers in the public service are taking part.

They started a two-day strike today after national pay negotiations with the Government failed last night.

The strike involves members of the SA

Democratic Teachers' Union and the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union - people who work in the administrative wings of the departments of Health, Home Affairs, Education and Justice.

Nehru provincial secretary general Andrew Madella told a press conference that 14 000 workers in the province had downed tools.

The union has 18 000 members in the Western Cape.

"On Monday we will be assessing whether the Government has improved its wage offer. We will then consider if we should go on an indefinite strike. If we have no options, unfortunately we have to strike," said Mr Madella.

Workers in essential services, such as hospital operating theatres and the police

service, had not gone on strike, he said.

The Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popccru) has said it will not strike.

There was confusion at many Cape schools today - with some teachers at work, some at school but not teaching, and many pupils staying away.

The provincial secretary of Sashu, Don Pasquallie, said the union would have "broad consultation with teachers today."

before making a decision.

"In our coastal region, Mitchell's Plain teachers are striking. In the Kraaifontein area teachers decided to stay away today, but will report to their schools tomorrow, where they will withdraw their labour."

Education MEC Helen Zille said the strike had come at a critical time of the school year and warned it was potentially catastrophic.



Offer doesn't close the gap

A TEACHER on the lowest salary scale will have spent at least three years studying after matric, but earns about R1 750 a month. The state's proposed 6,5% increase will take that up to R1 860.

A teacher with five years experience on top of a degree or a diploma will earn about R4 500 a month — the government is offering to increase that to R4 783.

At the top end of the scale, a director in the education department earns about R18 500. Even though this person will get a lower percentage increase of 3,5%, his or her salary will go up to R19 100. Sadtu says this doesn't make sense.

"The lowest paid workers will receive a monthly increase of only R110 before tax while the highest managers will receive R607 before tax. Clearly this scenario is not addressing our demands for closing the wage gap in the public service" — Staff Writer

Strike affects 400 W Cape schools

(152) (321) et 30/7/99

JUDITH SOAL
MORE than 400 Western Cape schools were affected by yesterday's public sector strike, but health services and police carried on pretty much as usual.

It is not unreasonable to expect the "comrades" and the "bosses" to disagree during a labour dispute. You might guess they would differ on whether the workers' demands are reasonable; they are sure to clash over which party will emerge the victor and they may even have a contradictory interpretation of the laws governing industrial action.

That's only natural. It's when they present different "facts" that the media's job is difficult.

Take the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu).

At an 11am press conference Nehawu's Andrew Madella announced that its 14 000 mem-

bers had joined the national strike to protest against the government's offer of an average of 6,15% increase for public servants. He said only health workers directly involved in patient care — the minority of Nehawu members — were on the job. All health services had been severely affected.

Yet Health MEC Nick Koorhoff said later that services hadn't been affected at all. "According to my reports the impact was even less than last Friday when 1 811 health workers left their posts to join the march. We can only confirm 35 absentees."

The Cape Times went to Groote Schuur Hospital and was told not one worker was on strike. The same at Red Cross Children's Hospital, Tygerberg and Somerset hospitals said there had been a picket and protest at lunchtime, but healthcare continued uninterrupted. No disruptions were noted at the day hospitals either.

Now Koorhoff put this down to staff loyalty and thanked health workers for rejecting the union's call. But the people the Cape Times spoke to said they were just waiting for the word.

"We haven't heard anything, the shop steward hasn't been around," said one Nehawu member at Groote Schuur Hospital.

"Of course we are ready to strike. We will strike as soon as they tell us to," said another member at Red Cross Children's Hospital.

It was the same story for polling. Popcorn leader Mack Manuel said about 2 000 members — those not defined as essential service workers — were on strike. The prison authorities reported that no one had been missed.

It was in the schools that the strike caused the greatest disruption, but even here there was no consensus on just how great. Don Pasqualle of the SA Democratic

Teachers' Union (Sadtu) said 12 300 educators had downed chalk, the education department put the figure at 4 000.

"There were 427 schools affected out of 1 700 in the province," said Eugene Southgate, director of labour relations in the education department. "There was one school where all the teachers attended but many parents kept their children at home."

Some schools arranged for parents and volunteers to babysit when teachers left at 11am, but 202 schools closed early.

The schools affected were largely by the former Department of Education and Training and House of Representatives schools — in other words, the schools still largely attended by black and coloured pupils.

The "comrades" must be secretly disappointed with yesterday's turnout; the "bosses" admit it could be worse today.

Low turnout for strike

JUDITH SOAL

A SLOW start to the national public-sector strike didn't deter Cosatu unions from some tough talk yesterday. Come up with a better offer by Monday or there will be an indefinite strike — one that includes so-called essential services staff — from Tuesday, they said.

But their hand was significantly weakened by the lower-than-expected turnout around the country. Although many schools closed early, policing and health services were largely unaffected.

Although she must have been feeling buoyed, Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi refused to crow last night.

"Whether it is 10 teachers or 400 teachers out of 2 000 teachers (on strike), we still feel it is regrettable," she said. "I am still prepared to come to the table with labour at any moment."

It seems both sides are waiting for the other to move.

"We are prepared to talk through the weekend if necessary if the minister comes to us," said Cosatu regional organiser Anthony Dietrich.

Fraser-Moleketi reiterated her position: There will be no extra money for public-sector increases, the R3,2bn allocated so far is the limit. Where there might be room to manoeuvre is in the percentage increase to different levels of workers.

The unions were similarly adamant: "How can you enter

Turn to Page 3

(152)

CT 30/7/99

(250)

CT 30/7/99

Turnout low

From Page 1 (250) (152)

negotiations in good faith if you said at the beginning how much money was available?" asked Dietrich. "There must be flexibility."

Another point of disagreement with the definition of "essential workers" — those barred by law from striking.

The National Health Education and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) maintains that these are only health workers who deal directly with patients. The provincial health department says the definition includes all support staff, including theatre cleaners and carers.

Meanwhile, representatives of the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) met late yesterday to decide whether to call their members to join the strike — illegally — today.

"We decided to maintain the status quo," said Popcru's Mack Manuel. "But if the matter is not resolved by Monday we will call everyone out from Tuesday on."



What to do? teachers at Glendale High in Mitchell's Plain meet in the staffroom

300 000 answered

strike call, say unions

STAFF REPORTERS

The nationwide two-day strike by thousands of public sector workers continued for the second day today, with trade unions vowing not to let up until their demand for a 10% wage increase was granted.

Public sector unions estimated last night that just over 300 000 workers nationally had heeded the call to down tools. In the Western Cape the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union said 14 000 workers had taken part in the strike. The union has a paid up membership of 18 000 in the province.

Despite these estimates most Western Cape hospitals have reported little disturbance. Most of the pickets which Nehavu said would be held outside public service buildings had not materialised by this morning.

Nehavu provincial secretary general Andrew Madella told the Cape Argus they expected more workers to strike today.

Members especially those working at hospitals, were locked in meetings the whole day yesterday. These meetings were to determine which category of worker provided an essential service," he said.

The talks reached an impasse last night and workers have decided that they are going to strike come

what may Mr Madella added

Workers have threatened to go on an indefinite strike unless the government revises its wage offer by Tuesday.

The government is offering a 6.3% wage increase for the majority of public servants and 6.5% for teachers.

Department of Public Service and Administration spokesman Collen Msibi said the strike had not affected essential services at institutions like hospitals.

While the department had no monitoring systems, he was convinced that not much damage had been done by the strike.

Teachers picketed at various points on the Cape Flats today. Don Pasquale SA Democratic Teachers Union (Sattu) provincial secretary said teachers at many primary schools had been at schools yesterday as parents had not been informed of the strike.

"Because of the time factor many schools did not have time to convey the message of the strike to parents. This meant that primary school teachers remained in their classes until the schools closed."

But teachers would not be in their classrooms today.

Meanwhile the Democratic Party (DP) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) have called on workers to return to work.

Kids roam streets as teachers strike

'What about us?' demand angry pupils due to write matric soon

LINETTE JOHNS AND YAZZAN MERA

Staff Reporters

Children throughout Cape Town were wandering the streets aimlessly for the second day today as striking teachers gathered to picket in support of their wage demands.

And an indefinite public service strike looms if the Government does not increase its offer from 6.15% to at least 8.15%.

Yesterday teachers who were members of the South African Democratic Teachers Union Sattu, were huddled in meetings sitting in the sun or talking in staff rooms. Union members had been instructed to report to schools but to withdraw their labour.

Monday is expected to be a normal school day but if the wage negotiations don't succeed by then, teachers could stop again from Tuesday.

But at Athlone High where only four teachers are Sattu members, noisy students were settling in for lessons.

Deputy principal Mary Ann Wilson however refused to allow a Cape Argus news team to photograph teachers at work.

We do sympathise with the cause but our teachers are still waiting on a mandate from their union the Teacher's League of South Africa," she said.

She said teachers did not want to cause a rift between their union and Sattu.

Down the road from Athlone High at Blossom Road Primary teachers dozed off at 10.30am and after a staff meeting decided to support the strike.

Most former Model C schools in Cape Town were unaffected by the strike.

Children not in class yesterday found different ways to amuse themselves. A group of boys was having a great time playing cricket close to Silewela Primary in Klipfontein Road Athlone until they were heard back to school by the principal even although other children had already left the school.

For many pupils the strike provided a chance to sleep late and relax but for matric pupils the situ-

ation looked grim.

Belgravia High School pupils waiting for buses and taxis in Klipfontein Road said they would not go to school today because of the strike.

It will just be a waste of time," Khululiwa a Madina said. "What if they decide to strike indefinitely? What about us?"

With only 30 school days left before matric exams Khululiwa from Bulemko High in Khayelitsha said she was getting nervous. Her friend Babatla a Minkwezo who wants to study fashion design



Where's the bus? with no teachers on hand to give them lessons, pupils from Silverlea Primary in Athlone wait patiently for a bus to take them home

next year said "If the strike continues how will we pass? I am so scared I will fail."

Other pupils who did not want to be identified said that if they failed Grade 11 this year the teachers would say it was because they had not studied enough.

However they are the ones who are not teaching enough," said one angry pupil.

Teachers said they would go back to work only after getting an inflation related increase.

It is expected that a strike ballot could be called today.

Jonavon Rustin, Sattu's inland regional chairman, said that if an indefinite strike was called, committees would be consulted.

"Sattu does not want to disrupt education, but we need commitment from our employer to treat bargain seriously. Their shift from 5.7% to 6.15% is not serious negotiation," he said.

At Glendale High in Mitchell's Plain pupils went home, but teachers remained at school, debating union issues. They were convinced

the Government could not enforce the no-work-no-pay rule as teachers had reported for school.

We told the children about the strike and they took the decision to leave," said principal Achmat Chocua. At Zingisa Primary in Gugulethu teachers were sitting in the middle of the quad, enjoying the winter sun and their lunches while a school guard guarded the gate.

At Bongela Lower Primary most of the classrooms were deserted but a group of young girls sat in a circle working on an assignment.

Schools the most affected by civil sector strike

Sowetan 30/7/99

By Sowetan Reporters

EDUCATION was the main casualty when many teachers heeded the call by public service unions to strike yesterday after their wage talks with the Government deadlocked this week.

Areas of the public service affected by the strike included hospitals, schools, courts, police stations, prisons, and home affairs.

The strike has been called by Congress of South African Trade Union (Cosatu) affiliates, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu), the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru).

The strike started slowly yesterday morning with teachers reporting to their schools and then later abandoning classes.

In Soweto teachers picketed and held meetings.

In Mpumalanga and Northern Province teachers did not even report to work as was the case with teachers in Lenasia, the Vaal and the East Rand.

However, teachers in mostly white schools reported for work.

But there was confusion among civil servants around Johannesburg when the strike started with some workers still on duty while others were toying in the streets.

The Home Affairs offices in Johannesburg were shut down with notices saying that the industrial action had disrupted services until further notice.

However, at the Home Affairs offices in New Canada, outside Soweto workers were officially on duty. But some were waiting outside because there was an electrical breakdown.

Warders and staff at the Johannesburg Prison were also on duty.

The justice system took a knock as well as the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court almost ground to a halt yesterday as members of the Nehawu embarked on a picket.

A group of court-officials who are also members of Nehawu disrupted court proceedings.

There was little disruption at many of the big hospitals in the province including Chris Hani-Baragwanath hospital with many departments reporting a 100 percent turnout.

At the busy casualty department, all the staff turned up for work, according to chief professional nurse, Ms Lucy Tahabalala.

During his visit to Soweto, Minister Kader Asmal told irate teachers who were picketing that the Government regretted the strike but everything was being done to resolve the dispute.

Government employees in the health, safety and security, correctional services and education departments were not supposed to go on strike because they are employed in essential services, said Public Service Administration Affairs Department spokesman Mr Colin Msibi.

However, Cosatu said yesterday that their members in essential services would ensure that there was a skeleton staff left behind to carry out duties.

Spokesman for the department of health Mr Stephen Hendricks said: "Our staff will be on duty and those who go on a strike will be dealt with as stipulated by the Labour Relations Act."

"We hope it will not have to come to that. We are monitoring the situation and getting reports on an ongoing basis."

Police spokesman Superintendent Strim Govender said police, in terms of the labour relations and police Acts, are prohibited from participating in any strike. Doing so would be a contravention of both Acts, he said.

The impact of the first day of the strike forced three major hospitals in Pretoria to limit the intake of patients.

Meanwhile, spokesperson for the Department of Correctional Services Mr Vusi Shabalala told *Sowetan* that as far as they were concerned more than 90 percent of staff reported for work yesterday.

The Eastern Cape region of Cosatu reported yesterday that their strike would start today when services were expected to be disrupted by the non-attendance of civil service workers.

National strike may intensify

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A slow start to yesterday's nationwide public service strike by three Congress of South Africa Trade Unions-allied unions is likely to intensify today when more workers are expected to take part.

An estimated 300 000 civil servants reportedly participated in workplace demonstrations yesterday, the three unions said.

National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) president Mr Vusi Nhlapo said all the unions had come up with a programme of action in preparation for intensifying the industrial action to be announced on Monday.

Members of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadu), the Police, Prisons and Civil Rights Union (Popcru) and Nehawu participated in the strike action throughout the country yesterday in support of their demand for a 10 percent wage increase.

Nhlapo said the strike was evaluated on an hourly basis and the national leadership monitored schools, government buildings, police stations and prisons to ensure the provision of skeleton staff to manage essential services.

No meetings were planned between the Government and the unions today, but union leaders said that they were looking forward to resuming negotiations. Though limited disruption of services were reported, the protest action was effective, Popcru president Mr Zizamele Cebekhulu said.

He denied that police and prison wardens were participating in the strike because of confusion, insisting that those who reported for work manned essential services.

In Pretoria, sporadic incidents of picketing were reported in Garankuwa, Pretoria Academic and Kalafong hospitals, according to Nehawu strike coordinator Mr Shabane Dlangalala. The Departments of Public Service, Education, Foreign Affairs, Justice and Trade and Industry in the city centre were picketed by a few placard-carrying protesters.

Sadu president Mr Willie Madisha, who expressed gratitude for the support shown by most teachers, condemned and regretted the shooting of three teachers who were Sadu members at a Soweto high school.

Breakdown of govt's pay offer

- The Government's offer of pay will get an increase of R138 from R1 978 to R2 116 a month.
- Nurses have been offered a 6.3 per cent increase. The annual earnings of sergeants will increase from R47 613 to R53 361.
- Student nurses' annual earnings will increase from R27 444 to R29 287.
- Annual earnings for the police will increase from R2 287 to R2 492 a month.
- Annual earnings for the police inspectors will rise from R59 307 to R65 289.
- The annual earnings of nurses in the middle category will increase from R38 460 to R40 875, translating into an increase of R201 from R3 205 to R3 406 a month.
- The annual pay for police captains will increase from R74 211 to R82 305.
- Matrons will receive a five percent increase. Their annual salaries will increase from R89 454 to R93 927.
- Matrons' monthly salaries will go up by R674 from R6 184 to R6 858.
- Clerical officers have been offered a 5.2 percent increase which will push their annual earnings from R20 997 to R22 117.
- This means student constables will receive a 10 percent increase from R1 789 to R1 959.

Low turnout for strike

JUDITH SOAL

A SLOW start to the national public-sector strike didn't deter Cosatu unions from some tough talk yesterday. Come up with a better offer by Monday or there will be an indefinite strike — one that includes so-called essential services staff — from Tuesday, they said.

But their hand was significantly weakened by the lower-than-expected turnout around the country. Although many schools closed early, policing and health services were largely unaffected.

Although she must have been feeling buoyed, Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi refused to crow last night.

"Whether it is 10 teachers or 400 teachers out of 2 000 teachers (on strike), we still feel it is regrettable," she said. "I am still prepared to come to the table with labour at any moment."

It seems both sides are waiting for the other to move. "We are prepared to talk through the weekend if necessary if the minister comes to us," said Cosatu regional organiser Anthony Dietrich.

Fraser-Moleketi reiterated her position. There will be no extra money for public-sector increases, the R3,2bn allocated so far is the limit. Where there might be room to manoeuvre is in the percentage increase to different levels of workers.

The unions were similarly adamant. "How can you enter

□ Turn to Page 3 (152) CT 30/7/99 (250)

CT 30/7/99

Turnout low

□ From Page 1 (250) (152)

negotiations in good faith if you said at the beginning how much money was available?" asked Dietrich. "There must be flexibility."

Another point of disagreement was the definition of "essential workers" — those barred by law from striking.

The National Health Education and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu) maintains that these are only health workers who deal directly with patients. The provincial health department says the definition includes all support staff, including theatre cleaners and caterers.

Meanwhile, representatives of the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) met late yesterday to decide whether to call their members to join the strike — illegally — today.

"We decided to maintain the status quo," said Popcru's Mack Manuel. "But if the matter is not resolved by Monday we will call everyone out from Tuesday on."

Public service strike 'not over'

BD 30/7/99 (152)(250)
Reneé Grawitzky

PUBLIC service workers could continue to strike next week if union leaders are not satisfied by government movement on their pay demands

Initially planned for two days, the strike could resume on Tuesday if government refused to move on its R3,2bn allocation, or increases ranging between 4% and 6,8%, union leaders said yesterday

As the strike entered its second day, the three public service unions aligned with the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and involved in the strike have demanded a meeting with President Thabo Mbeki in his capacity as African National Congress (ANC) president. The call comes ahead of an ANC national executive committee meeting this weekend at which the strike is likely to be discussed

The three unions — the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union, the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popcru) and the SA Democratic Teachers' Union — said workers had responded to the call to strike. While it was slow to start, by afternoon about 300 000 workers had taken part in demonstrations and pickets, union leaders said.

"This is a clear message that the workers are angered by the present average government offer of 6,15%," the unions said. They expected support for the strike to grow as it entered its second day today.

Reports indicated that schools were the most affected, with up to 80% of teachers around the country heeding the strike call.

The effectiveness of the strike in es-

sential services such as health was more difficult to assess. Workers in essential services could go on strike only if hospitals agreed on minimum service arrangements ensuring that some staff were at work to ensure the continued and effective delivery of services. By yesterday few hospitals had reached such agreements.

There were sporadic reports of disruption of hospital services. The health department said all indications were that most facilities around the country were operational. Lunch-time pickets took place at a number of hospitals.

Clarity has yet to be obtained on whether police and correctional services staff may strike, even if minimum service arrangements are agreed to, because the Police Act prohibits strikes.

Popcru said its members were on strike but groups of policemen wandering around the centre of Johannesburg denied they were on strike, saying they were on duty, "observing the pickets" outside the offices of Gauteng finance MEC Jabu Moleketi.

A similar response was received from police who put up a roadblock on a route into Soweto. Asked why the roadblock had been set up, they responded "We are working."

The Cosatu-aligned public service unions said they were still open to negotiations. Members are expected to report back to work on Monday to assess the strike and possible further action.

Meanwhile, unions aligned to the Federation of Unions of SA plan to hold countrywide marches today, starting strike action on Tuesday.

Cosatu plans to march in Pretoria tomorrow to protest against continued job losses throughout the economy.

Strike deadlock not over yet

Essential services threatened as unions push for bigger pay increases

ESTELLE RANDALL
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Striking public service workers will return to work on Monday but may resume the stoppage if their wage deadlock with the Government is not broken.

But besides wages, agreements about minimum service conditions must be met before workers in essential services - health, policing and prisons - can embark on a legal strike.

About a third of public service employees work in essential services.

According to the Labour Relations Act essential service workers may not embark on legal strike action unless they have concluded minimum service agreements at their places of work.

Meeting yesterday, unions and essential service managers were unable to reach agreement. Instead, they agreed to meet sometime in the near future.

If such workers are prevented from embarking on a legal strike, observers believe they could take other forms of disruptive action, which may be more difficult to manage.

The strike is the first major challenge to President Thabo Mbeki's six week-old government and a baptism of fire for new Public Service and Administration Minister General du Preez Moleken.

Over the past two days South Africa's 1.1 million public-sector employees engaged in demonstrations and pickets to press home their demands for an inflation linked pay increase of up to 10%.

Unions said about 300 000 employees heeded the strike call, which according to reports, mainly affected schools. Essential services such as policing and health care were largely unaffected.

Despite the two-day strike, the Government has maintained that it cannot meet the unions' demands for a 10% increase without compromising delivery of social services. Since negotiations began almost



WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED about 2 500 public-sector workers picketed in the centre of Pretoria yesterday to demand wage increases

Picture PETER ANDREWS

seven months ago, the Government has revised its offer twice. A week ago the Government shifted from 5.7% to 6% for most civil servants and 6.5% for teachers. This week it increased the offer to 6.3% for about 90% of employees and 6.8% for teachers. The latest offer would add R200-million to the R3 billion budget for public sector increases.

But the unions who at first demanded a 15% increase maintain this is not enough. "We would like to see them make a major shift, of say 6.7% or 6.8% for the lowest paid workers," said Abbey Withoof, general secretary of police union Popertu.

Mr Withoof said the unions were ready to go back to the negotiating table so that the Government could reassess the situation when workers were back at work on Monday. The strike has thrown into stark relief the dilemma the Government faces of cutting its spending on wage costs - so that it can put more into developing infrastructure for basic needs - and honing a public service that is able to deliver in crucial areas such as education, health care and policing.

Although the public service shed about 13% of the personnel it had in 1994, most of these were in lower level and part time jobs. Since 1994 the number of teachers and nurses has increased by about 40 000. The wage bill has also increased at about 1% above inflation between 1997 and 1998.

This year the public sector wage bill will devour up to 51% of the budget which does not go towards servicing debt. According to information from the Department of Public Service and Administration, the average annual salary for educators is R67 057. For nurses, it is R52 026 and for the police, R59 787.

Currently teachers, health workers, the police and correctional services workers make up the bulk of the 1.1 million public-service workers. While the Government has maintained that the difference in percentage terms is not large, it amounts to thousands in rands. An increase of half percent on the Government's current offer means R250-million more.

Some observers believe that if deadlock continues the strike could develop a momentum of its own. Twelve unions are involved in the

dispute, which may make co-ordination difficult. The three largest - the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (Nehawu), the Police and Prisons Civil Union (Popertu) and the SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) - are affiliates of the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu). Others are affiliated to the Federation of Unions of SA Unions (Fedusa) or are unaffiliated.

While the Cosatu unions called on their members to strike this week, Fedusa has indicated that its members will strike this Tuesday. And, while Popertu has indicated a reluctance to engage in a full-scale strike, the South African Police Union, which is not affiliated to Cosatu, has hinted that it may call on its members to do so. Jerry Botzolo, of the Fedusa affiliated Hospital Personnel Trade Union, said his union would consider a full blown strike, even though most of its workers provided essential services and could face dismissal.

The Cosatu affiliated Nehawu did not participate in a lunchtime demonstration by about 200 members of Fedusa outside the main gates of Parliament yesterday. Nehawu's Parliamentary Liaison Officer Mark Sweet said the union would continue to seek negotiations with the Government.

There have been no major disruptions so far but a protracted strike could result in serious problems in the crucial areas where the Government has pledged to improve delivery. Education, in particular, could be hardest hit with matric exams on the horizon. Last year there was only a 50% matric pass rate.

Teachers comprise about 30% of public service workers and schools have so far been most affected by the stand-off between the Government and the unions.

Bheki Nkomo, of the Education Ministry, said yesterday that about half of South Africa's 320 000 teachers had heeded the strike call and that township schools were most affected.

The New National Party has called for teachers to be declared as essential service workers.

152 (192) (200) AKG 31 7 | 99

Civil servants promise bigger show next week

BRENDAN BOYLE

Johannesburg - South African public servants ended their two-day walkout yesterday vowing to mount a bigger and broader strike against President Thabo Mbeki's new government if their wage demands were not met.

David Makhura, of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, said participation yesterday was up from the estimated 300 000 who joined the strike on Thursday.

"Our overall impression is that today the strike had more impact than it had on Thursday, even to the point that some essential services were affected," he said.

Unions representing half of the 1.1 million public sector staff are demanding a 10% wage increase. The Government has offered increases between 6.2 and 6.8%.

Reacting to the first major public sector strike since the transition from apartheid to democracy in 1994, the Government has warned that strikers will not be paid and essential service staff who strike will face disciplinary action.

Bhekani Khumalo, of the Education Ministry, said about half of the country's 320 000 teachers downed chalk for a second day yesterday but no serious incidents were reported at schools.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, who heads the Government's negotiating team, declined to comment yesterday.

The ministry said it had received a note from the unions calling for action by tomorrow to avert a potentially more damaging strike on Tuesday.

(152) (270) ARK 31/7/99

The fight is getting very rough indeed!

Nehawu president Vusi Nhlapho said the unions had met the Government during the strike, but there was no move now to resume the talks.

Mr Makhura said the unions would probably resume the strike on Tuesday if the Government did not improve its R3.2 billion wage offer.

"We're meeting on Sunday as leaders of the three public-sector unions and we will decide then what action to take from Tuesday," he said.

"If there is going to be any progress, it can only come from the Government. They are the only ones who can make a meaningful step forwards."

Mr Makhura said the unions would remain open to negotiations based on the country's 7.3% consumer inflation rate but

that the Government would have to make a significant new offer.

"If there is no movement from the Government by Monday, it is logical to assume that our action will escalate," he said.

Mainly white unions representing about 160 000 public-sector workers joined the strike yesterday and have echoed the threat of escalated action next week.

The strike had little obvious impact, but witnesses reported long queues at hospitals and border-control points.

Political analysts described the strike, which comes just six weeks after Mr Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela as president, as a challenge to the Government's commitment to fiscal discipline.

"The fight is becoming very rough indeed. The big question now is who is going to blink first," said political commentator David Walsh. - Reuters

New law could limit right to strike

By MALOSE MONAMA

A LANDMARK decision with serious ramifications for workers handed down in the Labour Appeal Court recently has gone relatively unnoticed due to the jostling on the labour front that is dominating the headlines.

The unprecedented decision limits the right to strike and empowers employers to dismiss workers involved in a legally protected strike subject to certain conditions.

The finding that operational requirements may justify dismissal of employees participating in a legally protected strike, even if the operational requirements arise from the strike itself provided that the other requirements of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) are met, was passed down by Judge Froneman, deputy Judge President of the Transvaal High Court.

Delivering the unanimous decision of a bench of three judges, Justice Froneman commented that the LRA seeks to protect striking employees from dismissal if they play the power game according to rules,

but the LRA also seeks to safeguard the continued commercial viability of enterprises, even in strike situations.

This clash of interests lay at the heart of a dispute between Afrox - represented by Bernard Matheson of Webber Wentzel and Bowens, and the South African Chemical Workers' Union.

Judge Froneman found that one of the primary objects of the LRA was to give effect to the fundamental labour rights in the Constitution. These include a right to strike. There is no explicit constitutional right to dismiss striking workers.

The Constitution however, also enshrines a right to fair labour practices. These rights are given expression and regulated in the LRA.

The LRA places a number of significant limitations on the right to strike, while the employer's fundamental right to fair labour practices is recognised in his right to dismiss an employee for a fair reason based on operational requirements, provided fair procedure is followed.

The LRA states that an employer

may not dismiss an employee for participating in a protected strike and any action by the employer in this regard is automatically unfair.

Other sections of the LRA, however, provide that dismissal in these circumstances may be fair if it relates to the employee's conduct during a protected strike based on the employer's operational requirements.

"Operational requirements" are those based on the economic, technological, structural or similar needs of an employer.

The LRA also provides that once the employee has proved that he has been dismissed the onus is on the employer to prove that it is fair.

Judge Froneman rejected the argument that dismissal based on operational requirements flowing from a protected strike should be barred.

The right to strike was functionally limited because the right to work depended on the continued existence in economic terms of the enterprise.

"A right to strike is predicated on the very existence of an enterprise providing for employment for the

employees who wish to exercise that right.

"The employer's right to fair labour practices in the form of a right to a fair dismissal based on operational requirements must come into play when the exercise of the right to strike threatens the continued operation of the employer's enterprise."

The court found that in protected strike dismissals based on operational needs an employer must prove that - in addition to considering other options to avoid the dismissals - it paid proper attention to allowing the outcome of the protected strike to be dictated by the normal power play involved in these situations.

Matheson, who represented Afrox, says the judgement is of major importance for both employers and unions.

If a union through strike action pushes through its demands too hard, it may force the employer to restructure and the issue will be come not the demands for improved conditions of employment, but whether it will become necessary to retrench employees.

'Remove teachers' rights to strike'

By MALOSE MONAMA and SIMBA MAKUNIKE

THE FACT that education in traditionally black areas ground to an almost complete halt during the two-day strike action by Cosatu aligned public sector unions has resulted in calls to withdraw the right to strike from teachers.

Many township and village schools were desolate on Thursday and Friday as teachers heeded calls for a stay away to press for a 10 per cent wage increase. Ironically, it was business as usual in traditionally white schools.

Mosibudi Mangena, Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) president, and Rudi Helne, Democratic Party spokesperson for labour, this week called for an amendment to the Labour Relations Act to have teaching classified as an essential service, thus preventing teachers from going on strike. They called for the amendment of Section 71(10) of the LRA to include teachers.

Helne said the DP believes teaching is as important as policing and should therefore be included in this category.

Mangena argued that education was crucial for the future of "innocent children" and should be protected by the act. Sectors such as health, policing and defence which are classified "essential services" barely felt the strike pinch.

Helne said the DP called on Education Minister Professor Kader Asmal to support its call to change the



TEACHER + DECENT SALARY = GOOD IDEA. Protesting teachers march on the Gauteng department of education offices to demand a 10 percent salary increase for public servants. Picture Sipho Maluka

"essential services" provision in the LRA to include teachers.

Teachers are expected to return to work tomorrow while their unions assess the impact of the strike charting the way forward.

Although the impact of the strike is difficult to measure in Rand terms, labour analysts and economists interviewed by City Press said it had had little effect on government's operations.

Labour expert Duncan Innes said "What happened on Thursday and Friday was not very serious. The government was still able to provide basic services (except for education)".

He said the government would only begin to feel the pinch if the strike continued. "At the moment the two parties seem to be digging in. I think the government will want to settle below the 7.3 headline inflation and the unions will probably accept an eight percent increase."

"Both sides are still sampling the

other's might and the one who feels the pinch first will settle," he said.

Finance Minister Trevor Manuel and his public service counterpart, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, were adamant that government could not afford a 10 percent increase.

Giving in to the workers' demands would entail suspending some relief programmes and failure to meet the Growth, Employment and Redistribution targets set by the government.

They have since improved the government offer from R3 billion to R3.2 billion, representing a 6.3 percent offer. The unions turned it down.

Another labour expert, Gavin Brown, said the government was in a precarious position and could end up in a "no win" situation if no settlement is reached soon. "The government's options are clear. If it gives in to the unions and agrees to the unbudgeted expenditure, it will trigger an inflation spiral. Interest rates will stop dropping and confi-

dence in the monetary system will be shattered.

"If it sticks to its latest offer and the workers do not budge the economy will suffer a backlash."

He said a jobs for wages deal, in which the government substantially cuts the civil service and uses the savings to reward key personnel like nurses, teachers and policemen, could be a lasting solution to the public service wage problem.

The strikes coincided with the 78th anniversary of the SACP which held a series of meetings around the country this weekend.

Clashes between government and the ANC's alliance partners, Cosatu and the SACP over the public sector wage dispute and earlier threats to retrench at parastatals will be one of the topics discussed at next week's alliance meeting.

The ANC National Executive Council met this weekend to prepare for the alliance meeting and to discuss issues such as the next session of parliament.

CP 1/8/99

(152)
CP 1/8/99

Nestle faces strike on agency shop agreement

Simphiwe Xako (186) (152)

NESTLE SA faces a one-day national strike by Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) members today in support of their demand for the introduction of an agency shop agreement

Meanwhile, a wage strike by members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) at Columbus Stainless in Middelburg enters its third week

Fawu spokesman, Dumisani Yoyo, accused Nestle of opposing transformation. The agency shop agreement would require all employees, irrespective of whether they are union members, to pay a levy into a special fund administered by the union.

The company said last night it was prepared to introduce an agency shop, with the exception of employees belonging to another union. Fawu's demands include those belonging to minority unions.

Members of the Transport and General Workers Union are to embark on countrywide marches today to protest against job losses. This is part of the Congress of SA Trade Union's programme to defend existing jobs and ensure the creation of new jobs.

Cosatu was due to hold countrywide marches on Saturday, but some did not take place.

BD 2/8/99

'Racism' at Nestlé sparks march today

FRANK NXUMALO

(186) (152)

CT(PR) 2/8/99 LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) said on Friday it would lead about 3 000 of its members through the streets of Johannesburg today to demonstrate against racism at Nestlé South Africa

At issue was the deadlock over an agency shop agreement which was an instrument of the new Labour Relations Act of 1995 aimed at preventing non-unionised workers from freely benefiting from the struggles of trade unions with management at the collective bargaining unit

The shop agency agreement achieved this target by forcing non-unionised employees to pay a levy to a special fund administered by the union

Fawu said a compromise had been reached in 1997 in the bargaining unit, which consisted of job categories 10 to 19 using the Peromnes grading system

Lizo Mzendane, Fawu's national organising secretary, said following the compromise that the union had insisted the agency shop agreement cover all job

categories in the bargaining unit

"Nestlé refused to do so, arguing that management was prepared to apply the agreement only from job grades 14 to 19 because most whites were in grades 10 to 13

"The company claimed white employees in these categories had skills and could strike and therefore put the company in a difficult position," Mzendane said "We reject with contempt the naked protection of white privilege at the expense of our members"

However Nestlé said the majority of employees in grades 10 to 13 were "not white"

The company said there was a strong moral argument against an agency shop agreement as a limit to individual choice

"Fawu's claim does not recognise the choice of workers to belong to a minority trade union," said Dave Jelley, the director of Nestlé South Africa

"The objective of the agency shop agreement is to discourage free riders benefiting from union negotiations. Workers who choose to join minority small unions are not free riders"

Strike postponed for more talks

SAPA AND STAFF REPORTERS

Three public sector unions today postponed their strike and said they were ready to resume pay talks with the Government tomorrow.

"The Minister for Public Service and Administration (Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi) has expressed eagerness for the parties to return to the negotiating table," South African Democratic Teachers' Union president Willy Madisha said at a news conference in Johannesburg.

"In the light of this, the Congress of

South African Trade Unions' public sector unions have agreed to return to the table and to postpone further strike so that normal service to the public may be resumed pending the outcome of such negotiations."

Sadtu, along with the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union, will, however, continue to hold lunchtime pickets and mass meetings this week to press home their demands.

The three unions would consider reverting to a full-blown strike next Monday if the talks were unsuccessful, a spokesman said.

Members of the three unions were expected to return to work today after a strike that mainly affected schools and hospital support services last Thursday and Friday.

Nehawu president Vusi Nhlapo declined to discuss the union's bottom line, but he said the union would go into tomorrow's talks demanding a "graduated 10% increase".

This would in fact mean increases of above 10% for lower paid workers and below 10% for highly paid public servants, Mr Nhlapo said.

ARG 2/8/99

(152)

(250)

National strike called off

Sowetan 2/8/99 (250) (102)
By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE nationwide public sector strike by three Congress of South African Trade Unions-affiliated unions has been suspended and 500 000 members will report for work today, union officials announced yesterday.

While other unions engaged in the wage dispute vowed to intensify the strike and protest actions this week, National Education Health and Allied Workers Union, Police Prisons and Civil Rights Union and

the SA Democratic Teachers Union took a respite to assess the situation.

Nehawu deputy general secretary Mr David Makhura, speaking on behalf of the three unions, said it was decided that the action be suspended after union leaders had conducted a series of report-back meetings countrywide at the weekend.

Union members were urged to wait for a directive from the three unions as they were locked in meetings last night to decide on the effectiveness of their strategy, he said.

It is understood that Government

negotiators and the unions have held informal talks since the strike started last Thursday, but this was vehemently denied yesterday by the leaders of the three unions.

Institute of Public Servants and Public Union of Servants and Allied Workers spokesman Mr Jav Bhalí said their members would go out on strike today, but insisted the call to heed the strike was "a voluntary one" on its 69 000 membership.

Federation of South African unions also announced it would mount its protest demonstration today.

Strike hits courts, cases postponed

STAFF REPORTERS AND SAPA

(252)(152)

Court proceedings in several major cities continued to be disrupted today as a strike by court interpreters and prosecutors entered its second day.

Several hearings had to be postponed in centres such as Johannesburg, Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Durban and Cape Town, said Justice department spokesman Heinrich Augustyn in Pretoria.

"I won't say that courts are being crippled as only one union is continuing with the industrial action," he said.

The strike is being organised by the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (Nupsaw) to press for a 10% pay rise.

Nupsaw joined 11 other public service unions last week in rejecting the State's latest offer of a 6,3% raise for most employees.

The Nupsaw strike, which started yesterday, continued despite the resumption

of pay talks between the State and the unions today.

Centres such as Welkom in the Free State and Wynberg in the Western Cape were also affected by Nupsaw's stoppage.

A senior official at Wynberg Magistrate's Court reported that only three interpreters were on duty, leading to a substantial number of cases not proceeding. Twenty-five interpreters, some clerks and five prosecutors had joined in the strike.

"We are not seriously affected as we have planned ahead," said chief magistrate Bertus Jooste.

Nupsaw claimed support services had been disrupted at Groote Schuur Hospital and the Odi Hospital in Mabopane in the North West Province.

Groote Schuur Hospital spokeswoman Phillipa Johnson said a small group of strikers had picketed the hospital, but services were running normally and no patients had been compromised.

■ About 150 members of the Public and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (Pawusa) protested outside the main entrance to the parliamentary complex in Cape Town.

The protesters chanted slogans and some carried placards bearing the words "Geraldine you liar, analysts confirm that there's money for us", referring to Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

The Pawusa members plan to march through the streets of the city in support of their demands for a 10% wage increase.

Pawusa spokesman William Hoffmeester said depending on the outcome of the meeting between unions and the government later today, the union was likely to declare its programme of action for the week.

The protest proceeded peacefully and police monitored the situation from a distance - Sapa

Wage talks resume as Fedusa members strike

Reneé Grawitzky and Sapa

(152) (250) 20 3/8/99

THE resumption of wage talks between government and public service unions today coincides with a one-day strike by employees affiliated to the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa).

The return to the bargaining table comes in the wake of a series of weekend meetings aimed at ending the deadlock over wages.

Public service unions aligned to the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) met on Sunday night to assess last week's two-day strike and to explore options for a settlement.

At the same time, the African National Congress (ANC) national executive committee emerged with a neutral statement on the dispute. It called on Cosatu to return to the parliamentary portfolio committee on finance so that labour could participate in discussions on the budgetary process.

The ANC did not comment on the substance of the dispute.

A special Cosatu executive committee meeting today is expected to discuss the issue. The Cosatu unions said consideration should be given to ensuring that future negotiations are concluded ahead of the budget so that proper negotiations can take place.

The Cosatu unions have suspended their programme of action pending further talks in the public service co-

ordinating bargaining council

The unions said yesterday that depending on the outcome of talks, further strike action could be contemplated from next Monday.

National Education Health and Allied Workers Union president Vusi Nhlapo declined to comment on whether the unions had revised their demand for a 10% increase implemented on a sliding scale. "We know where we are going to settle," he said.

Government's current offer is 6,8% for teachers and between 4% and 6,3% for other public servants, with an average of 6,3%.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said government believed "there is room for discussion" on the R3,2bn allocation currently on the table.

The Fedusa-aligned Hospital Personnel Trade Union of SA said ahead of today's strike that government had refused in most provinces to ensure minimum service agreements were in place so that some workers classified as essential could participate.

Meanwhile, some magistrate and regional courts were affected by yesterday's strike by the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers.

The union claimed that courts in Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Welkom were affected. It said the action would continue indefinitely unless the state improved its pay offer.

ut
f
ion
that
ie
als
ia
he
e
n
he
ig
n
at
cal
i
and

Unions reject govt's 'final offer'

W Renee Grawitzky

THE PUBLIC service unions rejected yesterday a further revised government offer which would add an additional R80m to the current wage offer of R3 2bn

This revised "final offer" would effectively grant teachers and the lowest-paid earners a 7% increase while remaining public servants would receive an average 6.3%

Nurses and police, depending on seniority, could receive increases ranging between 5% and 6.3%

More senior officials would receive increases ranging between 4% and 4.5%

Teachers have argued that they deserve a higher increase because they are not eligible for automatic promotions that are available to the majority of other public servants. As a result government offered teachers a 6.3%

increase plus 0.7% for salary progression

The unions rejected the offer because it was not linked to inflation, which is currently 7.3%. All parties agreed to go back to their respective constituencies to seek a revised mandate and resume talks on Friday

Government believed its revised offer constituted a significant shift from its initial offer. Since the unions declared a dispute in April, government has tabled an additional R280m to its initial budget allocation of R3bn. Unions have in turn revised their initial demand from 15% to 10%, introduced on a sliding scale

There were indications yesterday that some unions wished to move off this demand, with the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers revising its demand down to 8.5%

There has been speculation that the

Cosatu unions have revised their demand, but no such indications were evident during talks yesterday

Government's revised offer follows a two-day strike last week by public service unions aligned to the Congress of SA Trade Unions and a one-day strike yesterday by unions aligned to the Federation of Unions of SA

Meanwhile, production at Northam Platinum Mine in North West was affected yesterday after 4 200 workers went on strike demanding their contributions from the company provident fund

This demand is reminiscent of a demand faced by Anglo American Platinum Mines (Amplats) in 1996 which subsequently led to a lengthy and violent strike

In the case of Northam, with the closure of Gold Fields of SA administration of the fund was taken over by another company

MD 481 99 (and) (152)



AKG 4/8/99
(272) (192)

High Court at standstill as officials join strike

STAFF REPORTERS

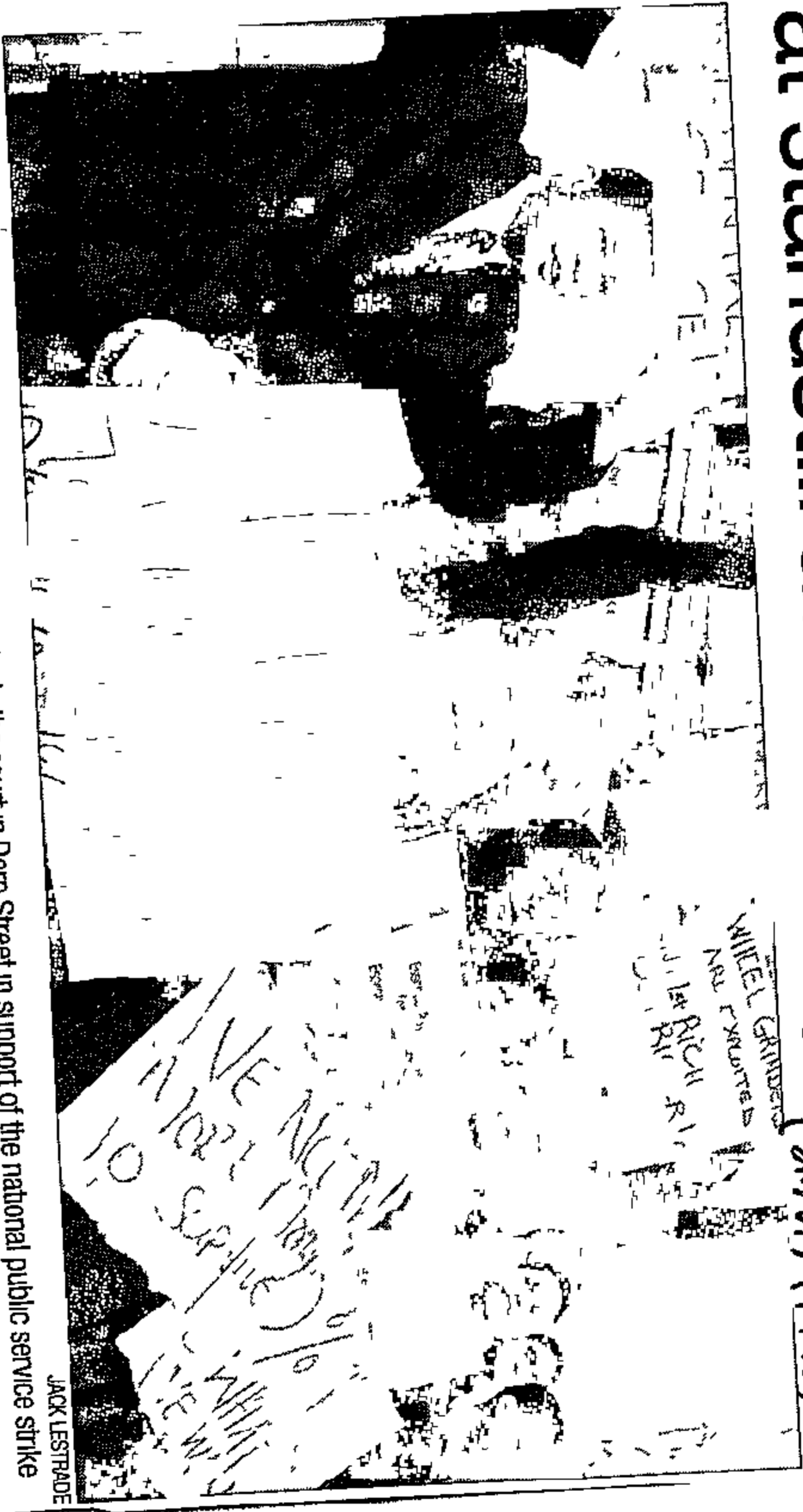
About 50 Cape High Court officials have joined the national public service strike, bringing proceedings to a virtual standstill.

The officials, including interpreters, security officers and clerks of the court, yesterday embarked on strike action after meeting at noon to discuss what they could do to help persuade the Government to give them a 10% salary increase.

They decided on their action in spite of a call by Justice Minister Penuell Maduna for all court officials to return to work.

By noon most of the courts, which re-opened on Monday after a month-long recess, were silent. However, it is expected that the High Court will only feel the pinch next week, if the strike continues, when new criminal cases are expected to start.

Yesterday's strike action follows repeated comments by Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi that the Government was unable to grant workers more than a 6,3% pay increase.



Give us more pay: Cape High Court officials protest outside the court in Dorp Street in support of the national public service strike

After the noon meeting, in which the court officials decided to "down tools", they congregated on the steps of the court and vowed to continue their strike until the Government increases its wage offer. A spokesman for the group, Elliot Qukwana, an interpreter, said High

Court officials would accept nothing less than a 10% increase. Mr Maduna yesterday called on court employees to return to duty as their work constituted an essential service. He said the principle of "no work no pay" would apply to employees

who took part in strike action. Meanwhile public service labour unions have undertaken to consider a new pay offer of 7% after yesterday's wage talks. The unions will consult their members about the new offer and meet Government representatives on Friday.

Strike hits

car giant

(152) (192)
East London - Production at the giant Daimler/Chrysler motor assembly in East London came to a halt for nearly three days as workers went on strike in protest against last week's dismissal of five of their colleagues, a company spokeswoman said here.

Annalise van der Laan said the company had lost a substantial amount since Monday afternoon when a number of workers engaged in an illegal strike.

She said management had dismissed hourly-paid employees on "normal disciplinary grounds."

"The strike then spilled over to various sections and we were compelled to stop production altogether," she said. Sape
AR 5/8/99

Making the kids pay

The first time restrictions prohibiting trade union association were repealed was in 1884 in Britain - the most important achievement of the workers movement.

The next most important achievement was the establishment of the right to strike. In turn the right to strike defends and protects all the other achievements of the working class.

The *raison d'être* for the right to strike is that it forces the employer to satisfy the legitimate needs of his employees when less confrontational methods have failed.

Strikes are intended to inflict the pain of cost on the employer. The employer is in business for profit, and when his ability to maintain or maximise this is threatened, he/she is bound to look for ways to avoid the threat.

The strike method always works unless the employer has a vast reserve of resources to assuage the pain until he/she drains the strikers (as happened during the miners' strike in Britain in the 1980s).

It is appropriate to use the strike method on a profit-motivated employer. However when the employer is the government and the product or service is education, the issue becomes complicated.

It becomes not just an issue of resources but of conscience as well as considerations about the future and quality of the nation.

There is no profit involved, in the strict sense of the word, in providing education. The pain is therefore transferred from the employer to the students. The students control neither the resources nor the administration of the service. What are the consequences? The immediate outcome is of course loss of lessons.

This further results in a string of other events. Studies become more difficult and students' interest in their studies is diminished by loss of information and prolonged absence from their studies.

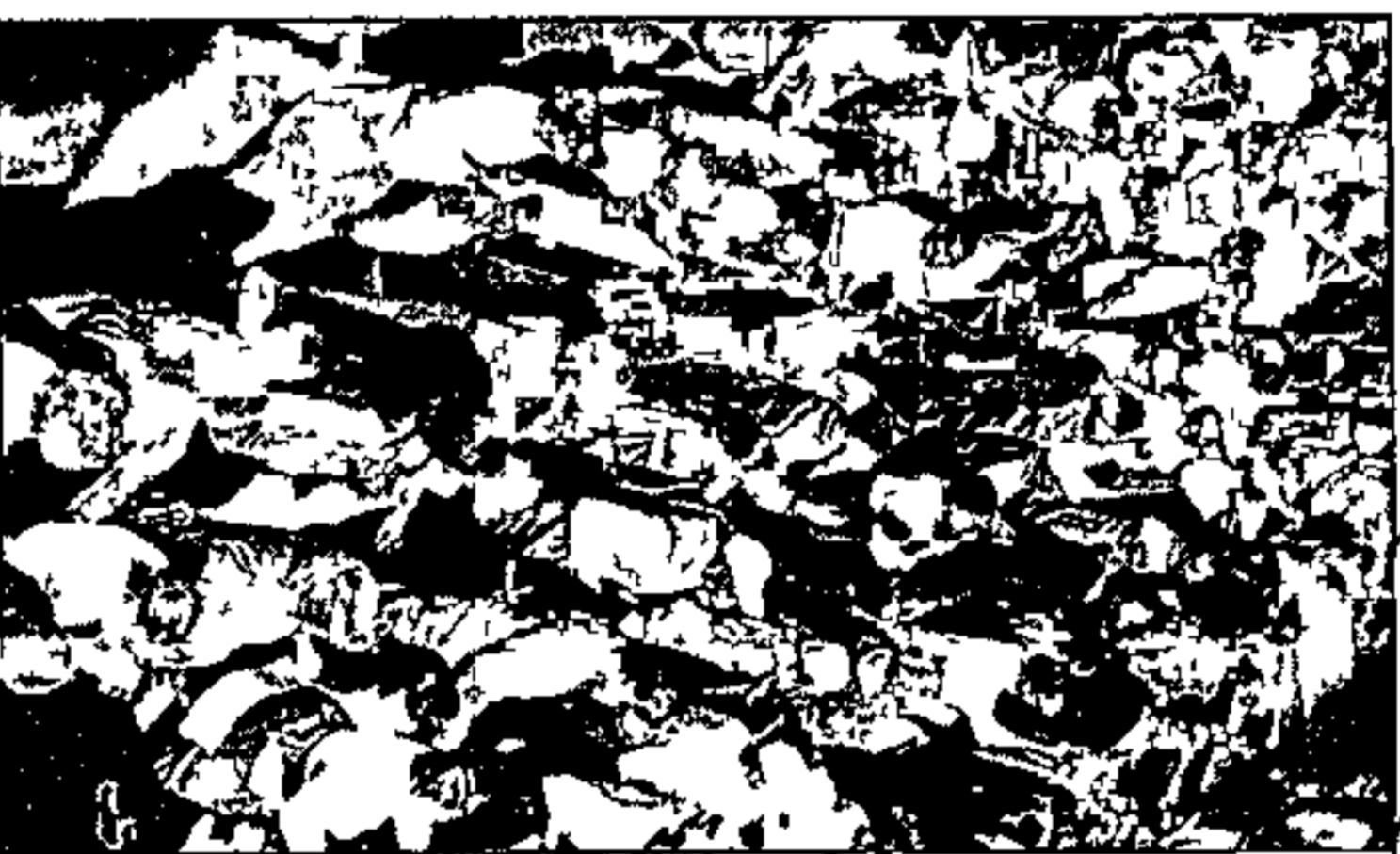
The signal they get is that learning is not important. The longer they stay away from the classroom, the more they forget what they learned previously. This, in turn, increases the number of dropouts.

There are other more serious implications, not least because they affect the community beyond the students and their families. Students who hang around in the streets inevitably focus on other things, including crime.

The longer they stay out of class, the more vulnerable they become to the lures of crime activities, they still become victims of economic and social disadvantage.

While teachers from predominantly black schools are on strike the majority of their white counterparts go to work and so do the majority

When teachers go on strike the wrong people - the pupils instead of the employer - are worst affected. Ngila Muendane suggests a new approach



Teachers at a protest march in Pretoria during their two-day strike last week. PIC PETER MOGAKI

of white students.

Come the next generation, black children, who are then adult employees, do menial or inferior jobs with obviously less pay, while the educated workers, obviously white, hold senior positions.

The causes will then not be the legacy of apartheid as it is now. I wonder if any teacher in his/her right senses will be happy to replace apartheid as the cause of the disenfranchisement of our own children. I do not want to hold teachers entirely responsible. But perhaps they should look at other methods to deal with the Government instead of strikes.

As it is, the Government cannot meet all the demands of the teachers. The Growth Employment and Redistribution (Gear) policy forbids it. One of its imperatives is the reduction of government expenditure.

Teachers salaries become one of the casualties. This makes it difficult to understand why the Congress of South African Trade Unions and South African Democratic Teachers Union continue backing up the wrong one.

They asked their members to vote for the African National Congress yet they knew very well that the ANC is committed to a macroeconomic policy that negates the advancement of workers in terms of earnings.

How can they ask the working class to support a government that is committed to an ultra-capitalist ideology such as Gear?

Can't they see that the conflict they have with the Government now is a manifestation of class contradictions between capitalism, as represented by the neocolonial ANC, and labour?

And how can they fail to see that their actions are reactionary as they destroy the future of helpless children by keeping them out of class?

As for the Government, how can it finance the purchase of arms for R3 billion at the expense of financing the salaries of the most important section of the working class, the teachers?

Teachers are caught in the middle between a reactionary government that lacks vision and an opportunistic union leadership. I would suggest that teachers of conscience disengage from the influence of the present reactionary union leadership and form an alliance with parents.

They can then use this alliance, for instance, to generate solidarity with parents, who incidentally are workers. Concerned parents can go on a general strike in support of teachers' demands, while the latter stay in class.

In this way teachers will win parents' sympathy and the attention of the corporate world, which is better placed to put pressure on the Government collectively.

In addition, this will create an opportunity for the Government to persuade companies to get involved in the education of our children by making certain contributions, thus reducing the burden on the Government.

Everybody wins, especially pupils who will be free from involvement, as the ultimate victims. If this nation has any conscience at all, it must be stimulated by the welfare of our children. (The author is general secretary of the Pan Africanist Congress.)

Strike hits the tummy

at Grootte Schuur

(152) (92)
AR 5/8/99

The public service workers' strike at Grootte Schuur Hospital has forced administrators to change patients' meal schedules.

And members of the same union, the National Union of Public Servants and Allied Workers (Nupswaw), demonstrated outside the Cape Town Magistrate's Court today to protest against the Government's latest wage offer.

Groote Schuur Hospital spokeswoman Philippa Johnson said the meal changes had been prompted by staff shortages.

"We now have to give the patients their main meal in the evening. Previously, patients got this meal at midday," she said.

Serving the main meal needed more staff, and more of those on duty were working at night.

Nupswaw, which has 88 000 members nationwide, is demanding a 10% wage increase. The Government has offered all public service unions 6.3%. Other public service unions have suspended

their strike pending the outcome of wage talks with the Government.

In the Western Cape, a spokesman for Tygerberg Hospital said everything was functioning normally.

But Mrs Johnson at Groote Schuur said about 70 workers, mainly kitchen staff, were taking part in the strike. The linen and pharmacy departments were also affected.

At the Cape Town Magistrate's Court, interpreters, clerks and state prosecutors from other courts were expected to join the demonstration later today.

Nupswaw shop steward Vyvian Nyaime said, "Nupswaw has made a revised offer of 8.5% and has vowed to continue the strike until its demands are met. We are expecting to hear the outcome from the bargaining chamber on Friday. The Government is degrading the workers with its offer."

Reuters reports from Johannesburg that Anton Louwrens, an official in the 190 000-strong Public Servants' Association, said that if there was no progress in tomorrow's talks in Pretoria, unions could unite in striking.

Numsa does not condone the 'unprocedural action'

Strikers bring halt to Daimler-Chrysler SA

Roy COKARNE

Pretoria - Production at the East London plant of Daimler Chrysler South Africa (DSCSA) had been suspended since lunchtime on Monday because of unprocedural industrial action. Annelle van der Laan, a company spokesman said yesterday.

Van der Laan said the protest followed the dismissal last week of five hourly paid employees.

She said four of the five dismissed employees were in the plant's paint shop. They had been dismissed for "late-coming" that resulted in non-attendance at 10-minute meetings. The fifth dismissal was for non-performance.

Employees in the plant's paint shop had embarked on a sympathy strike. Other hourly paid employees had progressively joined the strike until production was suspended.

Van der Laan said the strike resulted in the loss of production of between 80 and 85 units a day.

Members of the company's management and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) had been engaged in negotiations for the past three days to resolve the dispute.

Van der Laan said both parties had agreed that the strike was unprocedural. Numsa said it did not condone the strike.

She said the company's recognition agreement with Numsa provided for disputes about disciplinary issues to be referred to arbitration for resolution.

On Wednesday two issues remained under debate. Agreement still had to be reached about an expedited process to resolve the dispute and about a commitment from employees to adhere to the collective agreement and the company's policies and procedures.

"Numerous positions and counter positions were put forward by DCSA's management and Numsa without reaching consensus," Van der Laan said.

She said Numsa, after consulting its membership, had informed management yesterday that employees fully agreed to adhere to the collective agreements and the company's policies and procedures.

"Numsa further advised DCSA's management that the workers would resume normal production while negotiations continued to find a solution on how best to resolve the dispute about the dismissal of the five employees," she said.

"Management, however advised Numsa that they could not accept this proposal because the issues that had resulted in unprocedural industrial action were not resolved, and agreement had not been reached on an expedited process to resolve the dispute.

"DCSA management regrets that the suspension of production has not been resolved and the impact this will have on the company's employees and their families."

She said the company was committed to finding a "lasting solution to the issue 'within the structure of the agreement' and relations between management and the union were cordial. Numsa spokesmen were not available for comment.

CT (M) 6/8/99 (192) (192)

Collective agreement with the union provides for the resolution of disputes

Van der Laan said both parties had agreed that the strike was unprocedural. Numsa said it did not condone the strike.

She said the company's recognition agreement with Numsa provided for disputes about disciplinary issues to be referred to arbitration for resolution.

On Wednesday two issues remained under debate. Agreement still had to be reached about an expedited process to resolve the dispute and about a commitment from employees to adhere to the collective agreement and the company's policies and procedures.

"Numerous positions and counter positions were put forward by DCSA's management and Numsa without reaching consensus," Van der Laan said.

She said Numsa, after consulting its membership, had informed management yesterday that employees fully agreed to adhere to the collective agreements and the company's policies and procedures.

"Numsa further advised DCSA's management that the workers would resume normal production while negotiations continued to find a solution on how best to resolve the dispute about the dismissal of the five employees," she said.

"Management, however advised Numsa that they could not accept this proposal because the issues that had resulted in unprocedural industrial action were not resolved, and agreement had not been reached on an expedited process to resolve the dispute.

"DCSA management regrets that the suspension of production has not been resolved and the impact this will have on the company's employees and their families."

She said the company was committed to finding a "lasting solution to the issue 'within the structure of the agreement' and relations between management and the union were cordial. Numsa spokesmen were not available for comment.

SA NEWS DIGEST

DIABOL REACTIONS Management, Numsa in talks as

Columbus' Shantless strike continues

RESIDENTIAL ROBERTS Market should end year on a high note

Radebe to head SA team to Ghana summit

PRIVATISATION

Jeff Radebe, the public enterprises minister would lead a South African delegation to Accra, Ghana next month for a three-day summit on privatisation. Business in Africa, an African business finance and leisure magazine, reported yesterday. The summit would provide a platform for debate on privatisation issues such as transparency problems, politics, joint venture opportunities,

have the ex nlu mer S, an tific lower

1 the t was ulfac owed July

the ex nlu mer S, an tific lower

1 the t was ulfac owed July

SA may face more strike disruption

(172)

(211)

DD 10/8/99 (167)

Disgruntled workers consider mass action

Reneé Grawitzky

THE country could face further disruption as Telkom unions consider mass action in support of their wage demands, mine workers on some gold and coal mines start balloting for strike action today and public service unions consider further protest action.

Public service unions representing close to 1-million members meet tomorrow to decide on whether to embark on further mass action to put pressure on government to review its final wage offer of R3,28bn. This follows Friday's meeting where unions revised their wage demand from 10% to 7,3%, with 8% for teachers.

Government's mandating committee meets today to consider various options to resolve the dispute and to decide whether to implement its final offer.

If government went ahead and implemented the final wage offer, it could negatively affect its plan to continue restructuring the public service. Agreement would have to be reached with the unions to pursue its plans to implement a new wage policy which would include changing current employment conditions and revising its pay progression system.

Unions might prove to be less than co-operative in such plans as well as the further rationalisation of the public service if government implemented the final offer, union sources said.

Meanwhile, the Communication Workers' Union plans to notify Telkom and the SA Post Office today of its intention to embark on a programme of mass action from August 16 after the parties failed to resolve a wage dispute in the Com-

mission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

This comes in the wake of Telkom's announcement last month that, as part of its plans to streamline operations, as many as 11 000 jobs could be shed.

The union is demanding an increase ranging between 11% and 13% while Telkom has offered 5% and 2% linked to gainsharing.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said yesterday that members on collieries and gold mines, except for those on AngloGold mines, would begin balloting for strike action today. The union and AngloGold signed a wage deal on Friday providing for a increase of 10% for the lowest grade and 9% for other workers.

The dispute, however, continues between the union and other mining houses where increases offered range between 8% and 9% while offers on marginal mines range between 0% and 7%. The parties plan to meet on Thursday.

Last night the NUM also criticised plans by Western Areas mine — a joint venture between Western Areas and Canada's Placer Dome — to retrench as many as 2 900 miners and said it would challenge such moves. The mine announced on Friday that it had notified the gold crisis committee of its intention to cut its work force by as much as 40%.

NUM general secretary Gwede Mantashe said it was expecting such moves as Placer Dome's reputation in terms of its approach to labour was known internationally. "They cut labour to the bone and as a Canadian company they do not care for the biggest crisis facing this country, which is joblessness and unemployment."

Production resumes at Daimler (192) Chrysler (152) CT (MR) 11/8/99 ROY CORAYNE

Pretoria - Workers at Daimler Chrysler South Africa's (DCSA) East London production plant would return to work today after five and a half days of an unprocedural strike said Annelise van der Laan a DCSA spokesman yesterday

Dumisa Ntuli a spokesman for the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa), confirmed that workers would resume production at the plant today

Van der Laan said the company's management had expressed "great disappointment" at the fact that the company's hourly paid workers who had turned up for a general plant meeting yesterday were not able to resume work afterwards "as per agreement reached on Friday"

She said Numsa had explained that the many workers who had turned out for the morning meeting were unaware of the resumption of production

The union also said that many other workers in the distant rural areas had not received the radio and print announcements released by DCSA's management over the long weekend

"The union has however, reaffirmed its commitment to the agreement reached on Friday and signed a memorandum of agreement capturing the terms of the agreement," she said

The strike started on Monday last week. The union called the strike to protest against the dismissal of five hourly paid employees.

Van der Laan said four of the five dismissed employees were in the plant's paint shop and had been dismissed for "late coming" that resulted in non attendance at 10 minute meetings. The fifth employee in the dispute was dismissed for non performance

The suspension of production because of the strike had resulted in the loss of about 450 units.

Van der Laan said the plant had spare capacity, which would be used to catch up on lost production without the company having to resort to overtime

She also said the dispute that caused the strike had not yet been resolved. However, the company's management and Numsa had reached agreement on the process to be used to resolve the issue

Ntuli said Numsa placed the blame for the industrial action on the company because it had failed to consult the union holistically and in an appropriate manner on the dismissals

He claimed the dismissed workers had not been given written warnings

He said the matter would be "taken to an arbitration meeting to get some form of mediation around the whole issue"

Ntuli said the meetings to try and resolve the dispute would probably take place "this week or next week"

Strike likely - Nehawu

By Mzwakhe Hlangani Labour Reporter

TWELVE public sector labour unions are finalising their plans for a major strike today after the Government reiterated yesterday that there was no more money available for salary increases

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said yesterday after a Cabinet meeting that the R328 billion allocated for the wage bill was final

"The Government is continuing to meet and consult in an attempt to resolve the current wage dispute," she said

National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu) spokesman Mr Makoko Lekola said the 12 unions would jointly consider



Public Service and Administration Minister Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi

the way forward. Public service administration, schools and correctional service operations are expected to grind to a halt if all 12 unions embark on a work stayaway

The three public unions aligned to the Congress of South African Trade Unions, SA Democratic Teachers Union

(Sadu) Police Prisons and Civil Rights Union (Popcu) and Nehawu consolidated plans on how to approach the labour caucus, Lekola said

Public Servants Association chief negotiator Mr Anton Lourens said other unions were also strategising

The unions have reduced their demand of a 10 percent increase, and opted for an increase related to the prevailing 7,3 percent consumer price index

The Government has raised its total wage offer to R3,28 billion, from R3,2 billion with a seven percent increase for teachers and the lowest paid workers, and a 6,3 percent increase for the rest of the civil service employees

The crunch came last Friday after seven months of dragging negotiations between the state and the unions

In a move to put pressure on the state, Nehawu, Sadu and Popcu embarked on a two day strike while four unions affiliated to the Federation of South African Trade Unions went out on a one-day stoppage

The unions expressed disappointment after the Government failed to respond positively to the position which required an additional R500 million

Nehawu president Mr Vusi Nhlapho said earlier the unions had agreed that a new wage policy for public servants was required and that pay talks should in future be synchronised with the way in which money was budgeted for increases

The unions were opposed to the lack of consultation and the practice of budgets for civil service wage increases being fixed in Parliament before the start of the negotiations. Nhlapho said

Action to halt postal services (152) (268)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani Labour Reporter 11/8/99

TELECOMMUNICATIONS and postal service operations will grind to a halt next Monday when about 27 000 members of the Communication Workers Union take part in a nationwide strike after conciliatory talks deadlocked

CWU president Mr Mike Seroba said yesterday notification of the strike had been served on Telkom and Post Office management after the three parties had failed to reach a compromise under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

Telkom corporate communications manager Ms Amanda Singleton confirmed the strike

She said both CWU and Alliances of Telkom Unions had tabled a total of 39 demands and negotiations which started last February were stalled when the unions rejected the company's 6,9 percent final offer

"It now stands at an effective 8,1 percent in terms of the actual cost to the company. Some of the 3,1 percent of this had already been paid out in the form of 2 percent performance-based increases, with a further 1,1 percent gain-sharing bonuses which amounted to a total of R133,6 million"

The remaining 5 percent constituted a general salary increase that would cost Telkom R220,5 million a year in additional staff costs, Singleton added

CWU demanded 10 percent for supervisors, 12 percent for operators and 14 percent for auxiliary support staff, which translated to a minimum wage of R2 600 month

Strike notice served on Telkom, post office (268) (152) CT (MR) 11/8/99

FRANK NKUMALO

Johannesburg The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) said yesterday it had served a 48 hour notice on Telkom and the post office to embark on a nationwide strike over a wage deadlock and the planned retrenchments of more than 11 000 workers

Telkom confirmed receipt of the notice. A copy of the CWU's notification has been forwarded to the CCMA (Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration) with a view to reaching an agreement on strike/picketing rules

"Telkom will adopt a policy of no work, no pay during the proposed industrial action and has made contingency plans to minimise the impact on customer service," said Amanda Singleton of Telkom

She said Telkom had already paid R133 million in performance-based increases and gain sharing bonuses. Additional staff expenditures would cost R220,5 million

"Telkom's offer would also raise the minimum wage paid to support staff at entry level, rising by 7 percent from R2 150 to R2 300," she said

Mike Seroba, the deputy general secretary of CWU said about 41 000 members were expected to take part in the strike, planned for August 16

The CWU is demanding wage increases of 10 percent, 12 percent and 14 percent for communications worker in categories C (auxiliary), B (operational) and A (supervisory) respectively

Seroba said Telkom had tabled a final offer of 5 percent, while the post office was offering 10 percent on a sliding scale. We are not accepting what has been placed on the table," Seroba said

He said the CWU would remain open to negotiations as long as these resulted in the improvement of workers' living conditions

Seroba accused Telkom of undermining and ignoring internal transformation and restructuring agreements by making public announcements on restructuring plans that would affect up to 11 000 workers with out consulting the union

In terms of section 189 of the new Labour Relations Act, unions have to be consulted when staff is to be reduced for operational reasons

Strike is set to continue (152) (159)

NO progress was made yesterday in resolving the month-long strike at the Columbus Stainless Steel company in Middelburg

Columbus spokesman Mr Lang Geldenhuys said the company had informal talks with representatives of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) last week, but no agreement was reached

National Numsa coordinator Mr Steven Nhlapho said there were plans for another meeting today. Two weeks ago the company took a tough line, abandoning a 7,3 percent pay rise that Numsa rejected and going down to 7,1 percent, plus 0,5 percent based on individual performance

It said three other recognised unions at the plant had already accepted this offer

Numsa said it was sticking to 7,7 percent and some other demands, including a fulltime shop steward for its 500 members at Columbus, who are all on strike

The company which employs about 2 000 people, said the strike had not affected production. Geldenhuys said international steel prices were at their lowest in 30 years and the company made a R323 million loss last year

About 150 union members have been arrested for various offences since the strike began, including alleged intimidation of non-strikers and damage to property. They were each given R500 bail - Sapa

Strike plans for major parastatals

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

FRANTIC contingency plans have begun in the major parastatals - the South African Post Office and Telkom - to lessen the impact of a major disruptive strike by 14 000 postal workers and 27 000 telecommunication service employees from Monday, August 16

Post Office senior human resources general manager, Reverend Vukile Mchana, said yesterday they were geared to continue rendering service when the planned strike by almost 14 000 Communication Workers Union members begins next week

Mchana believed the union's rejection of the offer ranging between 7,3 and 10 percent was not "reasonable and realistic" in view of the current financial position of the organisation. The offer meant an increase to the basic minimum salary of R2 350 which also entailed an increase of

nearly R80 million to the salary bill. CWU deputy general secretary Mike Seroba described the "sliding scale offer" by the management to be less than an average 7,5 percent increase when translated in real terms for the majority of employees

The union demanded a 14 percent increase for the lowest paid support staff and 10 percent for supervisors

Postal workers would be joining at least 27 000 Telkom employees who will also embark on a major strike next Monday

Other areas of deadlock included gain-sharing bonuses, long service awards and increased housing allowances

Post Office group communications manager Sandile Madolo assured customers that postal services will continue to operate smoothly despite the strike

Telkom group corporate communications manager Ms Amanda Singleton said the demands inflated staff costs to about R1,8 billion a year

(210) (152)

power 12/18/92

NEWS BRIEFING

'Marathon strike' at Columbus ends with two-year Numsa agreement (189) (152)

Johannesburg - The union representing striking workers at Columbus Stainless said yesterday it had reached a two-year agreement with the company, and employees would return to work today. **ET (BR) 12/8/99**

Workers will receive a 7,3 percent wage rise in each year of the deal, which is effective from July 1 1999

"The agreement put an end to the one-month marathon strike," said the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa). About 500 Numsa members employed at the Columbus Middleburg plant went on strike on July 12 to demand a wage increase of 9,7 percent. Columbus had initially offered 7,1 percent with 0,5 percent based on individual performance.

Under the new agreement, workers will get an additional individual merit increase of up to 0,3 percent. Another 0,5 percent increase is possible if the company meets its targets by June 2000.

Numsa said the company would not pursue charges against the 149 workers arrested last month - Reuters.

Three die in Driefontein quake: An earthquake measuring three on the Richter scale killed three mineworkers and injured five others yesterday at the Driefontein mine owned by Gold Fields and would cut the mine's gold production by roughly 10kg a day, the group said. Willie Jacobsz, a Gold Fields spokesman, said the rest of the shaft infrastructure was intact and it appeared as if only about 18 percent of production from the mine's No 4 shaft would be affected. The shaft produces about 1 200kg of gold a month.

800 000 PUBLIC SERVANTS COULD MARCH IN MASS PROTESTS ON AUGUST 24

Johannesburg - Unified labour action by public servants could result in up to 800 000 workers joining in countrywide protest marches later this month to press for better pay.

All 12 unions in the public service central bargaining chamber agreed in a joint caucus in Centurion outside Pretoria yesterday to mobilise their members for the planned action, scheduled to take place in major cities on August 24.



They said after the meeting: "This march will serve as a message to government that public servants are serious regarding their demands."

The unions, which claim a combined membership of about 800 000, would also seek an urgent meeting with President Thabo Mbeki (pictured) to ask for his intervention in their continuing pay dispute with the state. - Sapa

Sympathy strike ends: Hourly paid workers at the East London plant of DaimlerChrysler South Africa (DCSA) plant, who had been on strike for five-and-a-half days, had returned to work, Annelise van der Laan, a spokesman for DCSA, said yesterday. Production at the plant was suspended on Monday last week when workers embarked on a sympathy strike following the dismissal of five employees. **(152) (192)**

ET (BR) 12/8/99

Public servants postpone launch of strike action (270)

Reneé Grawitzky
and Sapa

DD 12/8/99

(152)

THE public service wage dispute seems set to drag on as unions emerged from a joint meeting yesterday with a decision not to immediately launch full-scale strike action but to hold a joint march on August 24

The unions have yet again called for the intervention of President Thabo Mbeki in the dispute

Government's mandating committee was also scheduled to meet yesterday to decide on its future strategy to resolve the dispute

The meeting was still under way late last night

Public service unions affiliated to both the Congress of SA Trade Unions and the Federation of Unions of SA met to decide on a joint programme of action yesterday. The unions agreed to the joint march and to meet again on August 27 to reassess the situation

It was unclear yesterday whether any more formal meetings between the unions and government would take place

Meanwhile, a number of Gauteng teachers carried out a threat to boycott classes yesterday in a bid

to force government to meet the wage demands of public sector unions, the education department said. Simultaneously, 12 unions — including the SA Democratic Teachers' Union — who were locked in a seven-month wage dispute with government, were meeting in Pretoria to plan strategy on the stalemate on a pay rise

Gauteng education department spokesman Sybilla Hilzinger-Maas said "We are aware of the situation. Various districts informed us that classes were suspended this morning (yesterday)"

She said the decision by the teachers to strike had not been communicated formally to the department and the policy of "no work no pay" would apply

She said the department expected teaching to go back to normal today as there still was no communication between it and the union. The department would try to negotiate with the union representing the striking teachers

The Star newspaper reported that Soweto teachers suspended lessons on Tuesday morning and picketed outside the Chris Hanu Baragwanath Hospital. The protest later moved to Vista University

Tension grips SA

By Mzwakhe Hlangani and Charity Bhengu (152)

WIDESPREAD labour tension gripped the country as the week drew to a close ahead of what could culminate in one of SA's biggest strikes in recent years

Post and telecommunications workers, mostly Communications Workers Union members (CWU), are gearing up for a nationwide strike on Monday

This follows two days of wage protests by teachers. Unless the dispute with the Government is resolved within the next week, these protests could spill over into a national strike involving close to a million public sector workers

Meanwhile Cosatu submitted a notice to the National Economic, Development and Labour Council earlier this month of its intention to embark on national protest action over job losses. The Labour Relations Act requires that the notice be discussed by the Government, business and trades unions first. If Cosatu's submissions are accepted, workers will be able to embark on legal protest

These developments come days before Cosatu gathers for a special national congress of all its affiliates, where current tensions between its members and employers will be discussed

The congress starts on Wednesday next week and ends on August 20, four days before the federation's public sector affiliates say they will launch national protests in support of their pay demands

Operational contingency plans have been put in place by the South African Post Office and Telkom

to ensure mail gets through during the strike by 14 000 workers starting Monday, Telkom general manager Mr Sandile Madolo said yesterday

"Obviously the strike is going to affect us. It will create some disturbance in service delivery, but we hope we can lessen disruption," he added

CWU members are on strike after they rejected a salary increase of 10,01 percent for lower ranks and seven percent for higher ranks. The union is demanding 14 percent increase for the lowest paid support staff and 10 percent for supervisors

The workers going on strike represent 56 percent of the total Post Office staff complement

SA Broadcasting Corporation spokeswoman Ms Thamnga Shope felt the corporation would be affected by the strike as members of the public would not be able to pay for services

Standard Bank spokesman Mr Erik Larsen said the Post Office had reassured them that contingency plans had been put in place "failing which we will have to call our clients to collect their statements from their branches"

Telkom group communication manager Ms Amanda Singleton said operational emergency plans were in place in the event of a well-supported strike. She said staff shortages could be experienced and delays should be expected in the installation of new services as well as the repair of faults, but working lines would not be affected

The Cabinet was locked in discussions late yesterday on the public sector unions' pay demands and a statement was expected to be released late last night

13/8/99

Telkom, Post Office workers to go on strike

Simphiwe Xako

MORE than 40 000 members of the Communications' Workers Union (CWU) are expected to embark on a national strike today following a wage dispute with the SA Post Office and Telkom last week

Union deputy general secretary Mike Seroba said all the affected parties had reached agreement on the rules and the conduct of the strike at a meeting hosted by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration on Saturday

"The Labour Relations Act specifies clearly the conditions, rules and regulations to be followed during a strike. We had an agreement with management regarding the time, form and place of the industrial action," he said

Meanwhile, a strike planned for today by the Alliance of Telkom Unions was postponed after management complained that a notice by the alliance was "vague and ambiguous and therefore not in compliance with the Labour Relations Act". Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said the notice did not specify the time and place

"Against this background the

(268) (172)
company advised the alliance to postpone any industrial action until proper notice has been served and agreement reached on strike and picketing rules," Singleton said

Alliance spokesman Dick Heyns confirmed yesterday that its members would not go on strike until proper procedures had been followed

"The alliance will meet management this morning to finalise the rules and regulations before continuing with the wage strike," Heyns said

Seroba said the postponement would not affect his union as the two organisations planned different actions

Meanwhile, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said it would give notice of a strike starting tomorrow if no agreement was reached with certain mines

The parties are expected to meet today in a final bid to avert the strike, which will exclude Anglogold mines and Duker collieries which have already reached a deal with the NUM

Groups such as Avgold, Harmony and Western Areas are offering between 8% and 8,5%, while the NUM is demanding 9%

15 000 Telkom staff out on strike

ARG 16/8/99
MURRAY WILLIAMS and SAPA

About 15 000 of Telkom's 59 000 workers countrywide heeded calls for a pay strike, the company announced today.

In the Western Cape, 1 100 of the province's 3 200 Communications Workers' Union members did not turn up for work, amounting to 13% of the province's 8 600 Telkom employees

Call centres around the country were the worst affected by the strike, where only between 20 and 30% of staff were present.

Telkom spokeswoman Amanda Singleton said from Johannesburg that the Western Cape's call centres were the least affected, although response times had suffered.

Ms Singleton said earlier that normal phone services were electronic, and would not be affected. Customers who needed

(268) (152)
repairs and those waiting for new services could face a long wait.

In Pretoria, Telkom and SA Post Office workers promised to bring mail and telephone services to a halt if their demands were not met. The union's deputy general secretary Mike Seroba said: "It will be in the interests of the companies concerned and of the public if this matter is resolved quickly. If not we will have no choice but to continue with industrial action."

Striking union workers said they planned marches in Cape Town, Pretoria, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern and Northern Cape.

The union is demanding increases ranging from 10 to 14% for staff in different categories in both the Post Office and Telkom.

Telkom has offered a 5% general increase while the Post Office has offered an average 7% rise.

Strike may hit mail delivery

JOHANNESBURG - Telephone repairs and mail deliveries could be affected as more than 40 000 Communications Workers Union (CWU) members embark on a national strike today.

The general secretary of the CWU, Seleboho Kiti, said it was expected that non-union members would also take part in the strike affecting Telkom and the Post Office.

The union had given employers notice that workers were planning a month-long strike, Kiti said. However, he was confident that the wage deadlock could be broken within the first week.

The union is demanding a 14% increase for auxiliary workers, which are the lowest-paid of Telkom and Post Office staff members.

It is demanding a 13% rise for operational workers — technicians, clerks and other trained workers in central positions.

The CWU is also demanding an increase of 11% for supervisors. Telkom has offered its staff 5% and the Post Office its staff, 7%.

Kiti said the union hoped the strike would bring the employers to the negotiating table. However, the union was not prepared to negotiate interminably.

"We want to settle the dispute and the onus is on employers to table a better offer," Kiti said.

"Failure to come out and resume the talks with an improved offer will provoke a month-long strike."

"We are optimistic that the deadlock will be broken within a week."

"For the moment, we are going ahead with the strike and nothing will stop us from disrupting Post Office and Telkom services."

Kiti said workers would stay away from work today, tomorrow and on Wednesday. Pickets at Telkom offices had been planned for Thursday and Friday.

The 17 000 members of the Alliance of Telkom Unions (ATU) who intend going on strike today have been warned by Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singleton that they risk being disciplined and fired.

The industrial action planned by ATU was not protected, she said.

Also, the notice given to the company's negotiators by the union on Friday had been "vague and ambiguous."

"The strike notice did not comply with the Labour Relations Act because it did not outline the starting time and place of the planned industrial action," Singleton said.

"The ATU was unable to provide the company with information on the strike and it was unable to agree on strike and picketing rules."

"The company subsequently informed (ATU representatives) that should the union embark on industrial action on Monday, such action would be unprotected."

Singleton has urged the ATU to postpone its action.

"Should ATU members engage in any form of industrial action under these circumstances, they would be subject to possible disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal," Singleton said. — Owen Correspondent and Sapa

Public sector strikes gain momentum

as talks stall

(Sapa) (AP) Clyde Russell

Johannesburg - Twelve public sector unions representing about 1.1 million workers said yesterday they would meet today to decide whether to go ahead with strike action over pay demands.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) is also in dispute with employers. Miners may decide to strike after a meeting with the Chamber of Mines today.

Union workers at Telkom, the state telecommunications utility have already decided to strike, with some 26 000 workers stopping work today.

The labour unrest is the first serious challenge for the two month-old government of President Thabo Mbeki, which so far has said it would not deviate from its strict fiscal policy.

The public sector unions have been angered by the government's decision to stop negotiating and impose its offer of a 6.3 percent wage rise for civil servants.

The unions are demanding an inflation linked 7.3 percent increase for most workers and a higher increase for teachers.

The South African Democratic Teachers Union threatened at a media briefing to disrupt the country's already struggling education system to ensure the government bargains in good faith and returns to the negotiating table.

The teachers union said it planned industrial action from tomorrow a move supported by the Hospital Personnel Trade Union which said in a statement the government was trying to undermine the unions.

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, the public services minister confirmed that the union demands could not be met.

The decision by the government has strained the ruling alliance between the ANC, the powerful umbrella Congress of South African Trade Unions and the communist party - Reuters

(Sapa) (AP) Reuters

Labour crisis spreads

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

Labour conflicts have plunged South Africa into a major crisis as crippling strikes loom. Tomorrow 150 000 mineworkers are set to down tools, while about 40 000 postal and telecommunication workers began their strike today.

National Union of Mineworkers general secretary Mr Gwede Mantashe rejected the last-ditch intervention by the Chamber of Mines yesterday as "delaying tactics aimed at averting the strike rather than resolving the pay dispute". Mantashe was adamant that the mineworkers' strike would go ahead tomorrow unless something positive comes out of today's meeting under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

Anglo-Idmin and Duker collieries reached a settlement with the unions last week with offers ranging between 9 and 10 percent for the lowest paid workers and 11 to 14 percent increases for the higher-paid workers. Gold Field is expected to reach a settlement with the unions today.

Chamber of Mines industrial relations manager Dr Frans Barker expressed disappointment at the union's decision to issue a 48-hour strike notice while negotiations were still on. Barker said it was unfortunate that the unions chose to go on strike while the mining industry was facing its worst crisis, with gold and coal prices having dropped by 40 percent since 1994. Meanwhile, public sector unions representing 1.1 million public servants expressed consternation at the Government's "myopic approach" to ending the protracted wage dispute.

Twelve public sector unions charged that the Government had declared war on them. The South African Democratic Teachers Union immediately announced its withdrawal from all sectoral collective bargaining.

Sadru general secretary Mr Thulas Nxesi warned yesterday that they would not cooperate with the Government on the development of a new wage policy which has to be finalised by the end of the year.

The Government's headline announcement emerged on the eve of the Congress of South African Trade Unions' special congress week, at which the public sector dispute is expected to feature prominently. Disruptions in Gauteng ground schooling to a virtual standstill last week when teachers staged protests in support of their pay demands.

Workers Union president Mr Vusi Nhlapo said the Government's decision to force its will on public servants "set a dangerous precedent" and was damaging future relations. He described the Government's action as short-sighted and a recipe for major confrontations. In a bewildering statement, Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi denounced continued talks by announcing arrangements for the implementation of salary increases backdated to July 1. She said the deadlock showed how difficult it was to reach agreement with unions.

"The Government has made every attempt to reach agreement with the unions on the wage increases and the demand for average 7.3 percent will require further allocation of R700 million to salaries in addition to the latest R3,28 billion allocated," she said.

somehan 16/8/99 (152)



PRESIDENT ENTERS FRAY

SA faces more

Strike conflict

ET 17/8/99

(968) (152)

FULL SHUTDOWNS are predicted for today and tomorrow by the Communications Workers' Union, although the strike by Post Office and Telkom workers had little effect on services in the Western Cape yesterday. **EDDIE JAVIYA** reports

RESTRICTURING, fear of retrenchments and job insecurity are the major causes underlying the current spate of industrial actions, labour analyst Gavin Brown said yesterday. He said Telkom and Post Office unions were facing the same tensions as the public sector unions that were pitted against the government.

On the surface it appeared that the conflict in Telkom and Post Office was over wages.

"The scenarios are the same in both sectors," Brown said.

"It is not coincidental that the Telkom and the Post Office strike is taking place while the public sector unions are involved in industrial action.

"These unions, which have diverse memberships, are facing restructuring and retrenchments — there is no job security."

President Thabo Mbeki's address at the Cosatu special

congress tomorrow would be crucial, Brown said. It could shed light on the government's views of the tensions between the state and the public sector unions.

The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) is demanding increases of 14% for auxiliary workers (low-est-paid), 13% for operational staff (technicians, clerks and trained workers in key positions) and 11% for supervisors. Telkom has offered 5%, while the Post Office has offered 7%.

Telkom and the Post Office said yesterday that the CWU strike had had little effect on the delivery of services. However, services that entailed direct contact with customers had been affected. 133 post offices did not open.

The CWU described the effects of the strike as "a major victory" and predicted that services would be shut down today and tomorrow.

The national postal co-ordinator Mavcar Dzasopu, said Telkom and Post Office workers had marched to their companies' regional offices in Port Elizabeth.

"There will be complete stayaways on both days and we expect shutdown of services," he said.

Telkom's group corporate communications executive, Amanda Singleton, said the facilities affected were the installation of new services, fault repairs and operational assisted services such as directory information (1023), fault report lines (10212), account inquiries (10210) and telephonic orders (10219).

By midday, 28% or just over 15 000 of Telkom's employees had not reported for work in Pretoria and surrounding areas. Northern Province, parts of North West, Mpumalanga and Johannesburg and surrounding areas, Singleton said.

Strike has 'little impact'

ZINE GEORGE

(968) (152)

ET 17/8/99

THE Communication Worker's Union (CWU) strike yesterday had little impact on Telkom's operations in the Western Cape, according to Eddie Makhani, its regional communications manager.

About 13% of Telkom's 8 830 workers did not turn up for work yesterday, the start of an expected week-long action.

Calls to Telkom's 1023 inquiry number yesterday were answered in 50 seconds — no longer than usual.

However, it remains unclear if services will remain unaffected by the strike.

Ed Makhani warned yesterday in a press release that some services could eventually be affected.

Should the strike continue, Telkom's directory information (1023), fault report line (10212), account inquiries (10210), as well as telephonic orders (10219) could be affected. All these lines are staffed by union members.

CWU's strike — union membership includes Telkom and Post Office workers — has affected eight post offices in the Western Cape region.

Three post offices were closed yesterday morning — Gugulethu, Grassy Park and Khayelitsha — although only 10% of the province's 4 768 post office employees did not pitch up for work yesterday.

Almost all the workers at the affected offices are members of the CWU, according to the Western Cape regional public relations officer of the Post Office, Rima Tsh-

Another five post offices affected, although not closed, were Somerset West, Milnerton, Erste River, Duhanville and Beaufort West.

Tshibongwa said temporary employees would be hired if things became worse during the week.

The union has de-escalated with management in wage negotiations that started during February this year.

According to Telkom, the union is demanding a 24,5% increase and a housing allowance of R1 000 a month for all employees, including those who rent.

Ed Makhani said Telkom has offered 8,1% across-the-board increase.

Makhani blames Telkom for abandoning negotiations, and says his union is willing to negotiate. "The Post Office is at least walking along with us," he said.

The differences between the union and the post office were small, Makhani said. Workers were demanding 14%, 12% and 10% against 10,01% for the lowest paid and 7% for supervisors offered by the Post Office.

Early this morning, union and management representatives were still locked in negotiations.

In KwaZulu Natal, most people turned up for work at the mail centre, Durban. Five post offices were closed.

In the central province region — serving the Free State, Northern Cape and North West Province — most employees turned up for work at the mail centre. Fifty-one post offices closed.

Makhani said mail had not been delivered in the northern region serving Pretoria, Northern Province and Mpumalanga. The areas affected included Blagat, Pretoria North, Silverton, Rethebe, Menlo Park, Waterkloof, Lytleton, Pretoria West, Hercules, Aterandgeville, Tembisa, Garankuwa and Mabopane. Seventy-five post offices were closed.

See Page 3

Few problems in postal services as 40 000 strike

(268)(152) Sowetan 17/8/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

MINIMAL disruption of postal and telecommunication services were reported yesterday as thousands of Communication Workers Union members participated in demonstrations to mark the first day of the strike over a wage dispute

CWU deputy general secretary Mr Mike Seroba said yesterday that about 40 000 of their members took to the streets and marched on regional head offices of Telkom and the Post Office in Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Durban, Cape Town, Kimberley and Pretoria

Telkom corporate communication executive Ms Amanda Singleton said contingency plans had been activated, though staff shortages might lead to delays in fixing faults reported and the installation of new services.

Other affected areas included directory information, fault reporting, call centres for accounts and international inquiries

"Telephone and Internet services were not affected since they were technologically driven and require very little, if any, human intervention to operate," she said

Post Office senior communication manager Mr Sandile Madolo said the strike had no major effect on postal services

He said only 130 post offices were closed out of more than 2 000 around the country

Some problems were experienced at mail depots in the region

"At the Post Office's largest mail centre,

Witspos in Johannesburg, a full shift was completed last night with most mail volumes processed. Post offices in Katlehong, Benrose, Excom and Vanderbijlpark were closed in the morning," he said

Police and Prisoners Civil Rights Union spokesman Mr Siyavuya Jafta said after a special executive meeting that 60 000 Popcru members decided to join 11 other public sector unions for the August 24 strike

The SA Police Service, however, warned that the Constitution regarded police as members of an essential service and they were forbidden in terms of police regulations to take part in work stoppages

Twelve public sector unions representing more than 800 000 workers are preparing for an "historic" joint national strike on August 24, with no sign that wage talks between them and the state will resume

Members of the 12 unions, which represent all categories of public servants from nurses, teachers and police officers to administrative and auxiliary staff, will take part in marches through Pretoria, Cape Town and other centres on August 24

Some unions said they would press ahead with low-intensity industrial action such as go-slows and overtime bans in selected areas in the week leading up to the strike

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi announced last Thursday that the Government had decided to implement its final offer with effect from July 1

was
that a
muted
John
nce
Re
Assem
could
obtain
assets
non pr
CRUCI
over
of the
with
ondo-
later
or for-
tz had
orgive-
of their
Marble
of about
some of
that they

Management downplays effect of telecoms strike (268)

BD 17/8/99

(142)

Simpliwe Xako

CONFLICTING claims over the success of industrial action by communications and postal workers yesterday emerged with unions saying it was a success but management saying it did not significantly affect their operations

Mike Seroba, acting general secretary of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) which organises in Telkom and the SA Post Office, said just more than 43 000 members had joined the strike

But Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said 17 000 of the company's employees countrywide were not at work. She said this resulted in service delays at call centres, where customers report faults, order new services and inquire about telephone accounts.

She said Telkom was limiting the effect of staff shortages by re-allocating job responsibilities among nonstriking employees and management

YeboNet MD Raven Naidoo said the Telkom problem affected most internet service providers

"As many of our customers access the internet through Telkom's Johannesburg exchanges we have been inundated with calls from subscribers who have not been able to access the internet"

Singleton confirmed a complaint had been received from YeboNet yesterday

The strike follows a deadlock between Telkom and SA Post Office management and the CWU over a 14% pay demand, with management prepared to offer 8,1%. It also coincides with Telkom's plans to outsource its fleet management, electronic workshop and property services which would affect more than 11 000 employees.

Sandle Madolo, SA Post Office communication GM, said 5 000 out of 26 000 post office employees went on strike

"Some post offices around the country had to close because employees had to join the strike. Some returned to work in all, 95% of employees turned up for work as we are applying the policy of no work, no pay," Madolo said. He said the post office could not

meet its workers' demands as the parastatal was running at a loss

The union said yesterday its members would participate in a work stayaways today and tomorrow followed by workplace demonstrations on Thursday and marches in SA city centres on Friday.

Seroba said the CWU was optimistic that a settlement would be reached but emphasised that "the ball is in management's court"

We are also concerned about management's no-work no-pay policy as it is intimidatory," he said.

Sapa reports that the newly appointed chairman of the National Assembly's communications committee, Nat Kekana, said he regarded the Telkom strike as a normal industrial feature of employer/employee relations.

Kekana called on all parties involved in the dispute to find a common solution speedily because the delivery of telephone services and other services that were provided by Telkom could not be compromised

Comment: Page 13



Finance Minister Trevor Manuwa

Unions rally to strike call

STAFF REPORTER AND SAPP

Pretoria - Twelve public sector unions, representing more than 800 000 workers, meet here today to prepare for "a historic" national strike next week.

With no sign that pay talks between the unions and the Government will resume, the workers' joint action committee will go ahead with planning for the strike.

Members of the 12 unions, which represent all categories of public servants, will also take part in marches in Durban, Pretoria, Cape Town and other centres next Tuesday.

Yesterday, the first effects of threatened mass labour unrest were felt when hundreds of Telkom employees in Durban joined their counterparts nationwide in protest marches. A total of 133 post offices did not open.

Hans van der Groenendaal, Telkom's spokesman in Durban, said disruption was minimal.

Among public sector unions, the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union confirmed its 61 000 members would take part in the strike next week, despite the fact that the police and prison officials were barred from striking.

LABOUR Union alliance's notice called vague, ambiguous and procedurally insufficient to make the action legal

Telkom strikers warned of disciplinary action

ET (M) 17/8/99

(268) (172)

FRANK NxUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - Telkom yesterday warned the Alliance of Telkom Unions (ATU) that its estimated 17 000 members faced disciplinary action, including dismissal, if they participated in the current wage strike by the Cosatu-affiliated Communication Workers' Union (CWU).

Amanda Singleton, the Telkom group executive corporation communications manager, said the alliance's notice on Friday informing the company of the intention to strike on Thursday was procedurally insufficient to make the strike legal.

"The notice was vague and ambiguous (because it gave) no specific starting time and place," she said. "Telkom informed ATU that their notice was not according to

requirements of the Act. Any industrial action is thus unprotected until they serve proper notice."

Dirk Herman, the spokesman for the Mine Workers Union (MWU), one of the ATU's major partners, said: "Telkom is trying to avert the strike by intimidating workers. The fact is that for the first time in history, Telkom is facing a full-scale strike that includes the technical workers."

He said the union had redrafted the initial notice even though it still believed it to have been procedurally sufficient. He said last-ditch efforts by the union to reach an amicable solution and to avoid large scale disruptions had proved fruitless.

"They said they were prepared to face the strike and did not want to talk to us anymore," Herman said. CWU members downed tools yesterday and marched on Telkom's

head office in Pretoria to support their demands for wage increases ranging from 10 to 14 percent at Telkom and the Post Office.

Telkom had offered a general increase of 5 percent and the Post Office 7 percent. CWU is not part of the Alliance of Telkom Unions.

Singleton said the memorandum the marchers had handed to the company's head office contained "vague" demands. "In the memorandum, the CWU makes no mention of the R175 per person per month or the minimum wage demand of R2 600 per month (basic salary)," she said.

She said the union's demands, together with those it omitted from the memorandum, would amount to an effective 24,5 percent increase. Singleton said the only services to be affected were those where there was direct interaction with customers.



ON THE MARCH
A striking Telkom worker carries his message outside the company's headquarters yesterday. Union leaders claim Telkom is intimidating workers to try to avert its first full-scale strike.

PHOTO LEFT: SHAMAMBU

Popperu joins

Kowoban 18/8/99

Strike

By Joshua Raboroko

DISRUPTIONS in an essential service could cause chaos when about 69 000 police and prison warders join other public sector unions in a national strike in their demand for a 7,3 percent pay rise.

The Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (Popperu) has decided to embark on a strike on August 24 despite the "no work, no pay" rule announced by Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

Business and civil rights organisations have called for calm during this period, saying the action might disrupt essential services and cause chaos in law and order enforcement.

Popperu president Mr Zizamele Cebekhulu announced the strike at a media conference yesterday.

The three public sector unions aligned to the Congress of South African Trade Unions - Popperu, the SA Democratic Teachers Union and National Education Health and Allied Workers Union - are engaged in a bitter wage dispute with the Government.



Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi

(2ND)
(1ST)
(2ND)

They would also embark on a go-slow from August 20 to August 23.

The mass action will include lunch-hour pickets and demonstrations outside police stations and government buildings.

Political analysts have urged the Government to pay better salaries to the police, prison warders and traffic officers so that they can render a good service to the public.

Cebekhulu said many police officers have been killed in the line of duty. "We risk our lives protecting citizens against criminal elements yet we are the lowest paid workers."

He was aware of the guidelines concerning strikes by workers in essential services, but was adamant they would down tools.

"The employers' hardline approach in introducing decisions outside the bargaining chamber prompted our decision to strike," Cebekhulu said.

Senior Superintendent Shira Gavanda said the Labour Relations Act and the Police Act prohibited police from taking such action. But in terms of the Constitution they could demonstrate.

South African Prisoners Organisation for Human Rights spokesman Mr Phaneas Mambuthu said prison warders had the right to strike.

'ACTION LOSING IMPACT'

Telkom strike has two faces

BT 18/8/99

(1527) (2188)

JOHANNESBURG: Striking Telkom workers expect a resolution by the end of the week, while harpered services chug along. The Post Office says its share of the strike is waning.

TELKOM voice-mail had recently summed up the impact of the striking Communication Workers' Union (CWU) members yesterday. "We are experiencing an unusually large number of calls, and, as a result, there will be delays," the voice said.

"Please bear with us. We will be able to offer an efficient service between 6pm and 8pm and we advise you to phone during this period, or otherwise stay on the line."

The 10219 centre handles new telephone applications and is usually manned by 80 workers between 7.30am and 4.30pm, while 30 workers man the night-shift lines until 8pm.

The Star tested all the call centres, and 1023, which handles telephone inquiries on residential and business numbers, answered the call after 60 seconds, during the day. After-hours calls to 10212 (faults), 10210 (telephone accounts) and 10219 took between two minutes and five minutes to answer.

An operator said CWU had given temporary workers permission to work during the strike. "We have been allowed to work because we are part timers. There is a skeleton staff and we are battling to cope with the calls. All the full-time operators are on strike. We receive more than 100 calls per second," he said.

Last night Telkom and the union were still locked in talks to end the strike.

Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singetson said yesterday's meeting followed a three-hour meeting

between the two parties on Monday night. About 17 000 CWU members working for Telkom were not at work on Monday, slowing down some of the company's services. The union, which has a membership of more than 50 000 at Telkom and the Post Office, plans to continue with the industrial action for a month. But general secretary Seleboho Kiti said the wage dispute could be settled before the end of the week.

The strike could be resolved if Telkom and the Post Office compromised on their offer of 5% and 7% respectively, or if the union backed down on its 14% demand for lowest-paid workers, 13% for operational staff (technicians, trained workers in key positions, and clerks) and 11% for supervisors.

The Post Office, which has not resumed talks with the union, claimed yesterday the strike was losing impact, with only 4 200 employees out of the total workforce of 26 000 not at work.

It added that 5 400 took part in the industrial action on Monday, causing the closure of 133 post offices nationwide. Only 95 offices did not open yesterday.

The Post Office's general manager for communication, Sandile Madolo, said the company would ensure that the mail went through, and, with high morale among and the assistance of employees not on strike, the negative impact on customer service was being minimised.

Meanwhile, the Alliance of Telkom Unions - representing the South African Communications Union, the Mineworkers' Union and the Postal and Telkom Association - will embark on industrial action tomorrow and Friday.

The action will consist of mass stayaways, picketing at company premises, working to rule and a ban on overtime. The alliance is made up of highly skilled technicians, administrative staff and a large number of management staff - Own Correspondent

SA faces a wave of sectoral industrial action

Asmal says teachers are not considered members of the essential services

(1672) 09/19/8/99

He also asked whether classrooms were standing empty as a result of the presence of 280 SA Democratic Teachers Union representatives at the Cosatu special congress which began yesterday.

SA FACES a wave of public sector and coal miner wage strikes while a post and telecommunication workers strike yesterday entered its third day with no resolution in sight.

Twelve unions representing the 1.1 million-strong public sector including teachers said they would mobilise up to 800 000 workers for a three-hour nationwide march next Tuesday to protest against government's handling of failed wage negotiations.

"We are expecting 700 000 to 800 000 members on the streets nationally," said Gavin Moultrie president of the Hospital Personnel Trade Union of SA.

A spokesman for the Public Servants Association said unions were irate with government for implementing an average 6.3% wage increase for 85% of the public service. The unions want an inflation-linked 7.3% hike with an extra 1% for each year. "We take extreme exception to the unilateral action taken by government. It is reminiscent of the previous regime.

Even in the face of such bad faith the unions remain committed to negotiations," said the hospital union's Koos Kruger.

The 1.8-million member Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) said it supported the public sector union in its actions challenging President Thabo Mbeki's new government but fell short of committing the federation to a sympathy strike.

"(While) Cosatu can simply not afford for this precedent to be set, Cosatu also cannot afford a defeat of the public sector workers who make up nearly one third of our members," said Cosatu acting president Peter Malepe.

Public Services and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi said the government's offer was final and proposed that parliamentarians award themselves a 4% salary increase to put govern-

ment beyond criticism.

She has told Parliament that about 60% of workers would fall within the range of core inflation and that predictions for consumer inflation by the end of the year would average 6.2%.

Meanwhile, 17 000 of Telkom's 59 000 workforce and 7 000 out of 26 000 Post Office workers staged a third day of strikes to push for wage demands.

The Cosatu-aligned Commercial Workers Union held talks with Telkom on Tuesday but rejected a 5.5% offer by the postal workers who promptly withdrew its 0.5% addition and reverted to 5%.

The commercial union has yet to hold talks with the Post Office. It is demanding increases of 11% to 14% for postal employees and 10% to 14% for postal workers. The predominantly white Association of Telkom Unions will bring its 17 000

members out on strike from today.

Up to 20 000 miners are expected to strike at Amcoal and Inyanga coal mines tomorrow. They were offered 7.5% increases in each year of a two-year deal but the National Union of Mineworkers wants a 9% hike in each year.

A new approach to teachers' rights to strike was perhaps needed given the chaos in classrooms opposition Democratic Party leader Tony Leon said in the National Assembly yesterday.

He was speaking during an interpellation debate in which he asked new Education Minister Kader Asmal if he accepted that teachers had the right to withhold their labour.

Leon asked what Asmal intended to do to ensure that pupils received the 190 days learning to which they were entitled instead of the 50 days received which was

the case at some of the worst-off schools.

He also asked whether classrooms were standing empty as a result of the presence of 280 SA Democratic Teachers Union representatives at the Cosatu special congress which began yesterday.

Asmal said Leon's remarks might go down well at house meetings in Sandton where even domestic work was regarded as an essential service.

The right to strike was protected by the constitution and was extended to all employees not engaged in essential services — those whose absence would be a risk to life personal safety or health. Asmal said.

Nowhere in the world was teaching classed in this category and it would be "most distinguished" to try to include it.

He believed educators were committed to making up lost time where teaching was disrupted through industrial action.

Politicians should take the sanctity of the constitution very seriously, Asmal said — Reuter Sapa.

members out on strike from today.

Up to 20 000 miners are expected to strike at Amcoal and Inyanga coal mines tomorrow. They were offered 7.5% increases in each year of a two-year deal but the National Union of Mineworkers wants a 9% hike in each year.

A new approach to teachers' rights to strike was perhaps needed given the chaos in classrooms opposition Democratic Party leader Tony Leon said in the National Assembly yesterday.

He was speaking during an interpellation debate in which he asked new Education Minister Kader Asmal if he accepted that teachers had the right to withhold their labour.

Leon asked what Asmal intended to do to ensure that pupils received the 190 days learning to which they were entitled instead of the 50 days received which was

23 000 Telkom workers stay away

(1591) (2/18)

Pretoria - The number of Telkom workers downing tools appeared to have grown to about 23 000 as three more labour unions joined the pay strike today.

Union leaders claimed some call centres handling directory inquiries and reports of faulty telephones were grinding to a halt because of the action.

"Our strike is a major success. Our members in strategic jobs are staying away," said Dirk Hermann, spokesman for the Alliance of Telkom Unions. He said early negotiations were that about 30% of the ATU's combined membership had heeded the strike call.

Telkom's largest staff body, the

Communication Workers' Union, has been on strike since Monday. About 17 000 of its 26 000 members have not been at work for the past three days. Telkom spokeswoman Amanda Singleton said the same number of CWU members was expected to stay away today.

Both the ATU and CWU have rejected Telkom's pay offer of a 5% raise across the board, a 1.1% gain share bonus, and a 2% increase in the ATU's share of the company's profits.

The ATU comprises the Mine-Telecommunications Union and the SA Communications Workers' Union.

A Telkom manager handling

calls related to repairs, orders for new telephone services and account inquiries at a centre in Pretoria said only about a third of staff were on duty. "We are very badly affected, but are trying our best," he said.

Directory inquiries did not appear to be as badly disrupted. Callers had to wait less than two minutes before being helped.

Mr Hermann said an initial ATU survey indicated that centres in Bloemfontein, the Western Cape, Johannesburg and Wilbank were suffering because of the strike.

At Telkom's Pretoria head office, Ms Singleton said, between 30 and 50 ATU members had not turned up for work. — Sapa

calls related to repairs, orders for new telephone services and account inquiries at a centre in Pretoria said only about a third of staff were on duty. "We are very badly affected, but are trying our best," he said.

Directory inquiries did not appear to be as badly disrupted. Callers had to wait less than two minutes before being helped.

Mr Hermann said an initial ATU survey indicated that centres in Bloemfontein, the Western Cape, Johannesburg and Wilbank were suffering because of the strike.

At Telkom's Pretoria head office, Ms Singleton said, between 30 and 50 ATU members had not turned up for work. — Sapa

Police strikers

(6517) (6/99)
NOT ON — FIVAZ
ET 19/8/99
NATIONAL police commissioner George Fivaz has warned police who participated in strike action that they could face disciplinary action which may result in dismissal.

"It is unthinkable that any member of the SAPS who is dedicated to serving the community would withdraw services from that community to serve his or her own interests."

Fivaz said the poor salaries of police officials remained a concern for police management. A number of endeavours were made over the past few years to increase salaries, perks and service conditions and police management would continue their efforts.

"However, the SAPS will not tolerate strike action," Fivaz said.

Police officers may participate in mass demonstrations, provided they did so while off-duty, he said. — Staff Writer

"It is unthinkable that any member of the SAPS who is dedicated to serving the community would withdraw services from that community to serve his or her own interests."

Fivaz said the poor salaries of police officials remained a concern for police management. A number of endeavours were made over the past few years to increase salaries, perks and service conditions and police management would continue their efforts.

"However, the SAPS will not tolerate strike action," Fivaz said.

Police officers may participate in mass demonstrations, provided they did so while off-duty, he said. — Staff Writer

opposition" is a sentiment not far from many lips.

But there was nothing on the agenda of this year's congress about forming a Workers' Party. There was, however, plenty about the need for Cosatu to begin to strike other alliances. Its natural allies now declared several unions, are civic organisations, nongovernmental organisations and the Inchoate Rural Peoples' Movement.

In the latest edition of the SA Labour Bulletin a Cosatu intellectual, Dikga Silekwebu calls for an independent political programme. "Only a programme of struggle can tilt the scale in favour of the poor. No amount of sweet-talking within the alliance will benefit the working class."

Silekwebu and others advocate a "social movement unionism" for Cosatu and say it must be more rooted in communities. The federation has resolved to become more involved in local government, school governing boards, hospital boards and water committees. With about one in three workers now employed as a casual or contract worker, Vavi says, Cosatu must get to these workers in their communities. But it has thus far shown little enthusiasm for this sort of unionism because it is hard to slog with none of the experience of stop orders or facilities that industry offers.

PUBLIC-SECTOR STRIKES

FORCES STIRRED UP, READY FOR A REALIGNMENT

Blue- and white-collar unions find common cause

The wage dispute in the public service has become the setting for a nascent realignment of forces — away from the impertinent alliance between the African National Congress, Congress of SA Trade Unions and the SA Communist Party and towards greater trade union unity across federations and encompassing white- and blue-collar workers.

Public Service Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi's decision to implement government's wage offer (lapped by R200m to R3,2bn) midway through a dispute has sent a tremor through the alliance. It has also prompted joint action by Cosatu's predominantly black affiliates with predominantly white and coloured

year was a failure. It targeted traditional industries where its membership had peaked. It has now decided on a "summer offensive" to reach 2m members early next year.

It will focus on the new categories of workers as well as on domestic and farm workers. "It means having to release huge levels of resources to maintain such a movement," says Vavi.

But new flexible work arrangements >> "I don't think Cosatu has quite adapted to the main challenges of a new democracy and of globalisation. Wealth creation, training and productivity must become part of labour's agenda. These issues haven't been foregrounded adequately." Eddie Webster

and growing unemployment eat into Cosatu's power. Casual and contract workers are unlikely to be able to afford the subscriptions full-time employees pay yet they will need far greater union attention. Organising the unemployed (as Cosatu has again decided to do) is difficult, frustrating and expensive because trade unionism after all assumes a "trade" or some form of employer-employee relationship. Says Vavi: "We must reposition Cosatu

to meet the challenges of the next millennium. This is not 1985. Realistic sentiments but factions in Cosatu behave as if they are still in the Eighties. The politics of opposition continue to dominate and they display little strategic economic sense.

According to Wits labour academic Eddie Webster, Cosatu must build on the gains it has made in the past five years. "I don't think Cosatu has quite adapted to the twin challenges of a new democracy and of globalisation," says Webster. He adds: "Wealth creation, training and productivity must become part of labour's agenda. These issues haven't been foregrounded adequately. There must be a shift towards problem solving."

Many believe that to maintain its influence and power, Cosatu must look to the idea of a triple accord between labour, business and government in which all parties make trade-offs for economic growth and for jobs.

The idea is gaining currency in top Cosatu circles but it will not be an easy sell among the rank-and-file where re-trenchments and for the public-sector unions a tougher stance from government, have caldried relations. Still, some lateral thinking is needed to break the logjam. "The challenge is for a new kind of worker or we will indeed become part of the Fourth World," Webster says. Fetal Hlatshway

(250) (152)

FW 20/8/99

creases be negotiated before they are announced in the Budget. In addition, it has moved on plans to introduce a basic income grant a key campaign by labour (see page 22).

But the unions will progress to negotiate appears to have been too little, too late for a government that said "enough". The Minister changed chief negotiators midway through the talks, opting to do much of the talking herself. She also toughened government's position with the assistance of her adviser, Robinson Ramatle.

Two reasons may account for his change of heart. The strike did not have the impact many imagined it would. Large chunks of the public-service work force are defined as essential services by the Labour Relations Act and, as such, are forbidden from striking. Their protests are tightly regulated so that unions are obliged to provide a minimum service even if they go on marches or lunch-time protests. Thus, the dispute has been most acutely felt at township schools and in some courts.

The sight, on national television, of marching teachers (some jiving) juda-



Teachers' union has implemented a 6.3% increase in wages for 1999. The union has also implemented a 6.3% increase in wages for 1999. The union has also implemented a 6.3% increase in wages for 1999.

posed against angry parents who had organised themselves into the parents' committees reminiscent of the Eighties, has swayed public opinion against them. Also, not all teachers who belong to unions in dispute with government have come out on strike. These factors weighed against the unions and prompted a far harder stance from government. If government's action sets a precedent, then protests planned for August 24 will do

so too. If the 12 unions concerned pull it off, it will be the biggest exercise in cross-racial and cross-federation unity. "Over the next five years, we'll see more common strategies and action across federations," says Eddie Webster of Wits University's Sociology of Work Unit.

Meanwhile, some government sources suggest Fraser-Moleketi may have misjudged the depth of union anger. Cosatu's three public service affiliates (the National Education Health & Allied Workers' Union, Nelawu, Sedu, and the Police & Prisoners Civil Rights Union Popcu) last weekend held emergency executive meetings to plan a new phase of protests. They have threatened to block government's plans to re-structure the public service and develop a new wage policy.

They have also exhorted members to return to work, but are planning a work to rule. Teachers, for example, will not supervise any extra-curricular activities at school. "If it's lunch-time it's lunch-time. If it's tea time it's tea-time," hammered Sedu's Ngesi at the weekend. The problem some argue, is that it always is. Fetal Hlatshway

Question?

In an unpredictable business world, how does a dynamic executive change his/her own future?

- a. By phoning 011 327 6714
- b. By faxing 011 327-7883
- c. By e mailing info@mba.co.za
- d. All of the above



GORDON INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS SCIENCE
University of Pretoria

Regula 211026

In a business world full of questions it's nice to know there are some clear answers to getting ahead. By choosing the Gordon Institute of Business Science MBA you will be choosing to adapt and shape your future. You will be choosing a more focused, two year curriculum designed to be significantly different. A modular structure which allows you to learn while you work with intensive on-campus lecture blocks, alternating with periods back at work. You will also be choosing to surround yourself by the best business minds locally and internationally. Not just the faculty but your fellow students. So remember, your choice of MBA is probably the most important business decision you'll ever make.

MBA Director Professor Nick Manktelow
Campus Office Johannesburg

09 20/8/94
Telkom to
meet CWU

as ATU joins
in strike
(152) (268)
Simpfwe Xaba
and Renee Gwerizky

TELKOM and the Communication Workers Union (CWU) are expected to meet today in an attempt to resolve a wage dispute which has led to a week of industrial action.

Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said yesterday's workplace demonstrations and stay-aways were supported by more than 18 000 of Telkom's employees.

"Customer service such as call centre response time, the rate of installations and repairs were affected by the strike. Telkom managed the situation by placing employees who were available for duty on the most critical customer interfacing functions."

Singleton said the CWU informed management yesterday that its members would embark on go-slows, overtime bans and a work to rule.

Meanwhile, more than 20 000 members of the Alliance of Telkom Unions (ATU) also implemented industrial action yesterday. Union spokesman Dick Heyns said the union notified management yesterday of its intention to continue with strikes next week.

Singleton said Telkom had received no response from the ATU after management had invited the union to join today's talks.

At the same time the National Union of Mineworkers served notice on the Chamber of Mines yesterday of its intention to go on strike over a 9% wage demand today after a Labour Court ruling found its initial notice was inadequate.

Anglocoal and Ingeve collieries have offered 7%, but indicated they would give 7.5% if the union was prepared to settle.

The strike comes at a time when the coal price is \$20 a ton its lowest level since 1994.

An industry source said there appeared to be mixed support for the strike

'5 post offices affected'

FIVE post offices in townships on the Cape Peninsula have been closed since Monday due to a strike by members of the Communication Workers' Union (CWU), a spokesperson for the SA Post Office, Rhema Mashonga, said yesterday.

The workers embarked on strike action on Monday to press home their demands or increases ranging between 10 and 14%. They are also demanding a housing subsidy, employment of part-time workers on a permanent basis and an improvement in family leave, including maternity leave.

"Those (five) were the only post offices that closed in the Western Cape," Mashonga said. She did not name the post offices. She experienced some delivery problems in the Stellenbosch area but contingency plans were put into place and today (Thursday) everything is fine."

She said only about six percent of

Telkom, unionists meet today

PRETORIA Telkom and some labour leaders are to meet in Johannesburg today in a renewed bid to resolve a pay dispute that has prompted thousands of workers to down tools since Monday.

The talks have been arranged by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singleton said yesterday.

The CCMA offered on Wednesday to help reach an agreement between Telkom and the Communication Workers' Union (CWU), which has been on strike since Monday. No new talks are on the cards with a grouping of three other unions — the Alliance of Telkom Unions (ATU) — which

joined the CWU strike yesterday.

The four unions embarked on the action after rejecting a pay offer of a 5% raise across the board, a performance-based increase of 2% and a 1.1% gain share bonus.

The CWU's Mike Seroba said yesterday: "We are ready to enter into discussions at any time."

He said the union's strike action would continue until the matter is resolved, adding that a go-slow is being planned for next week.

Singleton said Telkom had also invited the ATU to enter into a new round of talks, but was still awaiting a response.

ATU president Colin Smith said the alliance would consider

resuming talks only if there is an indication that Telkom is prepared to improve its offer. "We have received no such indication and will not be going into talks at this stage," Smith said.

Meanwhile, Telkom played down the impact of yesterday's stoppage, saying fewer workers stayed away than on Wednesday.

Singleton said the company is able to maintain sufficient service levels in vital areas by redeploying available employees. About 16 500 workers were absent compared to 17 000 on Wednesday, she said.

ATU officials rejected Telkom's claims as "ridiculous", saying the shutdown had brought technical depots throughout the country to

Strike hits post offices

STAFF REPORTER
Four township post offices have been forced to close since Monday, due to the four-day strike by communication workers.

Three of the post offices are in Khayelitsha and the fourth is Gugulethu's only post office.

South African Post Office spokeswoman Rhema Mashonga said 253 Communication Workers' Union (CWU) members had downed tools in the province, out of a total of 4 939.

She said mobile post offices would deal with backlogs that had resulted from the strike.

Post Office and Telkom employees embarked on industrial action for higher wages on Monday.

Post office workers want increases of between 10% and 14%. The Post Office has offered 7% for supervisors and 10% for lower paid workers.

Telkom employees have rejected an offer of a 5% across-the-board increase, a performance-based raise of 2%, and a 1.1% gain share bonus. They want increases of between 11% and 14%.

The strike at Telkom was given fresh impetus yesterday when the 17 000 Alliance of Telkom Unions members joined their CWU counterparts in industrial action.

The Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration is to chair talks between Telkom and the CWU today in a bid to break the deadlock.

Post office workers want increases of between 10% and 14%. The Post Office has offered 7% for supervisors and 10% for lower paid workers.

Telkom employees have rejected an offer of a 5% across-the-board increase, a performance-based raise of 2%, and a 1.1% gain share bonus. They want increases of between 11% and 14%.

The strike at Telkom was given fresh impetus yesterday when the 17 000 Alliance of Telkom Unions members joined their CWU counterparts in industrial action.

The Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration is to chair talks between Telkom and the CWU today in a bid to break the deadlock.

Post office workers want increases of between 10% and 14%. The Post Office has offered 7% for supervisors and 10% for lower paid workers.

Telkom employees have rejected an offer of a 5% across-the-board increase, a performance-based raise of 2%, and a 1.1% gain share bonus. They want increases of between 11% and 14%.

Massive strike on Tuesday as govt, unions clash

By SEKOLA SELLO

AN ESTIMATED one million public sector workers cutting right across race and ideological divides are expected to down tools on Tuesday in what could be an unprecedented war of attrition between the labour movement and government over salary increases.

This industrial dispute is spearheaded by four unions affiliated to the Congress of SA Trade Unions



and the mainly white Federated Unions of South Africa (Fedusa)

And unless a way out of the impasse is found soon, the one-day strike could turn into a long, drawn-out test of strength between the African National Congress government and trade unions, some of whom are its alliance partners.

Government yesterday maintained a stoney silence on the pay dispute with civil servants, saying it has nothing to add to Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser Moleketi's statement earlier in Parliament.

Fraser Moleketi said government would not tolerate an illegal strike by unions pursuing their

own narrow interests to the detriment of society as a whole.

She also rejected demands that employees who participate in the strike should be exempted from the no-work no-pay rule.

Government has also made it clear that it will not budge from its offer of a 6,3 percent increase. The unions, on the other hand, are demanding an average increase of 7,3 percent.

Last week Fraser Moleketi broke off negotiations when she unilaterally decided to implement the 6,3 percent wage increase.

This was at a time when the unions thought negotiations were still going on.

As attitudes harden, Cosatu has threatened that it may embark on a solidarity strike to support the demands of the civil servants.

The union federation is looking at closing all legal loopholes that in terms of the Labour Relations Act, could prevent it from embarking on a secondary strike.

At its three-day congress which ended in Johannesburg on Friday, Cosatu unveiled a programme of action aimed at expressing solidarity with the public sector employees and preventing job losses in the private sector.

Cosatu is planning a three-pronged campaign to pressure both government and the private

sector to act decisively to end the jobs crisis.

This will entail a campaign at shop-floor level where each week the unions will decide on which sector of industry is to be targeted. This could be the public sector, gold mining sector, textile sector, banking sector, the food sector or any other sector where Cosatu has members.

Cosatu could also take its campaign to the provinces with what it calls a rolling mass mobilisation. The Cosatu leadership said the duration of this action will be determined by its central executive committee.

To Page 2

Millions to join solidarity protest

(152) (250)
CELEAN JACOBSON

ST 22/8/99

COSATU is planning a day of mass action on Tuesday when private sector workers will stage protests in solidarity with striking civil servants.

The action is the latest shot fired by the trades union federation in its dispute with government, which last week called off wage talks and began unilaterally implementing a pay increase.

A million teachers, health workers, policemen and other public officials are expected to down tools on Tuesday.

Businesses will be hit as a further 1,7 million Cosatu members are expected to take part in marches and protests.

Cosatu is also planning a one-day general strike of its affiliates to protest against job losses and government labour and economic policies.

"We will use Tuesday to mobilise for a full-blown strike. The government must come back to the negotiating table and reverse their decision [on pay] or face a major confrontation," said the general-secretary of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, Fikile Majola.

The threat came as hardline teachers' union boss, Willie Madisha, was elected Cosatu president, signalling tougher relations between government and the public sector.

Massive strike as govt, unions clash

From Page 1 (250) (152)

(3) Cosatu said if its demands are not met, the central executive committee has been mandated to call a general strike at national level and will also decide on its duration.

The National Union of Mine workers (Num), which is still reeling from the crisis facing the gold mining industry, was delivered another body blow this week when the East Rand Proprietary Mine near Germiston was finally liquidated. Some 5 000 mine workers, most of whom are Num members, will lose their jobs as a result.

At another gold mine Haartebeesfontein in North West, 9 000 miners were dismissed this week.

Also read 'Labour turmoil will have strong economic impact' on this page.

66/8/99
CP 22/8/99

Public servants, govt fail to settle dispute

BD 23/8/99 (250) (152)

Unions expected to embark on a national pay strike tomorrow

Primarashni Pillay, Simphiwe Xako, Nicola Jenvey and Sapa

MORE than 300 000 public servants from 12 trade unions are expected to embark on a national pay strike tomorrow, following a failure to settle a dispute with government.

The strike will involve teachers and other public servants. The Congress of SA Students (Cosas) has condemned the strike action and will tomorrow protest against teachers participating in industrial action.

Tahir Maepa of the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers (Nupsaw) said yesterday that talks with government were suspended by the unions after government announced its intention to unilaterally implement its final wage offer of R3 28bn which would ensure an average increase of 6.3% and 7% for teachers and lowest paid workers.

Maepa said the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) independent unions and the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa) would review their course of action on

Wednesday. The unions are demanding a 7.3% pay increase.

Cosas president Lebogang Maile said the "strike is going to negatively affect preparations for final examinations".

He said the deadlock had to end within the next five days and called for President Thabo Mbeki to intervene as Cosas wanted schooling to normalise.

He called for separate matric exams for township pupils who have been affected by teacher stay-aways in the past three weeks.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Mineworkers (Num) and the management of the Durban Roodpoort Deep mining group were last night locked in talks over Friday's dismissal of about 9 000 Haartebeesfontein miners after they embarked on an illegal strike.

The miners went on strike over the terms and conditions surrounding the group's R45m purchase of the North-West mine from AngloGold last Monday.

Num secretary general, Gwede Mantashe, said the union would meet mining management to continue wage talks today. He said

about 12 000 colliery workers would embark on a strike today.

Telkom and the Communication Workers' Union (CWU) yesterday failed again to reach a pay dispute settlement after management tabled a revised 9.1% offer.

Telkom spokesman, Amanda Singleton said union leaders would consult their members today to consider the offer. She said the two parties would meet next Monday for further negotiations.

This comes after Telkom and the Alliance of Telkom Unions (ATU) at the weekend reached an agreement of a 5.5% total remuneration package increase for employees on supervisory level 6% basic salary for operational workers and 6.5% for support staff. The company also offered to increase the minimum wage to R2 350 a month.

Singleton said the deal which is in addition to the 2% performance based increase and a 1.1% gain sharing bonus, will be effective from April 1.

Private courier companies cancelled on Friday said the telecommunication strike had not boosted business.

Protests to continue until demands are met

We want action now, says Cosatu

FRANK NXUMALO (250) (152)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The time for talking was over, Cosatu warned at the weekend after a national congress adopted a programme of rolling mass action to culminate in a general strike if its demands were not met.

Cosatu's demands relate to the job crisis, tariffs, labour market policy, the liquidation of East Rand Proprietary Mines, the mass dismissal of 10 000 workers at Hartbeesfontein gold mine and the public sector dispute.

"We are sick and tired of the senseless destruction of jobs in our country," the congress said. "The high unemployment rate inherited from the apartheid era continues to grow, jobs are being destroyed faster than they are being created while 350 000 new workseekers come on to the labour market every year."

"The time for talking is over, we want action now."

Cosatu said it had consistently put forward proposals on job creation and retention to employers and the government at Nedlac and at last year's jobs summit.

A special central executive committee (CEC) meeting would be urgently convened.

The programme of action had three components: every week the labour federation would focus on a different industry to defend jobs and labour rights.

There would also be provincial action in all Cosatu regions, the length of which would be decided by the CEC.

Third, a national strike would take place if congress resolutions

and declarations were not met. The duration would also be decided by the CEC.

The congress said Statistics South Africa figures showed a net loss of more than 365 000 jobs in the non agricultural sectors between 1996 and 1999.

More than 150 000 miners had lost their jobs between 1997 and 1999, six marginal mines had notified the Gold Crisis Committee of intended retrenchments and 28 000 jobs were at risk in the next two months.

In the same period more than 110 000 jobs had gone in manufacturing and 22 000 jobs were lost last year in clothing and textiles.

There had been 110 000 jobs lost in the construction industry, with 30 000 more at risk. The service and transport sectors had lost 110 000 jobs. Finance had lost 10 000 jobs between 1998 and 1999 and Spoornet and Telkom were threatening to retrench 27 000 and 11 000 workers respectively.

A combination of voluntary severance packages, frozen posts and natural attrition had reduced the public sector by 170 000 workers from the levels of four years ago.

"We are facing a national crisis of job losses and rising unemployment which is deepening poverty and inequality and threatening the gains of new democracy," Cosatu said.

"Despite the agreements of the jobs summit in October 1998, employers continue to throw workers on to the streets in numbers. Economic policies are stilling the economy (and) urgent measures are needed to address this growing crisis."

Public-service wage demands part of a bigger picture, says unionist

example, which make the whole area of wage negotiation in the public service look like a futile exercise may be reviewed.

We have been told of the reduction of personnel expenditure or the terms of negotiation before the development of a wage policy skills and service delivery audit and that related issues of the size of the public service are incomplete.

Against this we have been called (and still are calling) for a remuneration policy (and not subordinated to a restrictive macro economic framework which we think is not entirely appropriate) and to link wage negotiations with budgetary processes (particularly on personnel expenditure).

Cosatu public sector unions have always been at the forefront of public sector transformation, which is not confined to workplace democratisation, but includes a better life for all.

cal austerity on the wage bill as Government's main objective. This could include massive budget cuts 'downsizing' of the workers.

The effect is not just on workers but on their communities as well. Social delivery is thus affected.

In the context of the huge social deficit left by the apartheid legacy, you cannot simply remove these workers, while intending to build more classrooms, hospitals or police stations.

The Government's own public service skills audit raised the concern of downsizing health, education and other areas of social delivery, warning that larger cuts will affect basic service delivery.

We think the Government is likely to agree on this as previous statements indicate their desire not to retrench but to seek other alternatives like redeployment.

This could mean that even fiscal projections in the medium term, for

(water and electricity) food, medical care, and transport.

It is becoming difficult for a general assistant, for example who earns R1 500 a month, to meet the rising costs and support their families.

A wage increase below inflation could only make things worse in a situation where there is a lack of effective social security and an economy that is shedding jobs.

So it is absolutely wrong to regard the "immediate interests of workers as excluding those of their families and their communities."

Thurdly and more importantly, Cosatu unions acknowledge that public service pay has a major effect on the macro-economic balance of the economy.

Now we know that the macro economic framework (Gear) is extremely restrictive.

In the public service this strategy effectively means applying a fis-

And the concern about the "consumption expenditure", and the so-called "crowding out" effect of the wage bill could be misleading, as these social areas of delivery are inherently labour intensive.

Workers in these services are not just "consuming" the resources, as some would like us to believe, they are also producers. Retaining their role in the public service is an extremely important investment for the country.

Furthermore, the whole notion of "bloated" bureaucracy needs to be critiqued. Studies have found that the so-called "deadwood" or pea-pushers make up less than 8% of the public service and the so-called "surplus people" (50 000 of them) are actually being deployed to do work that is productive.

In the main, the public sector worker is the teacher, nurse, and policeman, all of whom provide an essential service to the country.

FRANK NXUMALO (250) (152)

'It is wrong to regard workers' interests apart from those of families and communities'

Cosatu unions have a different view which places the demand for a living wage within a wider context.

Firstly, the wage bill has been climbing up in the past three years, not because of basic pay of workers, but because of the costs of allowances and benefits which, for the first time, were extended across the public service, particularly to women.

The allowances and allowances, such as car and housing perks, medical aids (which take up more than R1.5 million) and overtime, are extremely inequitable, benefiting those at the top of the public service wage hierarchy. Basic pay rises have not been that significant for those at the bottom of the pile.

Secondly, Cosatu unions recognise that public service pay remains a major component of Government spending in areas such as health, education, safety, security and so on.

As the public-sector unions prepare for marches tomorrow to back their wage demands, president of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) provides a broader perspective.

It is unfortunate that the commercial media chose to portray, for whatever they want to prove, the public sector's deadlock over wages as being about salary increases for workers against the Government's diminished resources.

And Cosatu unions in the dispute are told to "see the bigger picture" for the demands "would (merely) mean cuts in already under-resourced services."

Thus a picture of grave crisis is drawn as some "sacrifice" is not sought, but a "sacrifice" is highly sought, and a "sacrifice" is highly sought, and a "sacrifice" is highly sought, and a "sacrifice" is highly sought.

GOVT ACTION CONDEMNED

Public servants plan national day of protest

JOHANNESBURG: Public servants will embark on protest action tomorrow that could lead to a shutdown in services. EDDIE JAYIYA reports.

23/8/99

MORE than one million public servants will take part in marches nationwide tomorrow in a show of anger at the government's unilateral implementation of its final wage offer to 12 public sector unions.

The action is also a challenge to the government to return to the public service coordinating bargaining chamber.

Unions have demanded an average of 7,3% and an additional 1% pay progression for teachers.

Before breaking off negotiations and unilaterally implementing its final wage offer, the government offered 6,3% to most of the workers and 7% to the lowest paid and to teachers.

Paddy Padayachee, chairperson of the action committee representing the 12 unions, said marches would take place in all nine provinces. The biggest march would be in Pretoria.

Padayachee said essential services workers would hold lunch hour pickets or apply for sick or annual leave.

Police, Correctional Services workers, nurses, magistrates and prosecutors are classified as essential services employees and are excluded from going on strike. If they stay away from work, they could face disciplinary action and dismissal.

"We don't want to put our members' jobs in danger and have advised them to apply for sick leave and ordinary leave," Padayachee said. "If they are refused leave, lunch-hour pickets will be ideal."

"This is the beginning of the mass action that will send a strong message to the government that we reject its final offer. We want it to return to the negotiating table."

The industrial action is expected to disrupt major institutions throughout the country.

● Teaching will be severely affected,

● Hospitals will run on skeleton staffs as general staff are likely to stay away from work,

● Staff shortages could hamper services at the Department of Home Affairs,

● Prisons could face work to-rule and lunch hour disruptions

● Provincial education departments face shutdowns,

● Police stations could operate on skeleton staffs if officers are granted a day's sick or annual leave. Officers will also stage lunch hour demonstrations and pickets.

Government spokesperson Joel Netshitenzhe said the implementation of the final offer was a "transitional settlement".

He said the state was calling on the unions to return to the negotiations process to develop a broader wage policy acceptable to the parties.

"This policy, which has to be finalised by the end of the year, will surely avoid similar disputes," Netshitenzhe said.

"The government is keen to begin wage negotiations with the unions before the Budget is finalised — so tomorrow's protest is unnecessary."

Coal miners are set to continue

their strike today while their union, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), and the Chamber of Mines meet in a bid to resolve the wage dispute.

About 12 000 coal miners are on strike. They are demanding a 9% increase across the board, while the chamber is offering 7%.

NUM general secretary Gwede Mantashe said the strike would continue until management upped its offer.

Telkom and the Alliance of Telkom Unions reached wage agreement on Saturday.

The alliance, which represents the South African Communications Union, Mineworkers' Union and Postal and Telkom Association, will receive a 5,5% increase on the total remuneration package for supervisors, 6% for operational staff and 6,5% for auxiliary (lowest-paid) workers.

Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singleton said the company had tabled the same offer to the Communications Workers' Union (CWU), which had not yet decided on the offer.

CWU general secretary Seleboho Kiti said the union would report to its members, who were expected to return to work today.

"We are not returning to resume normal work," he said.

"We will embark on protest action such as work-to-rule, a ban on overtime, and lunch hour pickets on Friday. The two parties will resume talks next Monday."

"We have made proposals to the Post Office in a bid to resolve the impasse. They have taken the proposals to their principals, who are overseas."

"We will meet (the Post Office) again today," he said.

● See Business Report

It's all-out strike next, say unions

Cosatu goes on march

ARC 23/8/99

STAFF REPORTERS AND SAPA

Eleven public sector unions say tomorrow's planned Cosatu march on Parliament should be seen as the first part of action which could end in a national strike if the Government does not return to the bargaining table.

At a press conference today, Cosatu said it would meet on Friday to discuss a full blown nationwide strike.

Tomorrow's protest was expected to hit schools, health and police services the worst. Only skeleton staff was expected to be on duty tomorrow in these sectors.

Unions are demanding a 7,3% increase and a 1,1% pay progression for teachers.

The Government has walked away from the bargaining table and has implemented an across-the-board 6,3% increase. Tony Enreich, Cosatu's assistant general secretary, said workers deserved an inflation related increase.

If the Government was not prepared to offer this, it was sending out a negative

message to private industry.

Tomorrow's marchers will be joined by nurses, even though this profession failed to secure a minimum service agreement with the provincial government.

Parliamentary staff will also take part in the march, along with provincial staff based at the legislature building in Wale Street. Mr Enreich said this would have a huge impact on Parliament and if the unions embarked on a full blown strike, Parliament could come to a standstill.

The intention was to ensure the employers got the message that the unions were serious about salary negotiations.

Cosatu has also called on its unions in the private sector to hold lunchtime demonstrations tomorrow.

Teachers' unions in the province are calling on parents to help out at schools, especially primary schools, while they are out marching.

Hawa Khan, spokeswoman for the

To page 3

Its all-out strike next - unions

From page 1

health related independent unions, said the provincial government was not prepared to grant leave for staff to go on the march. The provincial health department had also threatened that the no-work no-pay rule would be implemented.

Mrs Khan said, however, nurses would be out in force. "The nurses will definitely take part," she said, but added that nurses would not leave patients to die.

Today Public Service Minister Geraldine Fraser Moleketi said the government would not budge from its current wage offer to public ser-

vants, saying the proposal was reasonable.

One of the 11 striking unions, the Police, Prisons and Civil Rights Union (Popcru), said "The employer's hard line approach to implement decisions outside the bargaining chamber prompted the decision to strike."

Police and other workers in essential services are prohibited from striking.

But Mr Zizamele Cebekhulu, president of Popcru, said. "The government cannot expect us to conform with provisions laid down by management on strike action if the employer is running away from

negotiations. There is no option other than a strike."

The unions have urged public servants, especially police and teachers, to apply for sick leave or annual leave to take part in the strike.

The predicted disruption to schools, just weeks away from the year-end examinations, has angered parents and students.

The Congress of South African Students (Cosas) will hold a national protest tomorrow and has threatened to embark on its own mass action if the impasse between government and the unions was not resolved.

SAHRC to probe teachers' strike

By Charity Bhengu (S21)

THE South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) will make certain recommendations to strike a balance between the rights of the teachers to strike against those of pupils' right to education

This would follow an immediate inquiry by commissioners into the violations of children's rights by members

of South African Democratic Teachers Union who will be joining the national strike today by public sectors unions

SAHRC chairman Dr Barney Pityana acknowledged yesterday that teachers had a right to strike but there was a feeling that certain rights of children to education were being violated

He said "The inquiry seeks to redress the rights of children and to make recommendations to representa-

tives of both parties on how to balance their interests"

The SAHRC's intervention follows complaints by schools governing bodies at Phefem and Thulasizwe High Schools, both in Orlando West, Soweto

The parents raised concerns about how the strike was affecting their children's education, especially when Grade 12 pupils were supposed to write trial examinations in September

Sowetan 24/8/99

Huge marches hit SA streets

Pay protesters confront state

STAFF REPORTERS AND SABA

Thousands of public service workers, ranging from teachers to health workers, cleaners and managers, joined the biggest national one-day pay strike South Africa has yet seen.

The two main events were marches on Parliament in Cape Town and on the Union Buildings in Pretoria, but striking workers also converged on Bisho, Durban, Nelson Mandela, Pieterburg, Mafikeng, Kimberley and Bloemfontein.

More than 15 000 public sector union members marched on Parliament demanding the Government returned to the bargaining table.

The marchers, members of a dozen unions, started their protest march more than an hour late, while hundreds of people lined Darling Street in a show of solidarity and support.

Freek de Lange, a police union shop steward, had come from Oudshoorn with six other SA Police Union members. He said it was their day off and they had felt it was fitting for them to drive to Cape Town to take part in the march.

In Pretoria about 30 000 public servants swamped Pretoria's Church Square before marching to the Union Buildings.

Many Western Cape schools closed as teachers went on strike. The SA Democratic Teachers' Union,



ARLT 24/8/99 (152) (250)

Pay frontline public service workers prepare to march on Parliament today to voice their demands

the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of SA, and the Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie represent a combined total of 350 000 members.

Most of the staff at the Peninsula's big hospitals reported for duty and services were largely unaffected.

National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union spokesman Makoko Lekoko said most of the union's 230 000 members took part in the stayaway except for a core hospital staff, including those in operating theatres, maternity wards, and intensive care units.

Western Cape police management said

there were no significant disruptions in policing.

But at Pollsmoor prison, about 200 people visiting jailed relatives and friends were told to go home because most warders were out on the strike.

Strike organiser Paddy Padayachee said the 12 public service unions would meet on Friday to consider future action. This could include a protracted strike, or a withdrawal from all negotiating forums should the Government not improve its offer.

Unions hold last-ditch talks, page 3

Unions hold last-ditch talks with Government over national pay protest strike

CLIVE SHAPIRO
PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT

Top-level efforts were made within the tripartite alliance on the eve of today's public service pay protest to limit the damage to relations between the African National Congress and its labour partners.

Complicating the nature of the

strike, in which participating unions hope to mobilise thousands of teachers, police and health workers, among other public servants, is that traditionally ANC-aligned unions are working with non-ANC unions.

Meanwhile, President Mbeki maintained a studiously hands-off approach to the confrontation between the public service unions and his government, leaving management of the affair to recently appointed Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Mokghele.

Presidential spokesman Parks Mankahana said Mr Mbeki was "on top of the situation" and was continuing to be kept informed. Asked what Mr Mbeki's response was to the calls by unions for him to

intervene, Mr Mankahana asked what the point would be. Cabinet ministers, as a matter of course, did not do anything without the express approval of the president, he said.

Mr Mbeki was to spend today in a meeting with directors-general of all government departments and parliament to discuss issues of governance, Mr Mankahana said.

Yesterday, senior ANC officials held discussions with union leaders affiliated to the alliance about ways to resolve the labour dispute in a way least damaging to all concerned. But at the same time the Government maintained its firm stance that it would not move from its controversial decision to implement its wage proposals, over the objections of the unions, which want the

ARLT 24/8/99 (152) (250)

reopening of negotiations and which have called for Mr Mbeki's intervention.

Today's industrial action, which will include a march to Parliament and protests in all big centres, will be a key indicator to how the impasse will be resolved.

The unions have indicated that today's protest could be only a curtain raiser to further action, possi-

ble including a continuous strike. Sapa reports that the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union, aligned to the Congress of SA Trade Unions withdrew from the strike last night after Safety and Security Minister Steve Tshwete appealed to the leadership of Cosatu.

Popertu said its members were instead due to hold lunchtime pickets at their stations.

'800 000 TO STAY AWAY'

Unions unite in

historic protest

(250) (17A)

CT 24/8/99

THE MINISTER OF Public Services and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, faces an unwelcome birthday present today — up to 800 000 state employees taking part in a protest action. JUDITH SOAL, PRISCILLA SINGH and GASANT ABERDOR report.

Health and education sectors will gather at 11am today to begin their marches. Twelve public sector unions, representing 1.1 million civil servants, are expected to take part in the action, though not all of them are expected to march.

In the Western Cape, union officials expect between 30 000 and 60 000 people to take to the streets.

Many schools are expected to close early but essential services — hospitals, prisons and police stations — will be run by a skeleton staff. Organisers, who are busying in workers from as far as Oudtshoorn and Bredasdorp, say members will be urged to return to work after the march.

"All health workers, even cleaning staff, are deemed essential services so none of them can legally join the march, but we can't predict what they will do," said Alan Fraunstein of the provincial health department.

Red Cross Children's Hospital and Groote Schuur Hospital officials say they have contingency plans in the event of large stayaways, but they hope their staff will ignore the calls.

The health unions predicted that many health workers — including nurses and doctors — would join the march and that services would be disrupted.

"There will be staff to attend to emergencies but we may have to send away non-emergencies," said G.F. Jooste's medical superintendent, Norman Maharaj. "I would advise patients to come in only if it is really urgent."

Many schools have sent letters to parents informing them of the protest action and how it will affect their children's day at school.

Provincial education spokesperson Tony Eaton said principals unable to cope with the normal running of their schools today had informed area managers that they would be closed for the day.

Eaton could not say how many schools would be affected by closure, but he confirmed that the "no work, no pay" policy for teachers participating in the march would be enforced.

Education Minister Kader Asmal has condemned the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) for asking pupils to embark on protest action today. "The real casualty will be their own education. This amounts to cutting off their noses to spite their faces," Asmal said.

Public servants to march today

René Grawitzky (15a) and Simphiwe Xeko

HUNDREDS of thousands of public servants are expected to participate in countrywide marches and demonstrations today to protest against government's decision to implement its final wage offer.

This is the first joint action of its kind in recent years between the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Federation of Unions of SA (Fedusa).

The extent of support for the action will only become clear today in response to a request by Safety and Security Minister Steve Tshwete, police members agreed yesterday to demonstrate during lunch time only.

The Labour Relations Act allows essential services employees, such as police and health workers, to engage in strikes only if minimum service agreements have been reached. It is understood that

many health workers have taken leave or plan to picket during meal intervals.

The action is expected to be supported chiefly by teachers in township schools though it is expected that a large number of teachers from other areas would also participate. A union source said even in conservative, previously white areas public servants had adopted a "fed up" attitude.

Meanwhile the strike by 10 000 coal miners on Inyanga and Anglo-coal mines was expected to continue today though significant progress had been made during negotiations between Inyanga and the National Union of Mineworkers.

The union said agreements had been reached also on all gold mines. Most settled on 9% while agreement with Durban Roodepoort Deep was on 6% despite earlier offers of between 0% and 4%. Elsewhere the SA Post Office and Telkom stated yesterday that

most employees who embarked on a pay strike last week had returned to work.

Post Office GM Sandile Madole said that all post offices around the country were open.

Mike Seroba, Communication Workers Union (CWU) acting general secretary, said the union's members would intensify the pay strike until management listen to their demands.

He said the union and post-office management had not held discussions since the beginning of the strike last week.

Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said the company was consulting its members after management tabled a 9.1% offer during a meeting at the weekend.

Seroba said CWU members returned to work yesterday but would continue a go-slow, work-to-rule and overtime ban. Singleton said the two parties would meet next Monday.

TODAY'S industrial action is an historic occasion for organised labour in the new South Africa.

It's the first time that unions on opposite sides of the political spectrum are acting together to fight for workers' demands.

In the past month Cosatu affiliates and non-Cosatu unions have organised separate protests, pickets and stayaways, none of these has had the desired impact. Today unionists are expecting 800 000 workers around the country to take to the streets in a united show of force — although unions say it is not, strictly speaking, a strike. It will be the first time that some sectors, such as the formerly white model C schools, will be affected by protest action. "I think the employer (the govern-

ment) has made a serious miscalculation," said Andrew Madela of Cosatu's National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu). "We have it to thank for uniting the labour movement."

Cosatu said that if the government does not improve its offer of a 6.3% wage increase for public sector workers and seven percent for teachers to at least 7.3% after today's action, it will call out members of all Cosatu unions to embark on sympathy strikes and biting the country's economy to a standstill.

Fraser-Moleketi, who turns 39 today, remains adamant that the government cannot afford a larger wage bill and will not bow to the unions' demands.

As an unwanted birthday present, workers from the police, prisons, justice,

(250) (17A)

CT 24/8/99

Bas 18/99 Govt stands

firm in face of further strikes (152) (250) Renee Grawitzky and Primarashni Pillay

GOVERNMENT stood firm on its final wage offer yesterday despite threats of further strikes by public service unions in the wake of yesterday's countrywide marches and demonstrations.

Thousands of public servants heeded the call by the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Federation of Unions of SA to protest against government's decision to implement the final wage offer. Cosatu made unsubstantiated claims that 570 000 workers took part in marches and demonstrations. Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi urged the unions to return to the public service co-ordinating bargaining council — not to discuss the wage dispute but to talk about a new wage policy. Some unions have threatened not to co-operate on this issue while others said they would not negotiate on a new policy if it meant the erosion of current benefits.

Services in various government departments were affected to varying degrees by yesterday's action. The disruption of schooling varied across the country with Soweto schools being the hardest hit. Teachers in a number of schools north of Johannesburg also protested.

KwaZulu-Natal schools were mainly disrupted in Durban and Maritzburg. In Braamfontein Johannesburg police fired rubber bullets and stun grenades during a Congress of SA Students march in which students went on the rampage and damaged businesses and cars. They were delaying an appeal by Education Minister Kader Asmal to go to school. The unruly pupils harassed journalists and stole food from hawkers. Police struggled to control them while businesses in the area closed.

Strikes end at Ingwe and Telkom

Simplewe Xako
(212) (268) (152)
PD 25/8/99

ABOUT 4 000 Ingwe Coal Corporation miners in Mpumalanga are expected to return to work today after management agreed to offer them an 8% increase. The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) had demanded a 9% increase against management's 7.5% offer. Another 7 000 coal miners in the province however are continuing their strike to demand a 9% increase while their employer, Anglocol continues to offer 7%. NUM secretary-general Gwede Mantashe He said management had asked to meet the union this afternoon.

NUM and Ingwe agreed that their two-year deal would be backdated to July. They also agreed on a 1% increase in line with the consumer index price for two years.

Meanwhile, Telkom's employees who had been striking last week returned to work yesterday said Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton.

This follows a week-long pay strike by about 40 000 members of the Communication Workers Union (CWU). They returned to work but continued with their go-slow work-to-rule and an overtime ban to put pressure on management. Singleton said management

would meet the CWU next Monday to continue discussions after the company tabled a 9.1% offer to the union. She said the CWU would consult with its members regarding the offer.

CWU acting general-secretary, Mike Seroba said the union was also scheduled to meet the Post Office tomorrow.

He said that although the union still demanded 14% against the post office's 7% offer the union was still "willing to engage".

Cosatu warns state of bigger strikes to come

Frank Nxumalo
CT (25/8/99) (152)

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) yesterday warned the government that the country's biggest public sector strike marked the beginning of bigger things to come.

Zwelizima Vavi, the general secretary of Cosatu again lashed out at the government over its wage recent final wage offer of an average 6.3 percent for the majority of workers and 7 percent for teachers - against union demands of an average of 7.3 percent and 8 percent for teachers.

"We will not tolerate even an inclination of dictatorial tendencies," Vavi told about 350 000 public servants from 12 united public sector unions at the Union Build-ings in Pretoria.

This government belongs to us. It's taken months of confrontation and we are still prepared to confront the government to support our demands. He called on Trevor Manuel, the finance minister to stop an

announcing public sector wages in the national Budget before agreement had been reached with the unions.

Meanwhile, it emerged yesterday that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) convention on collective bargaining on which the government apparently based its decision to unilaterally implement a wage offer explicitly excludes public servants.

About two weeks ago, the government unilaterally implemented its final wage offer. "The convention does not deal with the position of public servants. It also leaves it to laws or regulations to determine the extent to which the guarantees provided by the convention are to apply to members of the police and armed forces," reads ILO convention No.98 "Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949" which the government ratified on August 30 1995.

Yesterday Vavi called on the state to withdraw the public announcement and return to the negotiations table as matter of urgency.

570 000 WORKERS MARCH

Govt firm on wage offers

ET 25/8/99 (250) (152)

JOHANNESBURG: Unionists were buoyant after yesterday's stayaway, saying their hand had been strengthened. But the government remained adamant that it would not budge. **EDDIE JAYIYA** reports.

YESTERDAY'S show of strength by civil servants in marches throughout South Africa and the government's hardline stance on the wage dispute could plunge the country into an indefinite full blown strike. Buoyed by the success of the marches which unionists said attracted about

570 000 workers, the 12 unions are set to enter the next round of talks with the government convinced that they will be able to force the state to bow to their demands. The government is offering 6,3% to most workers plus an extra 0,7% for teachers and the lowest paid workers, while the unions are demanding an average 7,3% increase, plus one percent for teachers.

The government remained unmoved by the large turnout of marchers saying it would press ahead with implementing the increases rejected by the unions.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi confirmed that she had received a memorandum from the leaders of the 12 public sector unions outlining their demands. However she said the government had implemented its final offer, which would be backdated to July 1.

She rejected criticism that the government's "unilateral" implementation of the

increase had undermined the collective bargaining process. "The government reaffirms its commitment to sound labour relations," she said.

Labour analyst Gavin Brown said the stand-off had become "political theatre" and that the government knew it would face the wrath of the unions when it implemented its offer. "I (foresee) unions embarking on more actions. The state will save millions in unpaid wages if it applies the 'no work, no pay' policy."

SA Democratic Teachers' Union president Willie Madisha addressing marchers at the Union Buildings yesterday, said "the biggest turnout ever in Pretoria" would send a strong message to the government that public servants would fight for better salaries. The government's unilateral implementation of its final offer had united the unions and co-operation between them would continue.

"The message has been driven home and we are now waiting for a positive response from President (Thabo) Mbeki. We have the power in our unity and we are not going to allow the state to negotiate with us through the media."

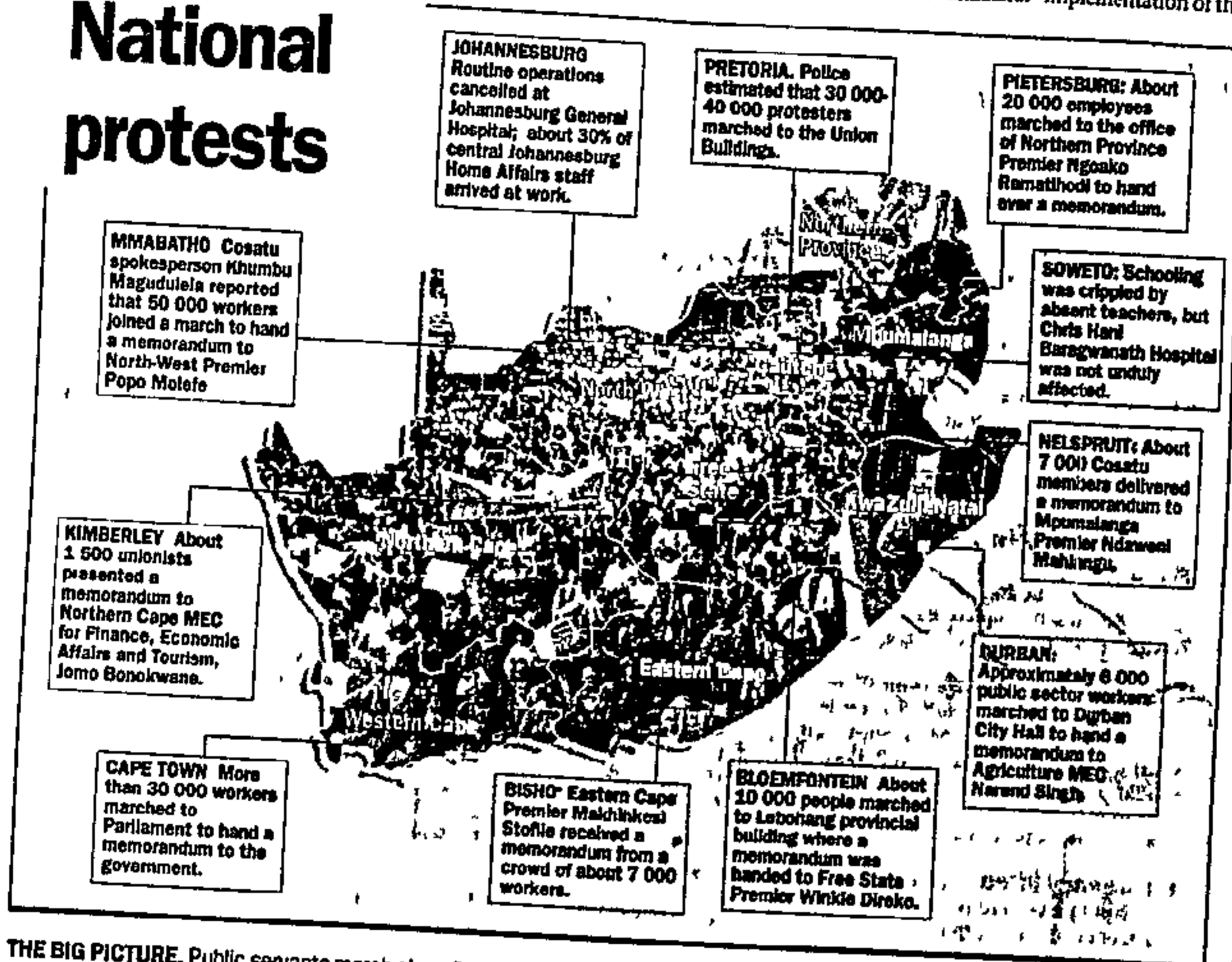
"We want a speedy return to the negotiation table where pertinent issues, including the wage deadlock, the development of a new wage policy, discussion of salary increases and the restructuring process, can be discussed," Madisha said.

Fraser Moleketi yesterday called on the unions to return to the bargaining council at a mutually determined date to discuss the new wage policy. "We will engage (over) a new policy that will review the conditions of service of all employees in the public service. It will take into account a system of pay progression for all public servants that will be performance-linked."

SA Council of Churches president Bishop Mvume Dandala appealed to the government and the unions to break the deadlock. He said the involvement of teachers indicated "how we as a community have let them down." He urged churches to explore ways in which communities could intervene in the dispute.

- Zille expects full report
- Taste of what might come
- Minister burns midnight oil
- Promise of talks 'within days'
- See Page 6

National protests



THE BIG PICTURE. Public servants march along Darling Street, Cape Town, during the stayaway called by 12 public sector unions yesterday. Marches around the country attracted a total of 570 000 workers, according to unionists. **PICTURE: DAVID BLOOMER**

Unions threaten more disruptions

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

THE public sector labour unions issued an ultimatum to the Government yesterday to reopen wage talks or face serious disruptive mass action if their demands are not addressed by Friday.

Congress of South African Trade Unions president Mr Willy Madisha warned that planned strikes "would be too ghastly to contemplate" unless the Government resumed negotiations to address the pay demands.

Further plans of action will be announced on Friday.

In response the Government has called on public service unions to return to the bargaining council to discuss a new wage policy.

Such discussions would ensure a more dynamic link between the budgetary process and salary negotiations, said the Government.

Hundreds of thousands of public servants have embarked on nationwide demonstrations to put pressure on the Government to restart talks. They also protested against the state's unilateral decision to implement its final offer of 6.3 percent.

Madisha, who handed a memorandum to Government representative Mr Mokoopedi Mokoena, told jubilant crowds at the Union Buildings in Pretoria that he expected President Thabo Mbeki to see the long list of their demands and respond soon.

More than 40 000 workers reportedly participated in a Bloemfontein Free State march which delivered a memorandum to the premier's office.

In Nelson Mandela, Premier Ndaweni Mahlagu received a memorandum from 7 000 protesters and promised to deliver it to Mbeki's office in Maseru.

Meanwhile, in Pieterburg, Northern Province, about 20 000 angry workers handed their memorandum to Ms Catherine Makuzza, who received it on behalf of Premier Ngeko Ramatlhodi.

In Madibeng, North West, over 70 000 workers joined the march.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and her finance colleague, Mr Trevor Manuel, faced about 40 000 disgruntled public sector workers as the Cape Town leg of the nationwide strike culminated outside Parliament.

Madisha said the unioned action was not only about pay rise percentages, but about the Government's attempt to undermine collective bargaining. It was also about protecting jobs.

Cosatu general secretary Mr

Unions issue government ultimatum over wage talks

From page 1

Zwehinzima Vavi also warned that the federation was bracing itself for a major confrontation with the Government in its fight for a living wage.

"We see this action as the beginning of things for we will not allow a dictatorial government, which was elected by people to contravene the International Labour Organisation's Convention," he said.

Federation of Trade Unions general secretary Mr Chiez Mlan lauded the unity of the public sector unions and warned that extra effort by the 12 unions would spurt off a full blown strike if the Government failed to accede to their demands.

South African Council of Churches president Bishop Mvume Dandala made an urgent appeal yesterday to both the Government and trade unions to break the current dead lock on salary increments.

In a statement Dandala said "On behalf of our communities, in which our children and simple ordinary people are suffering the consequences of upheaval and turmoil, we plead for an immediate truce to be called between the Government and trade unions. Out of sheer concern which is shared by all organs of civil society as churches - if need be - we are on stand-by to act as mediators in this deadlock."

Mzwakhe Hlangani reports that Yeswezi's strike had an adverse effect on the administration of justice, forcing major courts in Johannesburg to postpone cases.

Mr Thomas Dicker, deputy director of public prosecutions in the Johannesburg High Court, said the situation was bad especially since the court's roll was already congested.

"It is also bad because we are losing precious court time in a country where crime has reached alarming proportions."

Court proceedings at the Pretoria Magistrate's Court in Soweto were stopped at about 10am because interpreters were taking part in a protest march, said senior public prosecutor Mr André Lamprecht.

A single case was handled at the Orlando Magistrate's Court yesterday, according to senior prosecutor Mr Gansius Motumle.

Govt stands firm in face of further strikes

Basilela
Govt stands firm in face of further strikes
(152) (252)

GOVERNMENT stood firm on its final wage offer yesterday despite threats of further strikes by public service unions in the wake of yesterday's countrywide marches and demonstrations.

Thousands of public servants heeded the call by the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Federation of Unions of SA to protest against government's decision to implement the final wage offer. Cosatu made unsubstantiated claims that 570 000 workers took part in marches and demonstrations.

Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi urged the unions to return to the public service co-ordinating bargaining council - not to discuss the wage dispute but to talk about a new wage policy.

Some unions have threatened not to co-operate on this issue while others said they would not negotiate on a new policy if it meant the erosion of current benefits.

Services in various government departments were affected to varying degrees by yesterday's action. The disruption of schooling varied across the country with Soweto schools being the hardest hit. Teachers in a number of schools north of Johannesburg also protested.

KwaZulu-Natal schools were mainly disrupted in Durban and Maritzburg.

Mr Braamfontein, Johannesburg, police fired rubber bullets and stun grenades during a Congress of SA Students march in which students went on the rampage and damaged businesses and cars. They were denying an appeal by Education Minister Kader Asmal to go to school.

The unruly pupils harassed journalists and stole food from hawkers. Police struggled to control them, while businesses in the area closed.

Stop playing with words, Fraser-Moleketi told

15 000 public service protesters march to Parliament in support of demands for higher wages

LYNETTE JOHNS
EDUCATION REPORTER



The South African Democratic Teachers' Union accused Public Service Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi of playing with words following her call for a return to the bargaining table.

Yesterday, flanked by the Ministers of Finance, Education, Health and President's Office, Ms Fraser-Moleketi told 15 000 marchers that the Government would return to the bargaining table.

This was met by loud cheering from the crowd, which earlier had been baying for her blood.

In a later press release she said the Government called on the unions to return to the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council to discuss the new wage policy and not to reopen negotiations around salary increases.

"The Government has implemented the final offer put before unions on August 3. The increase will be backdated to July 1." She said this amounted to R3,28 billion for public service wage increases.

The provincial secretary of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, Don Pasqualle, said the minister was playing with words as she negotiated the 6.3% increase that had already been implemented.

The 12 public sector unions which represent, among others, teachers, nurses and police staff, left the bargaining table after the Government refused to further negotiate increases.

They accused the Government of acting in bad faith by first determining the budget then negotiating. Unions initially called for a 15% increase but have since lowered their demand to 7.3% and a 1.3% pay progression for teachers.

Yesterday's march, one of the biggest in the city in more than a decade, went off peacefully. In an ironic twist a number of protesters wore African National Congress colours and scarves.

Marchers many wearing union T-shirts and carrying banners and placards walked and toyed down Darling Street, which was lined by hundreds of supporters, before making their way up Adderley Street and then to Parliament where they were met by a large police contingent.

Inside Parliament union members were holding a lunchtime demonstration, much to the appreci-

ation of the crowd which encouraged them to come through the gates of Parliament to join them.

When the crowd spotted the five ministers their initial reaction was one of outrage. "You wanted us to vote for you, for us to put our crosses by your names, but you have betrayed us," a marcher said.

The five ministers were led through the crowd by police. Hawa Khan representing five independent unions, said people should know that "although nurses and police provide essential services, the labour organisations are prepared to make arrangements not to disrupt services."

"We are not interested in playing games and gambling with human lives rather do we want to beg, but bargain collectively."

"It is time for the Government to show commitment for a better life for all."

Before accepting the memorandum Ms Fraser-Moleketi shouted "Amandla!" to the crowd's delight. After she took the memorandum, the crowd sang *Happy Birthday* to Ms Fraser-Moleketi, who turned 59 yesterday.

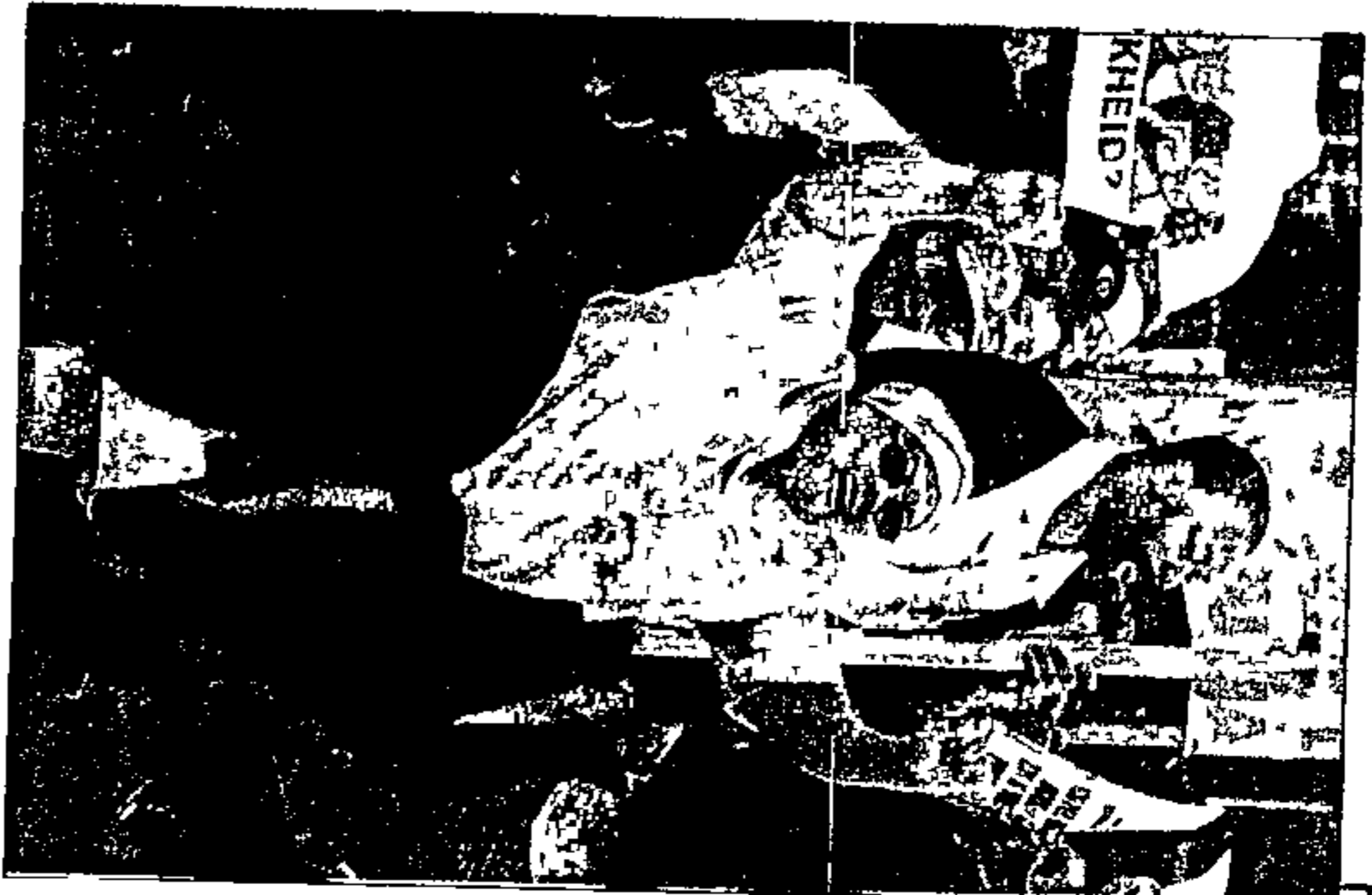
The president of the mainly white Suid Afrikaanse Onderwysunie, Steve Roux said marching yesterday had been great.

"We had to show the community and the state that teachers were being ripped off."

Two pupils Martin Mbanhahlo and Luthando Nanzu, from Vyvseka High in Phillipi, who came to observe the event said they were sad to see teachers marching.

"Teachers must not disrupt learning. They should rather march during the holidays - there are enough holidays for them to do so."

The Government is prepared to negotiate on several issues including a new wage policy which will review conditions of service. It will also consider a system of a performance-linked pay progression which will try to take care of inadequacies in pay to educators and other public service professionals.



Don't fight us, some of the marchers who took to the streets of the city



Amandla! Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, with Thulas Nxesi of the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, shouts freedom slogans



We hear you! Finance Minister Trevor Marwa, Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang and Education Minister Kader Asmal listen to the demands of the marchers

RAJ 25/18/99 (2h0) (152)

Minister called to account on costs

CAME SAVING
Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi has been asked to spell out to Parliament the impact of public service strike action this year.

In a question tabled in the National Assembly, Democratic Party leader Tony Leon has asked Ms Fraser-Moleketi to disclose how many "person-days" have been lost because of public service strike action since January 1.

Mr Leon has also asked whether any public servants have been paid for working hours while they were on strike, and if so what the total amount was. He asked whether pay was deducted for participating in strikes, and if so how much.

In a statement yesterday, DP labour spokesman Rudi Heine labelled yesterday's protests by 12 public sector unions "completely irresponsible".

Public service salaries should be performance-related, downsizing of the service should be speeded up and the savings used to reward excellence, Mr Heine said.

Andre Gauru, New National Party spokesman on education welcomed the Human Rights Commission investigation into whether it was unconstitutional for striking teachers to deprive pupils of their right to education.

In a statement last night, Ms Fraser-Moleketi urged the public service unions to return to the co-ordinating bargaining council at a mutually determined date to discuss a new pay policy.

This new policy would review the conditions of service of all employees of the public service and would take into account a system of pay progression for all public servants that would be performance-linked.

But the Government made it clear that it was standing firm on its final wage offer, which it has unilaterally implemented.

LENN KLEIN

Taste of what might come

CT 25/8/90

(250) (152)

WHILE tens of thousands of public sector workers were converging on the streets of Cape Town, the rest of the city had to deal with the loss of important services provided by civil servants for the day. Yesterday Cape Town had a taste of what could happen with a full-blown public workers' strike. **GASANT ABARDER** reports

WHILE Cape Town schools and colleges were the worst affected by yesterday's protest, mass action by public workers, police and hospital workers understood that they had an obligation to the communities they served. But even some of those still working voiced support for the unions.

The action's trends differed from area to area. The Tafelberg High School in Mitchells Plain resembled a ghost town by early morning with less than 100 of 1 200 pupils pitching for classes. In contrast, at Western High School in Newlands hundreds of pupils left school shortly after 2pm following a normal day. Parents picked up their children as usual and extra mural activities continued.

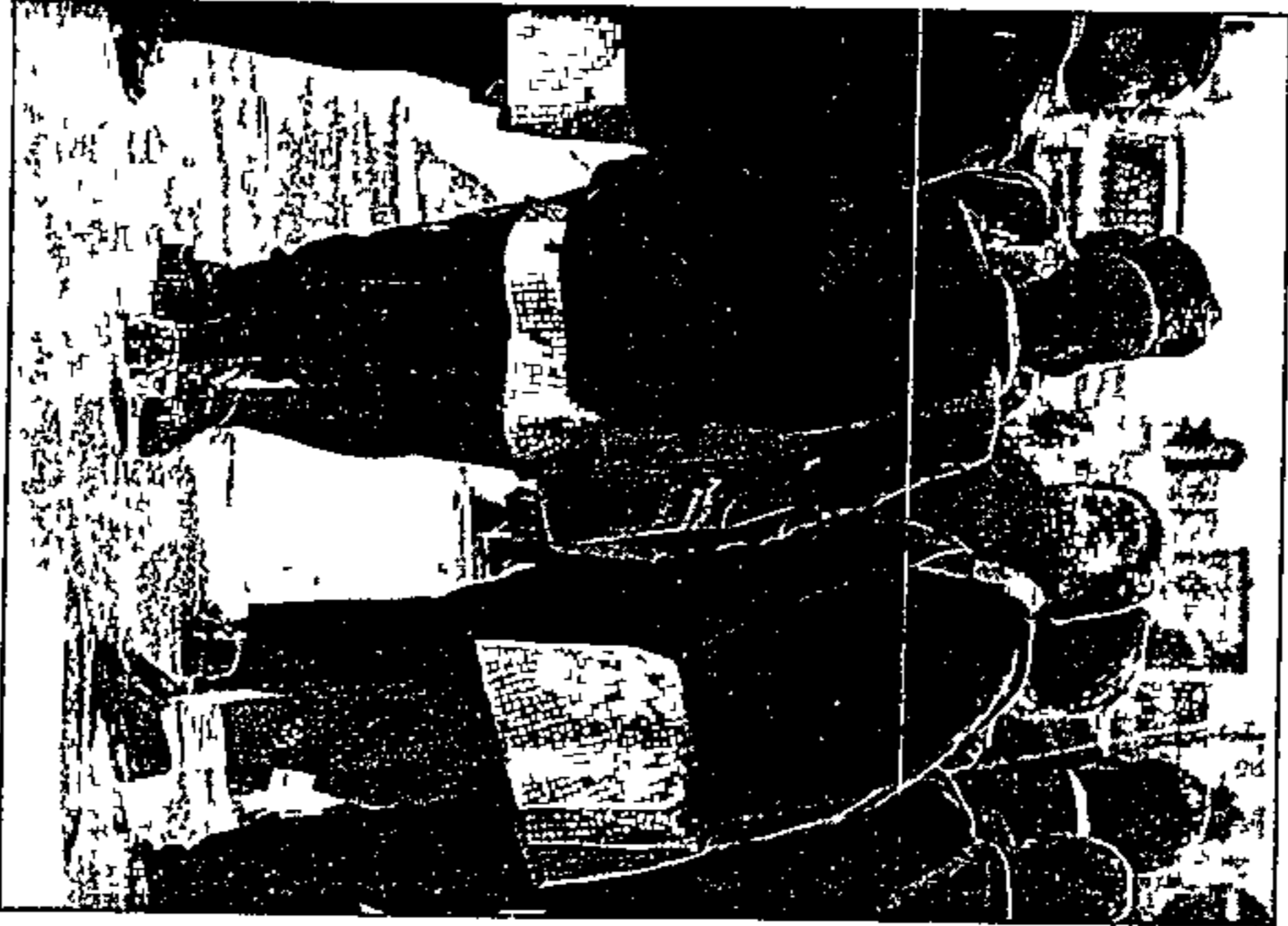
At police stations across the city, policemen were on duty to serve their communities, following safety and Security Minister Siviwe's request for them to consider the high crime rate.

Khayelitsha, Mitchell's Plain and Mianenberg police stations — plagued by violent crime — were adequately manned and crime fighting was a priority for police men on duty, who said they sympathised with their fellow public servants.

At hospitals, staff based closer to the city used their lunch breaks to join the mass action in the city and returned to duty after the march while those who worked at hospitals on the Cape Flats took time off.

Like all police stations across the Cape Peninsula, Khayelitsha police station functioned normally.

The B resident Theodora Hmekwana was pleased to be helped so quickly when she had documents certified at the charge



HALF DAY Sinazo Wulana and fellow Masayile Secondary pupils in Khayelitsha leave school early yesterday. **PICTURE: ANGELO KALMEYER**

office. "I did not have a problem — I was assisted speedily," Hmekwana said.

Khayelitsha police station commander Henne Haarhoff explained that it was important for his police station to be operating at full strength.

"We serve some 350 000 residents with our limited manpower

and we already have problems in dealing with crimes like rape murder and robbery, which are most common.

"If members had absented themselves today, things could have got out of hand seriously. But they understand that they have a job to do and a commitment to the community," Haarhoff said.

Just down the road, a group of schoolgirls from Masayile Senior Secondary School were idly walking down the street near the school, shortly after 11am in the G-section of Khayelitsha.

"We had three periods instead of seven today. We were sent home at 11am. The teachers then left for the march," matriculant Sinazo Wulana said.

"Our teachers work very hard and they should get a bigger increase. But at the end of the month we are writing an exam and we will suffer."

At the former model-C school Western High, situated in Newlands, a grade-10 schoolgirl, who had no knowledge of any mass action, said she "had a full school day today." "If I had one teacher missing it would have been a lot I got all my subjects. Even homework."

At another former model-C school, Camos Bay Preparatory, teachers joined unions in the protest march — an action never seen at the school before — despite complaints by parents.

At a few institutions, large numbers of hospital staff took off from work. One such facility was Giffoose hospital in Maitland, where 62 employees were absent out of a duty roster of about 200.

Medical Superintendent Norman Mahara said "Everything has been running okay, not quite smoothly, but all the patients have received attention, food and medication. I am a unionist myself and the workers have a very strong point to make with regard to the negotiation strategy, done in bad faith."

At Red Cross Children's and Groote Schuur hospitals however, little changed.

"We have loyal and committed staff who understand that they have to be at work for the children," Red Cross Children's Hospital spokesperson Di Ross said.

● See Business Report



UNITED A strong sense of unity among teachers from all unions was evident in Pretoria yesterday as thousands of conservative teachers, taking part in strike action for the first time, joined their more experienced toy-toting counterparts in protest action against the government. In a historic move, teachers from all three unions joined against what they termed the government's "high-handedness." **PICTURE: AP**

Promise of negotiations within days

ZINE GEORGE

CAPE TOWN, like the rest of the country, yesterday experienced the biggest labour protest in history.

More than 30 000 workers, including nurses in uniform, marched down Darling Street yesterday, chanting "protect our young democracy. Criminalise unilateral decisions" as they made their way to Parliament, where they handed a memorandum, demanding re-opening of wage negotiations, to Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi.

Four other ministers — Trevor Manuel of Finance, Kader Asmal of

Education, Manto Tshabalala Msimang of Health, and the Minister in the office of the President, Essop Pahad — flanked Fraser-Moleketi when she received the memorandum from South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) general secretary Thulas Nxesi.

Fraser-Moleketi promised "to call the unions back" to the negotiating table "within days".

While the unions were handing over the memorandum, union members in parliament demonstrated during their lunch hour and pledged solidarity with other workers.

According to Fikile Majola, general secretary of the National Education, Health and Allied

Workers' Union (Nehawu), the government negotiated in bad faith by announcing an increase in (government) unilaterally decided on.

The union initially demanded a 1,9% increase but lowered its demand to 7,3%, while the government only compromised with 1,3% from their initial offer.

"The government "used the press" to get information across to the union, which started the problem.

Majola challenged the habit of government to isolate civil servants from rest of the public. "We can not be seen as enemies of the public, as the government portrays us. When the workers demand a liv-

ing wage, our demand suggests a 'cut on essential services', according to the government. This is not necessarily the case," he said.

The public sector unions are composed of 12 Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) affiliates, Federal Unions of South Africa and Independent Unions — who, for the first time despite their differences, agreed to embark on a national demonstration after eight months of failed negotiations.

After singing "happy birthday" to Fraser-Moleketi, the large crowd of protesting workers dispersed peacefully. "Fraser don't eat chops and give us bones" one protester shouted.

First 'class action' in South Africa

Howard Barrell

When hundreds of thousands of civil servants join marches and work stoppages next Tuesday the country could witness the broadest coalition of labour traditions ever to combine in an industrial dispute on South African soil.

Public servants of all races, language groups and political persuasions are expected to be involved in the protests which will culminate in a march on the Union Buildings in Pretoria to hand over a memorandum to President Thabo Mbeki from the 12 unions leading the action.

Anton Louwrens, head of the Public Servants Association (PSA) which has 190 000 members, called the unity in action that had been achieved between different sections of the labour movement historic.

Observers say the unity achieved between unions in the dispute indicates the remarkable extent to which the racial and political cleavages that have divided workers and other employees in South Africa for most of this century have broken down since the days of apartheid. In some respects it is the first class action the country has seen, said one.

The two union groupings at the centre of the industrial dispute, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the Federation of Unions of South Africa (Fedusa) represent different union traditions.

Cosatu unions are unashamedly political, project a socialist message, have overwhelmingly black memberships and often resort to strike action. Fedusa unions are determinedly apolitical, in some instances have significant white memberships and are tactically cautious.

Cosatu has about 1,7 million members and Fedusa 555 000. The 12 unions involved in the public sector pay dispute with the government represent between 800 000 and one million workers.

They have revised their wage claim downwards to a 7,3% increase for all public servants with an additional 1% for teachers. The government's final offer, which ministers have said both publicly and privately they are now implementing and will not increase, is 6,3% with an extra 1% for teachers.

Senior state officials say they believe the public will not understand or sympathise with civil ser-

vants if they eventually go on strike over what amounts to a 1% difference between their demand and the government's offer. But the 12 unions say they are encountering growing public support.

Louwrens said it was all systems go for Tuesday's protest actions. There had been full liaison with police and municipal authorities to ensure the marches were orderly. PSA mem-

bers who stop work for Tuesday's protests will ensure that essential services are maintained by others.

Leaders of the Prison Officers and Police Civil Rights Union, a Cosatu affiliate, said their members are willing to strike in the dispute, prompting warnings from senior police officers to them not to do so.

Louwrens and other union leaders said it would be difficult now to call

off Tuesday's protests. But they were still hopeful that Mbeki would meet with the 12 unions' action committee and intervene on the wage issue.

If Mbeki does not intervene or the government does not soften its position, leaders of the 12 unions will meet on August 27 to plan further action.

Louwrens said he expected that consulting union members and deciding on further action would then

take about a month in the case of Fedusa. Cosatu's processes are likely to be quicker.

Another senior Fedusa leader said that although his members tended to be more cautious than their Cosatu counterparts, the depth of their anger and willingness to take strong action over wages in the civil service should not be underestimated.

The government should not think they can divide our members and Cosatu members in this wage dispute, he said. We are a lot more sophisticated than we used to be and we will recognise any attempt like that immediately.

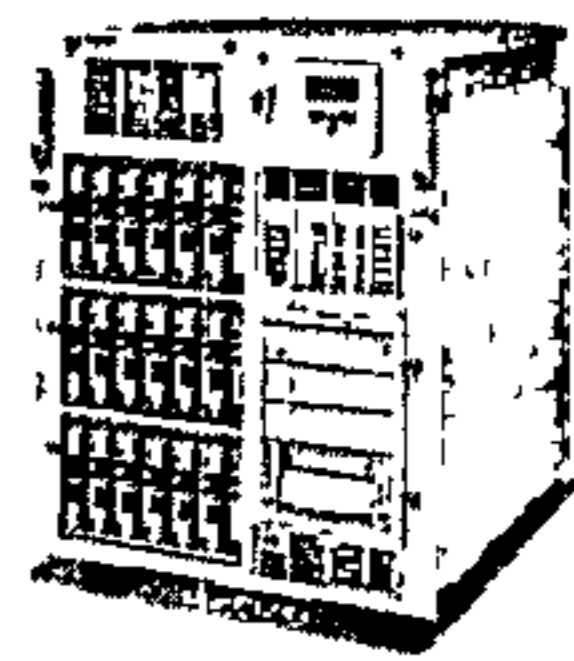


Guess whose
Daddy
didn't buy a
Compaq Server?

Do the words "I'll make it up to you" sound familiar? To be honest, no computer company can lessen your work load or bring back her last birthday party. One computer company, however, can help ensure you won't have to say "next time" again. Compaq

From the ProLiant 400 to the ProLiant 3000 and the Enterprise ProLiant 7000, we offer a range of Intel® processor based servers so complete they deliver outstanding performance all day, every day. Not to mention the unmatched availability to handle all of today's demanding departmental applications, reliably and safely. Even when you're not there.

More proof that we don't confine better answers to the workplace. We bring them home. Visit www.compaq.co.za



ProLiant 4000 supporting up to 4 Intel® Pentium® III Xeon® processors

DOB FRAMPTON'S 1358191

Post Office plans lock-out of striking employees

Samphwè Xako

THE SA Post Office has given the Communication Workers' Union 48 hours' notice of its intention to lock out employees on strike over pay.

Post Office spokesman Sandile Madolo said yesterday that the decision was aimed at preventing the deterioration of services, as the strike had affect-

ed the company "negatively".

Union members employed at the Post Office and Telkom embarked on the strike last Monday after the two parties' wage talks deadlocked. The union demanded a 14% increase against management's 7% offer for higher-level employees and 10,1% for those on lower levels.

The two parties will meet today for a second round of talks

Telkom spokesman Amanda Singleton said the company and union would meet on Monday for further wage talks. Telkom offered the union a revised 9,1%, while the union demanded 14%.

Meanwhile, Anglocoal tabled a revised 8% wage increase offer during talks with the National Union of Mineworkers last night. Anglocoal said NUM would report on the offer to its members.

(153)

(218)

BD26/8/99

Public sector unions to halt national wages strike

CT (OR) 20/8/99
(152)
FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - The 12 united public sector unions agreed at the weekend to suspend a planned national strike involving about 800 000 members until they have met the government later this week at the Public Service Bargaining Co-ordinating Chamber.

"We will consult and mobilise our members for possible indefinite strike action. Everything hinges on the outcome of the talks," Paddy Padayachee, the joint unions' spokesman, said at the weekend.

The government will unilaterally implement its final wage offer of 6,3 percent for the majority of public servants and 7 percent for teachers.

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, the minister of public service and administration, said the government did not have the additional money, estimated at R700 million, to improve on its final offer.

She welcomed the unions' offer to return to the talks but only to discuss a new wage policy and substantive conditions of employment issues, not wages.

"The return of the public service unions will mean discussions on issues with long- and short-term implications can begin," Fraser-Moleketi said.

Padayachee said: "The unions will withdraw from all other bargaining councils until the (wage) dispute is resolved."

The unions said they were dismayed their request for a meeting with President Thabo Mbeki had not materialised nor had he acknowledged receipt of their memorandum handed to his representative last week when 350 000 of their members marched on to the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

"Fraser-Moleketi has only responded to some issues raised in the memorandum via the media, and has failed to communicate directly with the unions. We see these actions as a delaying tactic and an unwillingness of government to resolve the dispute."

Union ends Post Office strike action

(268)
(152)
Sowetran 31/8/99

By Khangale Makhado and Sapa

A STRIKE by SA Post Office workers was called off yesterday after a salary agreement was reached between the parastatal and the Communication Workers' Union.

The two parties agreed at a meeting on a pay rise of between 11,41 percent and 7,5 percent for different staff levels, with a minimum monthly salary of R2 380, the SA Post Office said in a statement in Pretoria.

"Part of the settlement is that striking CWU members return to work immediately, and that the Post Office recalls the lockout announced on Wednesday last week."

The company has increased its offer from 10,01 percent for lower ranks and seven percent for higher ranks, and a minimum salary of R2 350

The CWU's initial demands included

a minimum R2 450 salary, and increases of between 10 and 14 percent

● After meeting for more than seven hours at the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration, Telkom and CWU failed to reach an agreement

Telkom spokeswoman Amanda Singleton said the union had agreed to suspend all forms of industrial action and would call on their members "back to work on full productivity as of today"

"In an attempt to resolve the dispute the company has improved its offer to employees on the support level by half a percent to 7percent. The offer is now made up of a 2 percent performance based increase, a 1,1percent gain sharing bonus and differentiated salary increases per level," Singleton said

She said CWU was to consult its members on the latest offer and had undertaken to respond by Thursday and "in the meantime the union will suspend all forms of industrial action"

Post Office strike abandoned

FROM SAPA

ET (MR) 31/8/99

(152) (268)

Pretoria - A strike by Post Office workers was called off yesterday after the company and the Communication Workers' Union (CWU) reached a salary agreement, the Post Office said yesterday.

The parties agreed on a pay rise of between 7,5 percent and 11,41 percent for different staff levels, as well as a minimum salary of R2 380 a month.

"Part of the settlement is that striking CWU members return to work immediately, and that the Post Office recalls the lockout announced on Wednesday last week," the Post Office said.

The company said everything possible would be done to bring mail delivery back to normal within the week.

The CWU's initial demands included a minimum salary of R2 450 and increases of between 10 and 14 percent.

But the union's pay dispute with Telkom had not been resolved by late yesterday.

A meeting under the auspices of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration was still under way last night, said Amanda Singleton, Telkom's spokesman.

CWU members went on strike on August 16. Most of the strikers returned to work on Monday last week, but Post Office staff embarked on go-slow and work-to-rule actions.

Disruptions prompted the company to give the CWU notice that those taking part in the go-slow would be locked out.

Telkom has since raised its



POST PROTEST CWU workers celebrate a salary agreement reached with the Post Office yesterday

PHOTO JOHN WOODPOOF

initial offer to a 5,5 percent rise in the total pay package of supervisors, 6 percent for

workers on operational level, and 6,5 percent for support staff

Press coverage of strike was union bashing

(950) (172) 08 1/9/99
Writes Franco Barchiesi

RECENT strike action by teachers and public sector workers received the kind of press coverage that under more conservative governments would be described as "union bashing".

Unions involved in the dispute have generally been represented as bearers of narrow sectional interests of a relatively "privileged" minority, invariably opposed to "the public" of service users. For example, echoing Tony Twine, one columnist argued that if the government wants to honour its commitment to service provision it can do so only by containing and cutting the wages of public servants.

On the other hand unnamed "abour" editors are mobilised by newspapers to advocate the government's strong ground to dismiss striking workers.

Meanwhile, the most common word used to define the strikers is "disruptive" with the associated images of students deprived of their exams and patients denied urgent care. The first casualty of this treatment has been the general and structural significance of the strikes.

The industrial action is made to look like conflicts on wage increases that have nothing to do with the concerns of masses of unemployed, marginalised or casualised workers who are the majority of the working class, or of those losing their jobs by the thousands each day.

There is more to the public sector workers' struggle than the stereotypes explain. In particular, three issues concerning the strikes have been ignored.

First, the strikes are challenging the government's unilateral implementation of wage increases based uniquely on "budget constraints". These constraints are the product of the growth employment and redistribution (Gear) programme, imposed on the unions without consultation.

Unilateral wage increases represent the continuation of Gear's logic. Therefore the public sector becomes a decisive testing ground for the government's unfettered capacity to implement wage flexibility and unilaterally impose sacrifices for the sake of the new secular religion "fiscal discipline".

Second, this conflict highlights the rising impoverishment of workers. In fact, having a formal job is becoming an increasingly inadequate condition for workers who have to satisfy basic needs at market rates where, also due to the very "budget constraints" used to oppose the strikers' services such as water and electricity are charged at exorbitant rates by municipalities.

This when services are not simply privatised — which brings further increases and re-trenchments — as the only way through which the government repays its debts. The lack of social security and free access to basic social services make this probably the most commodified country in the world.

This strike is a signal that workers can no longer cope with

such a systematic undermining of their living standards.

Finally, grassroots support for the strikes draws attention to a deeply-felt desire by members to continue to be part of strong, independent trade unions as a decisive component of a democratic society, even when it entails conflict over government's macroeconomic strategies.

From this point of view Jeremy Baskin argued in Business Day that unions demands are not compatible with the fact that budget limitations are voted by parliament at the beginning of the year.

This misses the point entirely. The current conflict is not over a technical issue of how to account for wage increases in

the budget. It rather challenges the priorities and principles that Gear and the budget process have so far advanced.

These priorities (cuts in public spending, privatisation, employment flexibility) have caused a far greater disruption to health care, education and social welfare than a hundred strikes like the recent ones could possibly do.

If striking public workers win, a debate on socioeconomic policy alternatives will become more thinkable than currently. Conversely, while negotiating in situations prove their limitations in defending workers' living standards, the present events show struggle can still play a meaningful role.

□ Barchiesi is a sociology lecturer at Wits University

Lock-out 'may lead to violence'

CT 6/19/99 (152) (270)26

JOHANNESBURG: Telkom's plan to lock out more than 16 000 Communication Workers' Union (CWU) members on Wednesday could lead to violence, the union has warned.

The union is to begin a four-day mass protest tomorrow.

Telkom told the union on Friday that it would use the lock-out option to stop workers from demonstrating on the premises, embarking on work-to-rule and go-slows and banning overtime.

Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singleton said yesterday the company had reached this decision reluctantly after realising that the union was interested only in mass protests and not in giving negotiations another chance.

"We cannot allow the union to disrupt our business by demonstrating on the premises," she said. "We will allow workers to protest on the premises tomorrow, but we will lock them out from Wednesday. Workers will be asked if they accept our offer and will be required to sign.

"Those who refuse to sign will be asked to leave the premises. Lock-out, like a strike, is part of the negotiations process to compel the other party to accept the offer. We are within our rights, as unions are with strike action.

"We are aware that the lock-out could lead to violence and we hope the union will discourage its members from intimidating non-strikers."

Singleton expected that disruption of services would be minimal as 16 000 of the 26 000 CWU members would be on strike. "We are confident that non-striking workers will deliver services. We are ready to meet the union at any time."

CWU general secretary Seleboho Kiti said a lock-out would be "intimidation" and could lead to violence.

"The company is refusing to negotiate with the union and is using the lock-out to engage in direct talks with the workers," he said. "We will demonstrate outside the premises with placards and banners highlighting our plight."

● The government and the public sector unions are to resume their wage negotiations in Pretoria today — Own Correspondent

Mandays lost nearly double the estimates

Mdladlana slams unions for taking 'minor disputes' to the CCMA

Pearl Sebolao

STRIKE figures released by the labour department yesterday show that mandays lost as a result of strikes last year were nearly double those previously estimated by various consultants and independent reports.

The department's annual report says the number of mandays lost to strikes last year surged to 4.8-million, compared to earlier estimates by labour consultancy Andrew Levy & Associates which put the figure at 2.3-million.

A study commissioned by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimated that 3-million mandays were lost during this period. Although there is a discrepancy, all the reports show a general upward trend in lost mandays.

Mdladlana said "We believe this is partly due to the fact that we are able to capture information more effectively since employers are obliged (by law) to report strikes to the department."

The release of the department's report coincided with the release of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration's (CCMA's) annual report.

Mdladlana said although the figures looked "nightmarish", most of the strikes were procedural and investors should not be alarmed.

"In SA you don't go to bed not knowing what's going to happen tomorrow. The Labour Relations Act makes sure there is certainly in the labour market. There is certainly for investors in SA," he said.

The labour department's report says there were 527 strikes involving 3.2-million workers, and result-

ing in about R48.3m in lost wages. Manufacturing was hardest hit, with 2.4-million lost mandays, followed by 700 000 in the financial services and 266 583 in mining.

At least 73% of the strikes were procedural, but violence and damage to property marked strikes that were largely over wages and retrenchments the report says.

The CCMA's annual report indicates that a total of 81 397 disputes were referred to the body last year, which represented a 35% increase on the previous year.

Commission head Thandi Orleyn said the CCMA received an average of 323 cases a day.

Unfair dismissal disputes accounted for 77% of the cases referred, while high-profile disputes accounted for only 1% of the total case load.

Orleyn said the fact that high

ing in about R48.3m in lost wages. Manufacturing was hardest hit, with 2.4-million lost mandays, followed by 700 000 in the financial services and 266 583 in mining.

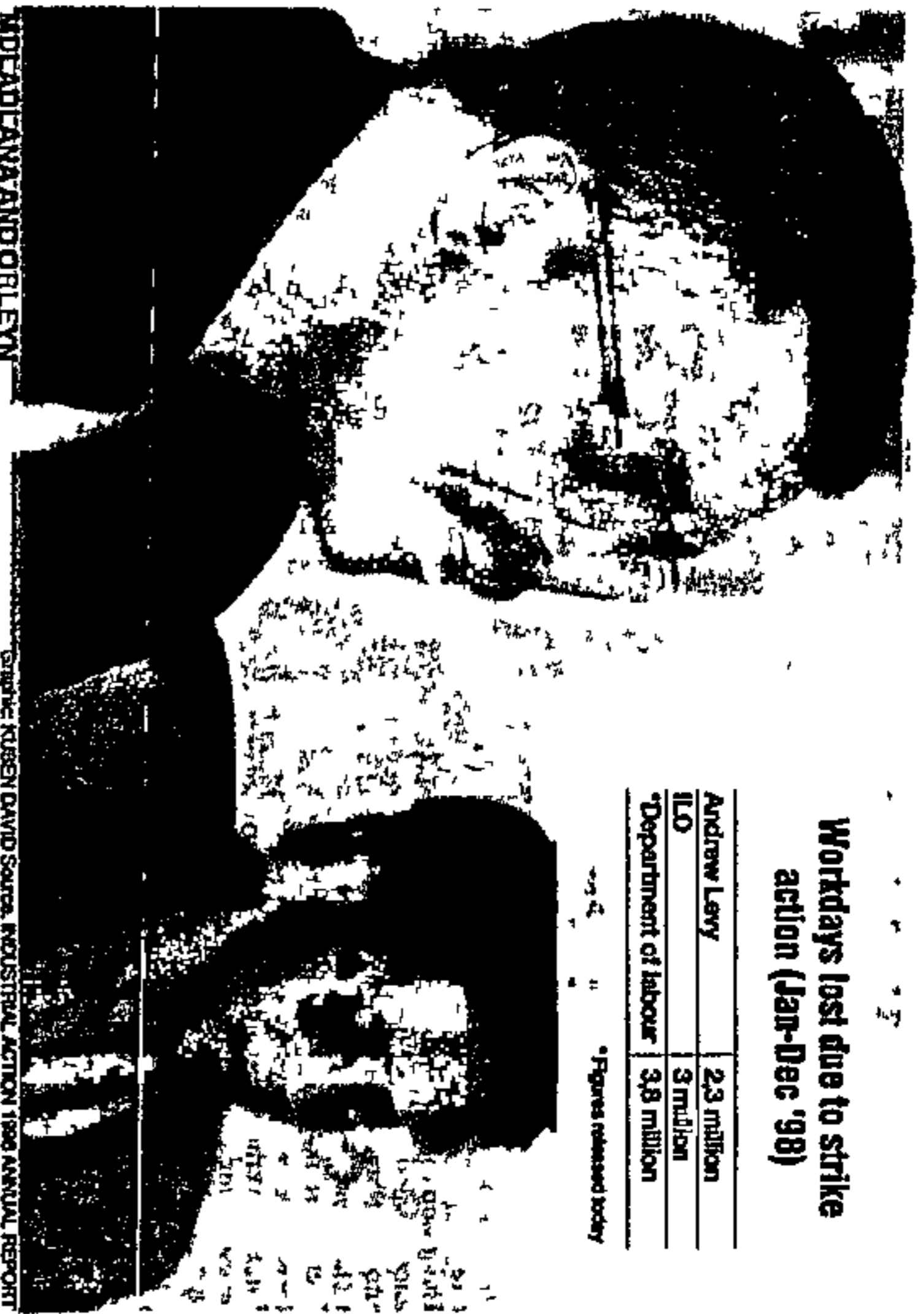
At least 73% of the strikes were procedural, but violence and damage to property marked strikes that were largely over wages and retrenchments the report says.

The CCMA's annual report indicates that a total of 81 397 disputes were referred to the body last year, which represented a 35% increase on the previous year.

Commission head Thandi Orleyn said the CCMA received an average of 323 cases a day.

Unfair dismissal disputes accounted for 77% of the cases referred, while high-profile disputes accounted for only 1% of the total case load.

Orleyn said the fact that high



Workdays lost due to strike action (Jan-Dec '98)

Andrew Levy	2.3 million
ILO	3 million
Department of Labour	3.8 million

* Figures released today

Orleyn said the fact that high

dispute, saying it fell within the sectoral bargaining council's jurisdiction and not the commission's. Mdladlana criticised trade unions for referring minor disputes to the CCMA when these could be resolved on the shop floor, saying they were weakening their own membership by running to the CCMA "every time the pin dropped."

Graphic: ROBERT DAVID SOURCE: INDUSTRIAL ACTION YEAR ANNUAL REPORT

LABOUR Number of man days lost reached 3,8m last year

Telkom plans to use lock-out as 'last resort' in pay dispute

BD #19199

(68) (52)

Simpfwe Xako and Henée Grawitzky

THOUSANDS of Telkom workers face a lock-out tomorrow if they go ahead with their strike threat while the ailing construction industry could be hit by a strike involving more than 70 000 workers after wage negotiations deadlocked.

At the same time government and public service unions met again yesterday in a further attempt to find solutions to end the continuing wage dispute. A failure to achieve this could derail the development and adoption of a new wage policy for the public service.

Sources close to the process said that a possible solution lay in trying to link a resolution to the dispute with the new wage model.

It in any way reduced current benefits, allowances or promotion opportunities.

The meeting ended yesterday following an intervention by Edwin Molahlehi, the chairman of the public service coordinating bargaining council who decided to postpone the meeting pending separate talks with the respective parties.

He said the intention was to engage in separate talks with government and the unions with the intention of seeking a solution to the problem.

Government agreed to resume talks in the council with the intention of talking about a new wage policy but the unions refused to discuss this until the current dispute was resolved.

Meanwhile, Telkom said yesterday it would lock out striking employees as a last resort to force members of the Communication Workers' Union to accept the company's final offer. Workers were given the op-

tion from yesterday to accept the final offer or face a lock-out.

At the same time, Construction and Allied Workers' Union general-secretary Thabo Mofale said the union and SA Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors management had deadlocked on wage increases.

The unions rejected a 6% offer while Mofale claimed the construction industry was the lowest paid. The lowest-grade worker earned R700 a month. He said Cawu and the Building Construction and Allied Workers' Union demanded a minimum wage of R1 200 a month.

Management spokesman Muller Lys said there was no possibility of the matter being resolved as long as the unions stood by their demands.

The construction industry was in its worst period, with very low production. "If you add up all the unions' demands they add up to 30% — something we cannot afford," Lys said.

Strikers lost R43m in wages

OT (PR) 7/9/99

(152)

FRANK NXUMALO

ABOUE EDITOR

Johannesburg - Striking workers lost more than R43 million in wages last year, a period in which the number of man days lost due to strikes reached 3,8 million, according to the department of labour's annual report of industrial action for 1998, released yesterday.

The department said the overwhelming majority of these labour disputes arose from collective bargaining disagreements, with 71 percent centred on wages.

Most of these disputes (49 percent) occurred in the private sector, followed by government at 40 percent.

At 2 440 406, the manufacturing industry lost more man days than any other sector, followed by the financial services industry at 700 000 and mining at 266 583.

Membathisi Mdladana, the minister of labour, conceded that "it is clear to me there is turbulence in the labour market."

"I am not happy that there is too much dispute."

The minister said in the light of the present level of industrial turbulence, it was pertinent to ask the social partners of government, business and labour whether they still shared the department's vision of economic

growth and job creation.

However, Mdladana assured overseas investors that "there is certainty in South Africa", especially in the labour market.

"You don't go to sleep in South Africa knowing nothing about what is going to happen tomorrow."

"These strikes may look nightmarish but they were all procedural, with very few of them spontaneous."

The minister said it was critical to point out the fact that strikes occurred only after talks had collapsed and, as the annual report had indicated, 71 percent of them had been over wage disputes — "a very emotional issue", he said.

The minister's sentiments were corroborated by Thandi Orleyrn, the director of the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), who said the high level of industrial turbulence, including the public sector wage dispute, did not mean the institution had been ineffective.

By the time the employers and trade union parties came to the CCMA, they were already beyond talking to each other, Orleyrn said.

She said although the CCMA could make use of legal instruments such as section 150 of the Labour Relations Act that allowed it to call the parties back to the negotiating table, the



HOLISTIC MODE Thandi Orleyrn says the CCMA has been effective in a turbulent season.

Orleyrn said that bold strategic decisions had been taken to move the institution from a reactive mode to one that offered more holistic labour relations services.

(172)
(968)

Lockout by Telkom

TELKOM will lock out any of its nearly 60 000 workers who embark on strike action today.

Telkom yesterday threatened its workers with severe disciplinary action if they do not accept — as individuals — pay increases that their unions are rejecting.

Telkom's final wage offer is 6,5% for support staff, 6% for operational staff and 5,5 % for supervisors. The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) is demanding increases ranging from 7% to 10%.

Yesterday Telkom sent a memo to all its staff that read in part: "CWU members will be locked out from work at 7.30 on Wednesday (today). Sign the company's salary offer and you will be allowed to work and get your back pay.

"Refuse to sign — you will be locked out, no work, no pay will apply

"Acts of intimidation will not be tolerated; those who intimidate others will be disciplined and criminally charged.

"After three weeks of stop-start industrial action and no indication that a wage agreement with the CWU is in sight, Telkom has decided to protect its business interests by commencing with a protected lockout of striking CWU members on Wednesday September 8," said Telkom spokesperson Amanda Singleton.

"Our intention is to compel our staff — not CWU — to accept our final offer." — Staff Writer

CT 9/9/99

Telkom lockout puts it at odds with union

ART 9/9/99

(268) (152)

STAFF REPORTER

Durban - A bitter war of words erupted yesterday between Telkom and the Communication Workers Union (CWU) as tensions mounted following the company's tough action in locking out striking workers.

Telkom accused the CWU of damaging company property while the union charged the parastatal with intimidating its members, who were on the second day of a four-day strike.

Telkom spokesperson Amahda Singleton claimed the company had received reports of "sabotage, wilful damage to property and intimidation". "We are investigating these reports

and disciplinary action will be taken against the perpetrators. We will also institute criminal charges," she said.

Telkom and the union are due to meet today in a last-ditch effort to find a solution to their wage talks stand-off.

Management presented CWU members with the option of accepting the company's final offer - of a 6,5% increase to auxiliary (lowest-paid) staff, 6% to operational staff (technicians, trained workers and clerks) and 5,5% to supervisors - and returning to work, or remaining on strike.

"Those who rejected our offer were not allowed in our premises. They were directed to designated picketing areas. Acceptance forms of our offer were faxed through at a steady pace

and management was verifying the particulars of the individuals who had sent in acceptance forms," Ms Singleton said.

But CWU spokesperson Karthi Pillay accused Telkom of intimidating striking members into accepting the company's pay offer.

The union is demanding an increase of 10% for auxiliary staff, 8% for operational staff and 7% for supervisors.

"Shopstewards were banned from holding meetings on Telkom premises during office hours. These tactics are tantamount to union-bashing, and we are consulting our lawyers," he said.

Cosatu said Telkom's lockout was a clear indication that the company had

reached a cul-de-sac of ideas and was desperate to take any possible short cut, even if it had severe consequences.

Ms Singleton said the call centres (where customers phone in to report services out of order, make enquiries on directory information, accounts and order new services) were most affected by the strike.

She added that customers calling in to these services experienced delays, but emergency and essential services were attended to immediately.

■ About 300 CWU workers protested outside the All Africa Games Village in Alexandra, north of Johannesburg, amid tight security. Telkom is one of the sponsors of the Games.

Lockout campaign ends in violence

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

(152)
(268)

TELKOM'S lockout campaign to compel about 26 000 striking members of the Communications Workers Union to accept its final wage increase has reportedly backslided into violence, intimidation and sabotage attempts

Placard-wielding workers picketing around Telkom premises nationwide were allegedly intimidated by management and forced to sign an average salary offer of 5,5 percent or face disciplinary action or retraining, CWU general secretary Mr

Seleboho Kitu said yesterday

But Telkom corporate communication executive Ms Amanda Singleton said a number of incidents of sabotage, damage to property and intimidation of co-workers had been reported

"In one incident a CWU member was caught cutting telecommunication cables and was charged," she said.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions has also slammed the lockout, describing it as a clear indication that Telkom had reached "a cul-de-sac of ideas" and was desperate to take any possible short cut even when this has severe consequences

sources

"We are disturbed by intimidation reports of workers by management in several provinces, particularly in the Western Cape," Cosatu spokesman Mr Munkoni Ratshtanga said

Telkom has maintained that management presented all CWU members with an option to accept the company's wage offer and return to work

Singleton said acceptance forms were being faxed through at "a steady pace" and the management was verifying the particulars of individuals who had sent in acceptance forms

Those who chose not to accept the company's offer were directed to designated picketing areas, she added

9/19/99

Barlows workers on strike

CT (189) 16/9/99 (189) (192)

FRANK NXUMALO

LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - About 200 workers allied to the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) at Barlows Equipment Company in Isando on the East Rand had embarked on a protected strike, the union said yesterday.

This follows a rejection of the company's wage increment offer of 7,5 percent across the board against the union's demands of 10,5 percent.

Numsa said the workers were also demanding a 40-hour week and a moratorium on retrenchments.

Dumisa Ntuli, a spokesman for Numsa, said. "Workers are utterly

disgusted that the management of the company has negotiated in bad faith (and) believe that the current deadlock will result in serious hostilities and plant instability."

But the company said it was taking negotiations with Numsa seriously. It said it had repeatedly called on the union to come back to the negotiation table.

Jackie le Roux, the human resources director at Barlows, said. "We went through mediation but it was not successful."

Le Roux was hopeful that an amicable solution would be found soon.

"We are still having discussions. There could be some movement."

Cosatu committed to strike action

(152) (250) BD 16/9/99

Taryn Lamberti

THE Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) has vowed to throw its full weight behind the proposed public service unions strike next month after government reaffirmed that it would not reopen this year's wage negotiations.

The public service and administration department implemented government's final offer of 6,3% yesterday after closing the door on negotiations last month. Cosatu is demanding 7,3%.

Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi said the federation would call a meeting of public service unions to "see how far they are prepared to go".

"We have to see if they have the commitment, we have the commitment," he said.

The 12 public service unions announced on Monday that they would embark on a month-long strike next month which will lead to a "total shutdown of all major government services".

Presidential spokesman Parks Mankahlana poured cold water earlier yesterday on Cosatu's hopes to resume wage talks when he denied that President Thabo Mbeki had reopened the door for further negotiations. Mbeki reportedly told journalists at a diplomatic function on Tuesday that if discussions between government and the unions took place, a solution would be found.

He said Mbeki was speaking "in

general terms" when he said wage disputes should be resolved through negotiations. He was referring to future wage policies and upcoming wage negotiations in 2000 and 2001, Mankahlana said.

"Cosatu conveniently misinterpreted the president's statement. The negotiations are closed. It is not something that we can go back to," he said.

Cosatu last week asked Public Service and Administration Minister Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi to clarify what she meant when she refused to resume wage talks in the public service co-ordinating bargaining council.

Vavi said the "clarity" the federation was seeking had come from Mbeki. "We are very satisfied. The president's statement can only be interpreted to say that the parties currently in dispute must negotiate." He hailed Mbeki's statement as "a very progressive step".

He denied that Cosatu had softened its stance toward government over the wage dispute in an effort to save face and said if Mbeki had not meant to "reopen" the wage negotiations then the federation would "wholeheartedly throw its weight behind the public service unions".

He believed there was still hope for a settlement in the dispute despite the fact that Mbeki said there was no money to meet the unions' demands. He said the unions had put forward 10 proposals on where extra money could be found.

No-work-no-pay rule to be applied to strike teachers

Sowetan 23/9/99

By Victor Mecoamere
Education Correspondent

THOUSANDS of teachers are facing salary cuts of at least R800 each after the education authorities confirmed yesterday that the no-work-no-pay rule would be implemented from next month.

Gauteng education MEC Ignatius Jacobs' spokesman, Mr Lebelo Maloka, said yesterday the cuts would affect teachers who were on strike over salaries on July 23, 29 and 30 and on August 24.

North West education department deputy director-general Dr Anis Karodia and Mpumalanga education department spokesman Mr Peter Maminza confirmed they would also implement the rule.

"We are definitely going ahead with the implementation of the rule. We are invoking the law. This is also in line with a Council of Education Ministers' decision," Karodia said.

All nine provincial education MECs are in the council, which implies that the rule is due to be applied countrywide.

Gauteng spokesman for the South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu) Mr Siphso Mthethwa said indications that thousands of teachers – most of

whom earn about R200 a day – were facing salary cuts emerged this week when principals received instructions to collect the names of teachers who went out on strike.

"We believe that this action of collecting names and threatening to dock the pay of teachers who were not at school on those dates is both premature and provocative.

"This is because the unions have suspended the strike, negotiations are still in progress, the no-work-no-pay rule is subject to ongoing negotiations, and it is an unfair labour practice," said Mthethwa.

National Professional Teachers Organisation of SA (Naptosa) executive director Mr Henry Hendricks said his organisation had asked the national Department of Education to avoid deductions from the salaries of teachers who were not on strike because this would lead to a legal challenge.

Maloka, Maminza and Karodia confirmed that principals were currently collecting the names of teachers who were not at work on the four days.

"The current negotiations in progress have nothing to do with the application of the principle of no-work-no-pay. This is a national process and will not only be applied by the Gauteng government," Maloka said.

Strikes set to cost 3m lost workdays, W Cape warned

AKU 30/9/99

THOMAS KEMP
STAFF REPORTER

Many more workdays have been lost this year than last year due to industrial action in the Western Cape, a study reports

The study, conducted by labour-law consultants Andrew Levy and Associates, found that because there was an increase in the number of strikes in the third quarter of this year, the number of workdays lost increased from 410 000 at the end of June, to 2,5 million at the end of September, overtaking the 2,3 million recorded for the whole of last year.

It attributed the sharp increase to big strikes in the public, posts and telecommunications, mining and retail sectors.

The study forecast that the year end figure would be in the region of 3 million workdays lost.

It showed that more than half (64,5%) of the days were lost as a result of the protracted wage dispute in the public sector that involved national strikes and demonstrations by the SA Democratic

(152)

Teachers Union, the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union in July and August.

Although it would be possible to calculate the loss of wages based on the no work no-pay principle the report said, it could not evaluate with any accuracy the actual cost to the economy.

The study said the "hard fought gains" achieved by the unions over the years "do not appear to be as easily realised today" citing the tough stance taken by the Government in dealing with the public sector union wage disputes this year.

It urged the Government and unions to move away from "the current adversarial mode and approach collective bargaining on a constructive foundation where productivity is linked to job security".

It foresaw a fundamental shift in the pattern of South African labour relations and predicted that the next decade would reflect patterns seen in other Western economies, where power and influence had shifted away from trade unions over the past 20 years.

2,5m man-days lost to strikes so far this year

CT (NR) 30/9/99 (152)

FRANK NKUMALO
LABOUR EDITOR

Johannesburg - Strikes surged in the third quarter of this year pushing the estimated number of man-days lost from 410 000 at the end of June to 2,5 million at the end of September, overtaking the figure of 2,3 million days lost during the same period in 1998, Andrew Levy & Associates, the labour consultancy, said yesterday.

The major strike trigger was wages, accounting for 97,4 percent of the total number of man-days lost, or 78,9 percent of the actual number of strikes. Retrenchment issues accounted for 2,2 percent of the total,

followed by dismissals at 0,3 percent and grievances (0,1 percent). The consultancy said that with the bulk of wage negotiations now completed, the year end figure was expected to be in the region of 3 million.

"This sharp increase is attributable to large-scale strikes in the public sector post and telecommunications, mining and retail sectors and confirms our predictions at the end of 1998 that there would be an increase in strike levels during 1999.

"The protracted wage dispute in the public sector, which culminated in national demonstrations and strikes in July and August, accounted for 64,2 percent of the

total number of man-days lost," said Jackie Kelly, the researcher for

Next was the transport sector (13,9 percent) largely as a result of the national wage strike in April involving the South African Bus Employers' Association and the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Wage strikes involving the Post Office, Telkom and the chemical industry workers in August and September accounted for 9,7 percent of the total.

The mining sector followed at 7,4 percent as a result of wage strikes at various gold and coal mines and a highly charged dispute at Oryx over the issue of

retrenchments.

"What is clear ... is that the hard-fought gains that the unions have achieved over the years do not appear to be easy to realise in the present day.

"Economic conditions have made it imperative for employers to tighten their belts," said Kelly.

"The approach the government has taken with the public sector unions could serve as a precursor for employers to take a tough stance during wage negotiations," she said.

"Thus in turn will lead to adversarial responses from the unions and this state of affairs is expected to continue well into the year 2000."

Report shows strikes are at highest level in five years

Reneé Grawitzky

STRIKES for the year to date surged to their highest level since 1994, largely due to disruptions in the public service, a report released yesterday by Andrew Levy & Associates shows

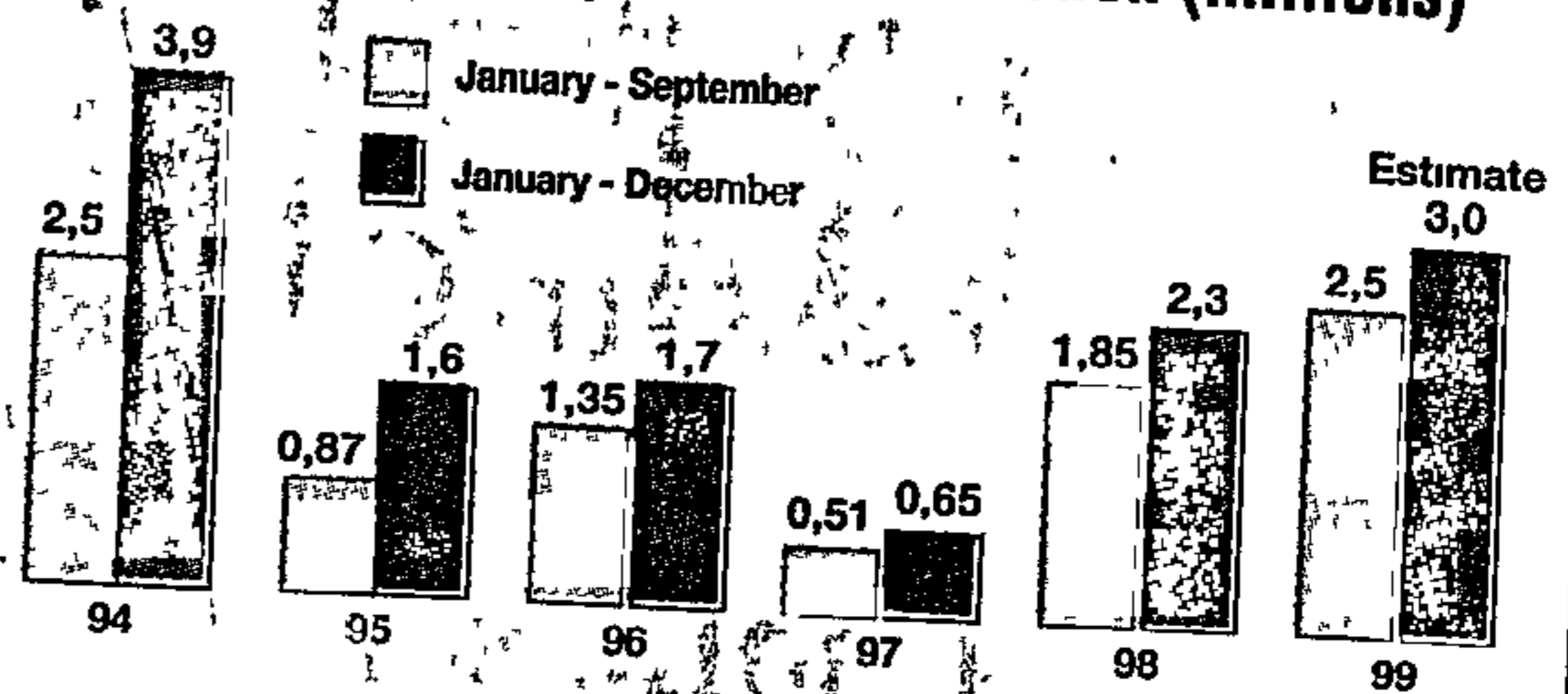
It estimated 2,5-million man days were lost during the first nine months of the year, compared with 1,85-million for the same period last year

Wage settlements for the same period averaged 8,2%, while agreements reached at central level and covering 1,6-million workers averaged 7,9% — in line with the average rate of inflation for the year to date

Jackie Kelly, research consultant for Andrew Levy & Associates, predicted that average settlements for the year would drop to 8%, in line with reduced interest rates and inflation. She estimated that man days lost for the year would be about 3-million, compared with 2,3-million last year

There have been discrepancies over strike statistics. The labour department has estimated that 3,8-million man days were lost to strikes last year and a study commissioned by the International Labour Organisation estimated a loss of 3-million man days in the same period

Man days lost due to industrial action (millions)



RUBY-GAY CAETANO Source ANDREW LEVY & ASSOCIATES

Kelly said the sharp rise in man days lost from June to September this year was the result of strikes in the public service, post and telecommunications, mining and retail. The public service strike accounted for 64,2% of the total number of man days lost.

She said the wage survey revealed that the hard-fought gains achieved by unions over the years no longer appeared to be as easily realised. Economic conditions had made it impera-

tive for employers to tighten their belts, and the approach taken by government in relation to the public service "could serve as a precursor for employers to take a tougher stance" during talks

The decline in wage gains by unions is reflected in the survey of total employment and earnings released by Statistics SA this week. It found that total gross salaries and wages paid to employees in the second quarter of the year rose by 5% on the previous year

BD 30/9/99 (152)

Man day losses up because ⁽¹⁵²⁾ of strikes

Sowetan 30/9/99
Sowetan Reporter

A SHARP increase in strike activity in the third quarter of this year has pushed the estimated number of man days lost to 2,5 million at the end of September 1999, overtaking last year's overall figure of 2,3 million man days lost, according to a strike report released yesterday

With the bulk of wage negotiations still not concluded after large-scale strikes in the public sector, post and telecommunications, mining and retail sectors, it is anticipated that the year-end figure will reach almost 3 million man days lost.

The report, compiled by leading industrial relations and labour law consultancy Andrew Levy and Associates, attributed the increases to ongoing and protracted wage disputes in the public sector which culminated in national protest demonstrations and strikes in July and August. This accounted for 64 percent of the total man days lost.

Research consultant Ms Jackie Kelly said wages were the main trigger of the conflict, while strikes over retrenchments accounted for only two percent followed by dismissal and grievance, less than one percent.

Evaluating with any accuracy the actual cost to the economy was impossible, she said, because of the broad variables involved

"An employer is seldom caught by surprise where procedural strikes are concerned, and invariably some form of stock or inventory adjustments are exercised prior to a procedural strike taking place," she said.

The current recessionary economic cycle had made it imperative for employers to be restrictive on spending and expanding investment. And, coupled with the Government's approach towards the public sector unions, could "serve as a precursor for employers to take a tougher stance during wage negotiations", Kelly said.

"What is clear is that hard fought gains that the unions have achieved over the years do not appear to be as easy to realise in the present day," she said, pointing to centralised bargaining agreements covering approximately 1,6 million workers which had resulted in an average increase of 7,9 percent.

Bus

POLICE investigating Lydenburg in Mpuma died this week, yesterday dead had so far been 1

Twenty-seven people, tourists and a South when the bus carrying the Long Tom Pass ne

Ten people, including the crash

Investigating officer Davel said the dead were South African (27) and British and West African



Civil engineering body seeks interdict on strike

BB 7/10/99

(172) (33)

With wage talks deadlocked, construction workers put down tools

**Simphiwe Xako
and René Grawitzky**

THE Building Construction and Allied Workers' Union (Bcawu) claims more than 40 000 civil engineering construction workers embarked on a wage strike yesterday.

Narious Moloto of Bcawu said workers reported for work as usual and held protest meetings outside construction sites. In some areas workers went on with the strike despite company notices saying that it was illegal.

A spokesman for the SA Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors (Safcec), Henne Botha, said, however, the strike had a minimal effect as it was joined by only 5 200 workers — just 8% of the entire staff.

Botha said Safcec had applied for an interdict against the strike and the Labour Court would hear the matter today. He said management had agreed to intervention by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration, set for next Monday.

Bcawu and the Construction and Allied Workers' Union called the

strike after wage negotiations deadlocked. The unions are demanding a 9% across-the-board increase while management is offering 7%.

Moloto said management also refused to implement overtime at one-and-a-half times the normal rate as prescribed by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act.

He said workers would continue with the industrial action until management met their demands. Botha said management was committed to finding a solution to the dispute.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) has threatened to declare a dispute if the Mpumalanga-based Highveld Steel company proceeds with retrenchment of 600 workers this month.

Numsa spokesman Steven Nhlapo said management recently informed the union of its intention to retrench the workers. He said the company also rejected Numsa's suggestion that overtime be banned, as an alternative to retrenchments.

Nhlapo said this would allow more teams to work different shifts.

He said workers' and the compa-

ny's legal teams were handling the matter in a bid to find a solution. He said should no agreement be reached the union would declare a dispute. The firm has declined to comment.

In another development, the retrenchment of more than 2 800 miners at Placer Dome Western Areas Joint Venture is expected to be completed by next Friday.

Earlier this week, the National Union of Mineworkers attempted for the second time to prevent the retrenchments from going ahead, by applying for a final interdict in the Labour Court.

However, the court ruled that the union was unable to support with evidence its application to prevent the retrenchments from going ahead. The union's application was thus turned down.

Company spokesman Patrick Evans said the situation on the mine remained calm yesterday.

Forced retrenchment was started last Friday, while the majority of the miners who opted for voluntary retrenchment packages have already left the mine.

Construction bosses lose court appeal

Source: 8/10/99

(152)
(33)

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

AN APPEAL by building and construction industry employers to declare the nationwide strike in the sector "unprotected" was dismissed by the Johannesburg Labour Court yesterday.

The SA Federation for Civil Engineering Contractors (Safcec) applied for an interdict on the basis that the Building Construction and Allied Workers Union (BCAWU) and the Construction and Allied Workers Union (Cawu) had not complied with all legal requirements before going on strike.

Safcec spokesman Mr Henne Botha said the federation felt the unions had not complied with the provisions of the Labour Relations Act.

BCAWU spokesman Mr Narius Moloto said the industry had been brought to a standstill as more workers, including non-union construction clerks and truck and loader drivers, had joined the strike which entered its third day today.

Cawu general-secretary Mr Thabo Morale said both unions had contested the court application since all wage-dispute related issues were known to all parties.

"We believe we have followed all

the procedures stipulated in the Labour Relations Act," Morale said, adding that 80 percent of the 60 000 workers in the industry supported the strike.

● Meanwhile, Sapa reports that a strike by 200 members of the National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) at Universal Enamel Ware in Rustenburg, North West, has entered its fifth week with no end in sight to the action, the union said yesterday.

Numsa spokesman Mr Dumusa Ntuli said workers were demanding R5 an hour minimum for the bottom grade and an increase of 8,75 percent for all other grades. The company was offering seven percent across the board.

Strike havoc threat to SA

Strikers start 4 fires

Hundreds of angry workers in St Helena Bay went on the rampage today, starting fires inside at least four factories.

The violence started early today when striking workers marched on several factories and apparently set pallets on fire.

The workers, who embarked on strike action yesterday, are demanding a wage increase they apparently should have received in August.

A St Helena Bay police spokesman confirmed that a blaze had been started at one factory and that the police had been called out to other factories which had reported fires. - Staff Reporter

Violent attacks will kill investment, warns besieged dairy giant

MURRAY WILLIAMS
SWF Reporter

A wave of violent attacks on the South African operations of one of the world's biggest dairy conglomerates has prompted the company to warn that the world will "turn its back" on South Africa unless labour laws are urgently reformed and law and order guaranteed.

Last year Italian food giant Parmalat, which bought out Bonnia and Towerkop dairies and three smaller operations, ploughed more than R1 billion into the economy.

workforce is on strike. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the Italian embassy has formally approached the ministers of labour, safety and security, and trade and industry, at the behest of Parmalat's top executives in Italy.

For the past seven weeks, since the strike by Food and Allied Workers' Union members began, the company has suffered a relentless series of attacks on non-striking employees, scrub labour and its assets around the country. This has included:

- Shots fired at its delivery trucks, and two employees shot in the stomach.
- Four five-bomb attacks on non-striking workers' homes and cars.
- Two armed hijackings and the abduction of the driver of a company vehicle carrying replacement labour.
- Stomping of staff and property.
- A string of death threats against Parmalat managers.

Parmalat's human resources group executive, Johan Louw, has been phoned 13 times with threats. "They said 'We will kill you, rape your wife and burn your house', he told the Cape Argus.

The company's local chief executive has made personal appeals to President Thabo Mbeki and provincial police commissioners

Dairy wars violence will kill investment, SA told

From page 1

ARL 12/10/99

3D DAILY (172)

Mpumalanga, Gauteng and East London. "But despite a court order restraining Fawu members from such actions, the police have failed over and over again to take action, even after the company had provided the police with names and details of the culprits," Parmalat said.

The company is offering rewards of between R50 000 to R150 000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators.

In a frank statement from the company's South African head office in Stellenbosch yesterday, Mr Louw said: "The Italian shareholders invested to get a return (on their money). When the effect of labour-market inflexibility is further worsened by strike action and aggressive trade unions, with concomitant impunity by the police to act against violence Investors will turn their backs on the country and go elsewhere."

Mr Louw said although "it would be too strong to conclude that the company is considering pulling out, it will remain an alternative". "A more realistic approach will be to rationalise our operations so we absolutely minimise the use of labour. That is a real possibility. Mr Louw said the recently enacted labour



True grit: Johnny Tilling, his wife Elizabeth and daughter Farren look at a paisley while grandma keeps an eye on the youngsters



Battle: firemen douse burning oil drums and pallets after workers started fires at fish factories in St Helena Bay yesterday

West Coast fishing villages on rocks

Behind the picture postcard facade, a traditional Cape way of life is facing ruin

BEAUREGARD THOMP
SME Reporter

For generations the people of the Cape have made their living from the sea but as the stakes are raised more and more West Coast fishing communities face ruin.

With the whale season in full swing thousands of tourists are flocking to the beaches to watch and admire some of nature's most glorious creatures. Driving through fishing villages often described as "picturesque" or even "quaint" in tourist guidebooks visitors soak up the best of what the Cape has to offer in wine, seafood accommodation and hospitality.

But behind this facade and usually some distance off the main routes one finds the poverty that has descended on these small fishing communities which are the reason for the very existence of these places. Lamingsville is not unlike most of

these communities with its small weather beaten houses where people make valiant attempts to maintain the little they have and where the local liquor store seems the most popular venue.

"Ag, we accept life the way it treats us," said Johnny Tilling who lives in a small semi detached house with his wife, mother and three children. For two months now he has sat at home waiting for the factory to call him back to work again.

Here we get up in the morning and see where we can get a few cents to buy bread and then we try again," said Mr. Tilling.

Mr. Tilling and his wife both work at the same factory but unlike his spouse Mr. Tilling is a seasonal worker.

With her job Elizabeth Tilling helps make up the 12% of workers in the West Coast who have permanent employment.



Break time: workers at a fish factory in St Helena Bay during a protest in their protest

Unemployment has led to the usual social problems of crime abuse alcohol and drug addiction and unwanted teenage pregnancies.

I've looked everywhere for work at all the factories but they all say that they only employ seasonal workers," he said.

Continued on page 1

FRG 13/10/99

(152) (3) FISHING

But this is the life the born and bred St Helena Bay father has accepted as he cannot remember when it was not a struggle to survive.

Outside in the street the young girls play gaily as they jump in and out of pieces of old nylon stockings tied together.

Further up the road a group of boys no older than three have tied together three plastic crates pretending to ride a train.

"That's my baby, and it's a miracle that she's still so fat," said a laughing Mr. Tilling as he points to his two year old daughter, Farren, who is shyly peering as she hangs on to the doorframe.

"As parents you want things to be better for them but the way things are going now," said Mrs. Tilling cast a longing eye skywards.

Statistics show that almost 19% of people along the West Coast are totally illiterate with 25% of the population

having studied no further than primary school.

"Usually around this time of the year I go out and help fix the trawler nets but I don't think there'll be much work because the boats haven't gone out much," said Mr. Tilling.

At the factory where he works the 300 workers have been divided into three shifts.

"The A shift will start on a Monday and if there is no fish for the B shift then they wait until there is."

"A lot of the time this means that there is no fish for the C shift and when the week starts again then the A shift will start the week," explains Mr. Tilling.

The C shift and its 100 workers have not worked for more than two months now. The desperate situation has forced Mrs. Tilling to take a loan from the company. This and the little money she brings in is the only thing that keeps their heads above water.

Strikers shut fish factories

BEAUREGARD THOMP

The West Coast fishing industry has been thrown into turmoil with strike chaos bringing the pelagic fish processing industry almost to a standstill.

Yesterday workers locked out management and security staff started fires and besieged factories.

The strike which affects mainly black empowerment companies started on Saturday over a dispute which has been dragging on since July.

Factories which process plaunders and anchovies in the fishing towns of Elandsbaai, St Helena Bay, Lambert's Bay, Gansbaai and Hout Bay were halted by the strike after a dispute over wages and a cutback in the number of working hours.

Companies, among them the Oceana group and Premier Fishing, are offering a 7.5% wage increase, but the Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) is demanding a 10.5% increase.

In St Helena Bay at Westpoint Fishing Corporation Oranjevis and St Helena Bay Fishing Industry factories, workers' frustrations boiled over as they set pallets and old drums alight yesterday.

Factory management and security were chased out of the factories and workers controlled entry as they laid siege to the premises.

Today Oranjevis and Westpoint were to seek an interdict in the Cape High Court to prevent union members occupying factory premises.

Fawu provincial secretary William Thomas said a meeting of workers was to be convened as soon as possible. About 5,000 are estimated to be out on strike. We are not condoning any type of violence or breaking down of property. But we do understand there have been frustrations."

A spokesman for the SA Pelagic Fish Processors Association, Dan de Vries, said the current situation was not good for either party in the confrontation. He said the dispute had developed into a full blown strike on Monday.

"The bad part for us is that the office workers can't go to work. They have been asked to leave."

Week-long strike fizzles out

By Mizwakhé Hlangani
Labour Reporter

A WEEK-LONG strike by construction and civil engineering workers from two trade unions has fizzled out "for lack of unity among the unions", labour officials said yesterday.

The Building Construction and Allied Workers' Union (Bcawu) and the Construction and Allied Workers' Union (Cawu) spokesmen disclosed

yesterday that there were differences within the respective unions on whether to accept or reject the revised offer by the employer federation.

Cawu general secretary Mr Thabo Morale said workers in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern Province, Western Cape and Free State had returned to work while other areas did not heed the call to return to work.

Bcawu spokesman Mr Narius Moloto said that although an agreement had not yet been signed, four

provinces had called off the strike Members from Gauteng, Northern Province and Mpumalanga had accepted the eight percent increase backdated to September 1.

A partial strike continued in Eastern and Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape, Moloto said, pointing out that they were disillusioned by the behaviour of management, which sought to exclude these provinces from the latest wage offer. South African Federation of Civil

Engineering Contractors spokesman Mr Henne Botha said employers had raised the offer to 8,6 percent, which comprised seven percent real wage increase and 35 cents productivity performance and improved overtime.

He said only eight percent of workers heeded the strike call yesterday while thousands of strikers were returning to work in their numbers.

● The Department of Trade and Industry is consulting with the Ugandan high commissioner in South

Africa to help resolve a dispute between Uganda's defence ministry and SA exporter Kramer Trade and Technology over a food shipment.

Uganda has failed to pay for the R9 million consignment of rations, claiming it was unfit for consumption.

Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin said in Parliament on Monday there were differing views in Kampala. As a result, Uganda's high commissioner had agreed to provide an analysis of his government's view

Sowetan 13/10/99 (32) (152)

Export deadlines threatened as 5 000 fishing industry workers strike in pay dispute

(152) (3) FISH/INT

GASANT ABARBER

ABOUT 5 000 employees from 10 companies in the Western Cape's pelagic fish processing industry have embarked on a crippling strike which could see the industry failing to meet its export deadlines.

Food and Allied Workers Union (fawu) spokesperson William Thomas said yesterday work has stopped and trawlers have been docked for eight days following the declaration of a wage dispute and cutbacks in working hours. Employers are offering a 7,5% wage

increase, but Fawu is demanding 10%. Also, the 46-hour working week has been reduced to 45, meaning a loss of one hour's pay for workers.

Thomas said yesterday "We are prepared for an eight percent increase if the employers are willing to backdate pay to August 1. Negotiations at the bargaining council are still continuing, but some companies have already indicated that they want to settle for the eight percent option. We are considering their offers."

Sapa reports that Dan de Villiers, a spokesperson for the South African Pelagic Fish

Processors' Association, said the situation was not good for the workers or fishing companies.

"The bad part for us is that the office workers can't go to work. They have been asked to leave," De Villiers said.

Meanwhile the South African Commercial Fishermen's Corporation (SACFC) is adopting a zero-tolerance approach to any of their contracted fishermen and divers found guilty of poaching.

This statement yesterday followed the arrest of Jacobus Jordaan, 42, who was charged in the Cape Town Magistrate's Court on Monday with

possessing 354 out-of-shell perlemoen. Jordaan was granted R5 000 bail in a special out-of-court hearing on Sunday.

He was found in a boat with the perlemoen in four bags, worth about R90 000, off the shore of Robben Island shortly before midnight on Friday.

The owner of the boat who, along with a number of divers, is still at large and is believed to be involved in the poaching, is contracted to the SACFC.

The police organised crime unit know the identities of the boat owner and the divers and

more arrests are expected.

Lulamiile Kati Kati, chairperson of the SACFC, said should the boat owner be found guilty, he would face immediate expulsion from the corporation. Kati-Kati confirmed the person was contracted to his company with rights to catch 20 ton of perlemoen.

"At the moment, we do not have concrete information. We intend to contact the boat owner, who was contracted to the company. If we can have concrete evidence, then we will expel this member," he said.

Kati-Kati said a hearing will be held today

where the member's fate will be decided.

He said the company entered into contracts with its members to catch the company's quotas to enable former poachers to "earn a living from the sea in a legal manner."

"This is the clear message we want to send to all our contracted members. We will not tolerate this kind of poaching. Everybody in this company knows that we want to eradicate poaching," Kati-Kati said.

An undertaking by the SACFC on poaching was also made to the Department of Marine and Coastal Management.

CT 14/10/99

Union calls for boycott in dairy dispute

From page 1

③ DAIRY (152)

Cosatu said Parmalat had refused to recognise labour legislation pertaining to public holidays, refused to recognise Fawu's organisational rights, refused shop stewards access to the work place, and viciously attacked workers through unilateral retrenchments.

But Parmalat has reported that since the strike by a quarter of its South African workforce began seven weeks ago, its non-striking workers, replacement workers and property had been the target of a wave of violent attacks.

There has not been one single incident prior or during the current strike in which a labour law provision has been transgressed, the company said yesterday.

Johan Louw, the company's human resources executive, said "Fawu had the right to refer such transgressions to the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and/or the Labour Court for intervention which they have not done."

Fawu's claim that its members were being forced to work on public holidays was "particularly unfounded - as even the Basic Conditions of Employment Act provides for work on such days - at special remuneration."

"Parmalat has never indicated refusal of such payments, but merely wants a commitment by workers that they will work on public holidays when so requested. After all, the cows do not stop giving milk on public holidays and all factories have limited storage capacity."

"By making allegations such as these, Cosatu and Fawu give a clear signal to investors that they are not prepared to address problems within the parameters of the labour legislation they have been part of writing, nor within the economic realities of this country," he said.

Provincial Democratic Party leader Hennie Bester said while the laws of the country, including its labour laws, had to be obeyed "it is clear that the trade unions have a vital role in protecting and nurturing outside investment in South Africa."

Mr Bester appealed to Fawu to do everything in its power to stop the attacks against Parmalat. "By taking an active stance in favour of a negotiated settlement, Fawu will be serving its constituency in the best possible way," he said. "Anything less is a cop out, which serves neither the interests of its members nor South Africa."

ARG 14/10/99

Cosatu calls for boycott in dairy dispute

MURRAY WILLIAMS
STAFF REPORTER

③ DAIRY (152)

ARG 14/10/99

The Congress of South African Trade Unions has called the first product boycott in the Western Cape this decade - accusing one of the world's biggest dairy conglomerates, Parmalat, of deliberately undermining the rights of its South African workers.

But Parmalat denied breaking the law, saying the union could have taken it to court had it done so. The province's last major boycott was in the early 1980s.

Now Cosatu and its member union, the Food and Allied Workers' Union, have urged their members not to buy Parmalat products.

Parmalat invested more than R1 billion in South Africa 18 months ago when it bought out Bonnita, Towerkop and three smaller dairies.

At least half of Parmalat's Fawu members are on strike.

Cosatu yesterday attacked Parmalat for "entering the country's labour market with a view that South African labour legislation and good industrial relations were being ignored, undermined and swept away."

"Cosatu wants to pass a clear message to foreign investors - we welcome direct foreign investment in productive sectors of the economy. What we will not accept is unlawful acts by any investor. Parmalat must respect the laws of this country."

To page 2

ASMAL, PRINCIPALS MEET

'Strikes must not close schools'

(321)
(172)

ET1

THE COUNCIL of Education Ministers (CEM) reached several strategic decisions at a meeting in the city yesterday, including a new labour policy for principals. Education Writer **PRISCILLA SINGH** reports

PRINCIPALS and education managers belonging to a trade union will in future have to give the education department at least 48 hours notice of intent to embark on strike action.

The CEM decided specifically to conduct a review of labour relations legislation and regulations on the role and responsibility of principals and other education managers during negotiations and industrial action.

At the same time, the CEM acknowledged principals' right to participate fully in the collective bargaining process, Education Minister Kader Asmal said.

"During times of strikes, some schools have been closed by principals. The principal is the metaphorical key to the school and the school must remain open at all times.

"The principal is paid to ensure the smooth functioning of the school, and if he or she wants to go on strike then a minimum of 48 hours must be given to the provincial head of department so that other arrangements can be made to keep the school open," he said.

Also, during strike action a register must be kept by the school of any violence and intimidation, with names of individuals involved.

"At all times the principal must keep a register of attendance of teachers, from the time when they come to schools until they leave and this must be available to the governing body and inspectors."

At the meeting yesterday it was also decided that private schools would adopt the national age admissions policy for public schools, which states that a child entering Grade 1 must turn seven in the year of admission.

The CEM also committed itself to examining issues of diversity and multiculturalism in schools, and policies on language and religion were being drawn up for implementation in the new year.

The review of Curriculum 2005 will continue, as will the implementation of Outcomes Based Education in Grade 3 and Grade 7.

It will establish progress made from last year, in keeping with the pre-defined objectives of curriculum change and examine the extent to which the system has been able to support this.

Other items discussed by the CEM included a single national exam for matrics, the establishment of a national association of governing bodies, the teaching of sign language in schools, and a progress report on the incorporation of Colleges of Education into the higher education system.

The quarterly report, to be presented to Mbeki and the premiers next month, will include the provinces' 1999 preparations for the matric exams, the provincial preparations for textbooks and stationery, to be delivered to schools within the first seven days next year, the policies for the national age admissions and the norms and standards for funding.

He said he would also look at the gender disparities for high school principals "because there were more men than women."

"I want schools to be the centres for community life and I will be looking at the progress of schools next year."

"Next year will be the real basis for assessment of progress, and if there has been no progress, then heads must roll," Asmal said.

Asmal tightens strike rules for principals, managers

ED 19/10/99

(162) (321)

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — School principals and school managers wishing to participate in strike action would have to give 48 hours' notice to their heads of department, Education Minister Kader Asmal announced yesterday.

He said the Labour Relations Act would be reviewed with a view to possibly creating a discrete ne-

gotiating sector for principals and education managers who would be subject to different rules.

Trade unions representing teachers said they were not consulted about the new policy. The SA Democratic Teachers' Union said it would regard the strike as covering all its members until persuaded otherwise.

Asmal stressed that the new rules would not impinge on the

right of principals to join trade unions or to go on strike, but would enjoin them to meet their professional obligation to keep schools running smoothly at all times.

During strikes a register would have to be kept of nondelivery of education, incidents of violence and the number of students attending school.

Guidelines would also be drawn up by the department for pupil dis-

cipline. The alternatives to corporal punishment could include community service, detention, school work or special projects.

Asmal also announced that the Council of Education Ministers had decided at their meeting yesterday to introduce an outcomes-based education programme in grades three and seven next year. A religious policy would also be introduced in schools in January.

4 News

Courts in crisis as orderlies stop work

STAFF REPORTER

(117) (217)

ARG 21/10/99

The Wynberg Magistrate's Court was in crisis early today after orderlies refused to escort prisoners from the cells into the courtrooms for their appearances.

A spokesman for the court confirmed that the orderlies, who are police staff members, had taken strike action and that courts were not sitting.

She said that the orderlies had indicated that they wanted to work in pairs in the courtrooms, to have "better cover" if prisoners tried to escape.

The orderlies have also reportedly been threatened by gangsters, who attend court cases in support of their members who on trial.

At mid-morning the orderlies were meeting the chief magistrate in an attempt to resolve the issue.

A further meeting, one between the Prisons, Police Civil Rights Union, the South African Police Union and senior justice officials, is scheduled to be held later today.

Earlier this year two prisoners awaiting trial disarmed a court orderly sent to fetch them for their court appearances.

They locked him in their cell before escaping.

Courts face disruption by orderlies

(252)(152)

MITHETHELELI MACKAY

STAFF REPORTER

AAU 22/10/99

Police unions are threatening to take matters in their own hands unless the shortage of orderlies at the Wynberg Magistrate's Court is remedied

Yesterday the court stopped functioning after orderlies launched industrial action in support of their demands refusing to escort prisoners from the cells to the courtrooms

They say they will continue protests unless they are allowed to work in pairs.

Billy Daniels, provincial organiser of the SA Police Union said most Wynberg courts had only one orderly on duty at any time

If additional orderlies were not provided today, they would double up anyway, leaving some courts without orderlies at all

Members of Sapu and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union met to discuss the issue

Superintendent Martin Swanepoel, station commissioner at the Wynberg police station said he and his colleagues sympathised with the court orderlies

But the problem was widespread at courts and had to be dealt with at provincial or national level

Numsa issues strike threat at Billiton

(189)(152)

FRANK NXUMALO

ET (AA) 22/10/99

Johannesburg - The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) yesterday served notice on Billiton's Alusaf aluminium plant in Richards Bay about its intention to strike over wages.

Numsa said the company had applied for an interdict in the Durban Labour Court to restrain about 1 000 employees from embarking on the strike.

"The deadlock arose out of management's decision to unilaterally change the wage policy in 1996 and offer other workers an increase in 1999," Numsa said

"The company has changed the wage policy without consulting with workers. The new workers were given R10 less per annum than the previously employed workers"

The interdict hearing is scheduled for Monday Alusaf management said contingency plans had been put in place "to keep production going"

Dunisa Ntuli of Numsa said. "Numsa has filed an application to oppose the interdict (because) the union believes the refusal of the company to accede to the wage demand in these circumstances was unfair"

"Numsa is greatly disappointed that the company changed the conditions of employment unilaterally. Even the small steps the union has taken to democratise the company has produced a backlash. Employers continue to flout it."

Ntuli said Alusaf workers had the right to seek dignity via collective bargaining. He reaffirmed Numsa's commitment to fight for full recognition at the plant.

"The fundamental role of the company is to be instrumental in developing good relations with the workers. The company cannot abrogate its responsibilities to set standards to protect the workers," Ntuli said

Govt's strike policy hits snag

There is difficulty in determining number of public servants who took part in protests

Primarashni Pillay
and Renée Grawitzky

GOVERNMENT'S attempts to implement its no work, no pay policy for public servants who participated in strike action in August could prove short-lived because of its lack of capacity to determine actual numbers who stayed away, union sources said.

The sources said initial reports from the provinces indicated that only 17 000 public servants — outside of teachers — had participated in the various forms of industrial action in support of demands for higher wages. One-third of this number are in the Northern Cape which employs the smallest number of public servants.

Government denied this,

claiming that the problem was not identifying those who participated in industrial action but rather in consolidating numbers according to departments and sectors. It would have a better idea next month as to the number of public servants who participated in the strike.

In the past, the implementation of the no work, no pay principle was done in a lax manner for most sectors.

This year, government appeared to take a harder line to show that "it means business", a union source says. It will be the first time since 1994 that teachers' salaries are docked.

The public service unions had hoped that the implementation of the no work, no pay policy would form part of a resolu-

tion to the continuing dispute.

Public service unions warned that government could face legal action if it went ahead and implemented its policy either on a selective or collective punishment basis.

A labour lawyer said government could find that it was challenged in both common and labour law if it deducted wages from those employees who did not participate in strike action by implementing a blanket approach.

The Mpumalanga education department has threatened to deduct salaries for all SA Democratic Teachers' Union (Sadtu) members if they did not receive adequate information on who stayed away.

The provinces education

spokesman Peter Mambuza said only 2 700 of the 26 000 department employees confirmed they stayed away.

"This is a drop in the ocean. We hope we don't reach the stage where we have to deduct from the salaries of all Sadtu members," he said.

Western Cape education spokesman Tony Eaton said circuit inspectors were still verifying whether teachers had stayed away or not.

Sadtu spokesman Hassen Lorgat said that should the provinces deduct salaries from all Sadtu members, the SA Human Rights Commission could be approached.

A union source said government was transferring the onus of proof to employees.

End of marathon dairy strike spells relief for hungry kids (152)

ARCT 4/11/99 (3) DAILY

WORKERS GO HOME
SHEPHERD

The two-month strike by workers of dairy giant Parmalat forced Northern Limpopo to leave her five hungry children in Umata and come to the city, because her striking husband was unable to send money home.

The Luphondo family is one of hundreds countrywide affected by the bitter and protracted labour dispute which ended this week. The children are aged between six and 20.

Mrs Luphondo said she had taken a temporary job as a domestic worker but her wages of R100 a month "didn't make any difference".

"And I couldn't persevere, looking at my children dying in front of me, so I decided to come to Cape Town where my husband works."

In an overcrowded hostel in Nyanga Mrs Luphondo found her husband who was himself hungry as a result of the strike which started on August 26.

The nine week action by members of the Food and Allied Workers' Union was called off on Tuesday as the parties reached a three year wage settlement with the help of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.

Parmalat, the Italian food giant bought out local dairy company Bonitta last year in a move which led to retrenchments and factory closures.

During the strike, Fawu was accused of chasing off foreign investment through intimidatory tactics, and Parmalat in turn was accused of riding roughshod over labour legislation.

On Tuesday, Fawu member Khangelani Mombile was shot and injured allegedly by a security guard, while demonstrating in front of the company's Parow branch. A man was arrested and police are investigating the matter.

Yesterday about 300 Fawu workers marched to the Italian embassy in Cape Town to hand over a memorandum.

In the memorandum, Fawu asked the embassy to appeal to all Italian investors not to erode workers' rights.

The memorandum was received by a consulate employee, who promised to respond.

Meanwhile, about 50 women most of them wives of Parmalat workers demonstrated at the hotels in Nyanga, claiming the strike had contributed to further crime and divorce.

Many of the women said their children had left school and their furniture had been repossessed.

They appealed for donations to help them survive.

■ The agreement is for an 8% increase this year and an increase of inflation plus 2% the following year.

The parties agreed that for the years 2000 and 2001, effective from May 1 each year pay will be increased by an amount equal to the rate of change in the Consumer Price Index as fixed in March plus 2%.

Unions to fight docking of days' pay for striking (152)

By Victor Meebamere
Education Correspondent

TWO teachers unions will join another union in taking legal action against the education authorities for docking a day's pay from the salaries of their members after the public sector strike in August.

South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadu) president Mr Willie Madisha and National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (Naptosa) director Dr Willem Boschhoff told *Sowetan* yesterday that they were considering legal steps against the authorities.

Boschoff and South African Teachers Union (Satu) spokesman Mr Chris Kloppers and Satu president Mr Corne Booyens said the deductions were unlawful because the affected teachers who were not part of the nationwide strike on August 24.

Satu announced its intention to sue last Friday. The threat was repeated yesterday. Kloppers and Booyens said 12 000 teachers were affected by the salary cuts.

This prompted Satu to instruct its lawyers to issue civil summonses against provincial education departments to

recover deductions made from the salaries of the union's members.

"Our executives are talking to other unions, including Satu, on possible joint actions on the matter, including legal action which, like Satu, we could carry out alone or jointly with one other or more teachers organisations," said Boschhoff from Pretoria yesterday.

Boschoff said the entire staff at a technical college in Gauteng had all reported for duty on August 24 but had one day's salary deducted. Another example was that of teachers who had been on leave on that day but were still penalised.

"Yes, our members have been affected by the salary cuts. But we are not contesting the cuts which we feel are a result of the Government's application of the principle of 'no work, no pay' in terms of the Labour Relations Act.

"But we are having problems with the modulates that have been used in the application," said Madisha.

Education Minister Kader Asmal's spokesman Mr Bhekis Khumalo said teachers claiming to have been unlawfully affected by the cuts should make written submissions.

Sowetan 24/11/99

Decline in workdays lost in 1999

(152)
Sowetan
19/11/99

By Mzwakhe Hlangani
Labour Reporter

DESPITE protracted wage disputes in the public sector, 1999 is expected to end with a significant drop in the number of workdays lost because of strikes

This is according to the labour market policy research division of the Department of Labour. The number of workdays lost this year could total 2,6 million. This is 1,2 million down on the 1998 figure.

Mr Thomas Mafela of the policy research division said the national protest by public servants had made a substantial contribution to the total number of workdays lost.

Strikes at Telkom and the Post Office and in the construction, mining and transport industries, and in isolated manufacturing industries, also contributed.

A five-month strike by farmworkers in Mpumalanga and a strike at Southern Sun hotels for more than three months, had pushed up workdays lost in the last quarter.

Mafela said although 90 percent of the major disputes were related to wage increases, a significant proportion were associated with retrenchment and dismissals. Some unrest was also sparked off by disputes over downsizing in the manufacturing sector.

He said indications were that wage settlements in most sectors, including transport, manufacturing, wholesale,

retail and financial services, rose by 10 percent. This is much higher than last year's average of eight percent.

The research division also established that wage settlements were not attached to higher productivity levels. Gains in productivity appeared not to be an issue.

According to the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (Naledi) high productivity levels experienced this year were linked to massive job losses in most sectors. Naledi director Ravi Naidoo said it seemed that "employees worked themselves out of work" as most firms chose to embark on downscaling programmes though they were not under pressure to do so.

Despite a reported improvement in productivity, retrenchments were much higher this year, corroborating the fact that when productivity rises, workers in many instances lose jobs, Naidoo said.

Mafela disagreed with the Naledi view that increased productivity levels often lead to large-scale retrenchments. He blamed overtime work as being responsible for lay-offs.

Naidoo decried employer non-adherence to the Presidential Job Summit agreement, which sparked off major conflicts.

Unlike 1998, when employer-union relationships were adversarial, he said the prebargaining conferences where information was shared had enhanced emerging relationships.

Industrial strikes cost workers millions of rands

mtg 26/11 - 2/12/99 (152)

Barry Streek

Industrial strikes have cost workers R149-million in salaries during the first eight months of this year compared to R48,3-million they lost last year and this could in the long run negatively affect social expenditure, Minister of Labour Membathisi Mdladlana disclosed in Parliament this week.

While it was difficult to come up with an assessment of the impact of labour unrest on the economic growth in just two months of this year's available figures, Mdladlana said it was important to note that strikes in general will "deter foreign investors from putting their money in the country".

The labour minister was responding to a question tabled in the National Assembly by Kobus Dowry of the New National Party.

"Each and every industrial action has a cost attached to it," observed Mdladlana to another question, tabled this time by the NNP's Dirk Bakker.

"The cost to the economy will be in the form of wages and salaries lost by workers, revenue lost in the form of taxes to the state and production lost to producers as a result of workers downing tools," he said.

The revenue lost to the state in the form of taxes and production lost during strikes was not available

to his department, but his ministry did generate data on total wages lost during industrial action.

This year, 2 131 902 workdays had been lost in strike actions in the public service, posts and telecommunications and mining sector, the minister said.

The public sector strike, involving the South African Democratic Teachers Union, the National Education and Health Workers Union and the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union in July and August, accounted for 64,2% of the workdays lost.

"Within the eight-month period, workers have lost more than R149-million in wages.

"This is really significant as it also reflects lost revenue to the government and this might in the long run affect social expenditure negatively," said Mdladlana.

In 1998, the manufacturing industry incurred the highest cost (R29,9-million) followed by wholesale and retail (R7,4-million), mining and quarrying (R4,8-million), and community, social and personal service (R3,3-million).

Mdladlana said next in line was the agriculture sector (R1,1-million), transport, storage and communication (R800 000), financial services (R600 000); electricity, gas and water supply (R300 000) and construction (R100 000).

Island strike tour blow

TAARIQ HALIM
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 3/12/99

(289) (152)

Hundreds of visitors to the Robben Island Museum were left stranded today as ferries were cancelled when most of the island workers went on strike.

The workers, members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, are accusing management of wage discrepancies as well as corruption within management.

This is the second time the almost 150 island workers have downed tools about salary scales. Last year, tours to the island were also disrupted by strikes.

Tour guides, drivers, secretaries and administrators staged a protest at the island's harbour.

The strike comes just two days after Robben Island was declared a World Heritage Site.

A meeting with management and the union to discuss salary scales was held today but no agreement had been reached. Further talks are scheduled this weekend.

It is uncertain when tours to the island will resume.

Museum director André Odendaal said the strike was illegal. Action would be taken if workers did not return to their jobs, he said. The union refused to comment.