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**REPORT**

**SOUTH AFRICA PROGRAM  
1986**

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## INTRODUCTION

This report sets out what has been achieved in 1986 by the AFL-CIO Program of Action in Support of Black Trade Unions in South Africa. In its third year of operations, the program has met all its basic goals of supporting black trade unions to establish a viable free and democratic labor movement that is beginning to stand on its own and determine its own priorities and directions.

## BACKGROUND

### Trade Union and Political Situation

On November 30, 1985, the largest black federation was created when 33 unions merged to form the **Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)**. The moving forces behind the new federation were nine former FOSATU affiliates, as well as CCAWUSA, GWU, AFCWU, CTMWA and the 150,000 member former CUSA affiliate, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).

These 14 of the 33 affiliates combined to account for more than 75 percent of the total membership. The remaining affiliates came from the community-based unions which claim a high membership but whose dues-paying members are relatively few.

COSATU was formed on a platform of militancy and rhetoric against the West. Immediate demands for disinvestment and sanctions, meetings with the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) and its WFTU-affiliated labor wing, rejection of assistance from the ICFTU and the AFL-CIO, and an open challenge to the South African government appear to constitute the main reasons for COSATU's existence.

Some of these positions have been challenged within COSATU. The disinvestment commitment has been questioned by some who see it as only serving to change ownership rather than substantially wound the South African economy.

Contact with the ANC has led to conflicts with other black groups and has given the government an excuse to accuse the organization of being controlled by communist elements.

The rejection of the ICFTU, the AFL-CIO, the British TUC and German DGB conflicts with reality. COSATU affiliates have received and continue to receive assistance, either directly or indirectly, from these two bodies. Apparently, COSATU refuses to accept that the American labor movement, the AFL-CIO, the AALC and U.S. unions are one and the same.

The AFL-CIO/AALC will continue to offer direct assistance to COSATU affiliates and support calls for sanctions and disinvestment. It was the call from the

COSATU-affiliated National Union of Mineworkers that prompted the AFL-CIO to launch its boycott against Shell in 1986.

The **Council of Unions of South Africa (CUSA)** disagreed with COSATU's platform of non-racialism and thus refused to join.

At the same time, CUSA attempted to merge with the **Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU)** but progress was slow. AZACTU, a creation of the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO), was the driving force behind the National Forum. A quick merger would have served to convince an international audience that CUSA was grasping for legitimacy rather than focusing on the difference between itself and the former FOSATU. Since 1979, CUSA and FOSATU had sought a common ground but could not overcome structural barriers. FOSATU was very centralized while CUSA was decentralized. These tendencies translated into a split between UDF and AZAPO/NF in 1985. The centralized COSATU leadership supported the long-range goal of a racially free South Africa while the less structured CUSA pushed for the immediacy of black leadership.

The final merger of CUSA/AZACTU strengthened their affiliates, but more important eliminated some of the confusion for workers over which union to join by offering a clear alternative to COSATU.

A tribally-based labor federation would seem to work for labor unity and industrial peace and have a good chance for survival. The Zulus, for example, the largest tribal group in South Africa, number six million, are relatively cohesive, are involved in the economy, and have a renowned leader Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. The existence of the Zulu political wing, Inkatha, points to the organizational ability of Buthelezi. Extending the arms of Inkatha to include labor would seem to be a viable option. Buthelezi's interest in unions is well documented as are his efforts to attract business enterprises to Kwazulu to offset chronic unemployment.

However, unionization and the desire to increase employment opportunities are not totally compatible. Chief Buthelezi could not attract business without offering up his followers as a cheap and docile labor force. Equally, he could not support labor legislation which is perceived as being more liberal than that of South Africa. And, finally, too vocal an opposition to the Pretoria government could severely limit both job creation in Kwazulu and the recruitment of Zulu workers.

This may explain why Chief Buthelezi never attempted to form a union federation before the creation of COSATU. With the latter's arrival on the labor scene in 1985 with its talk of disinvestment and relations with the ANC, positions Buthelezi opposed, the formation of the **United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA)** was inevitable. This move drew the support of conservative white South Africa but has been roundly attacked by almost everyone else.

The surprising feature of UWUSA's formation was the apparent lack of consideration of other options. Given the seemingly insurmountable separation between CUSA and COSATU, Buthelezi could have directed his followers to join CUSA affiliates. This option was feared by some in CUSA who felt such an endorsement would compromise its own progressive image.

Buthelezi felt that his support among Zulus was strong enough to overcome the

shop floor unionism of COSATU. However, UWUSA seemed to be of little threat to COSATU, having gained little momentum or prestige outside Inkatha circles. Many of USUWA's problems stem from the lack of shop floor leadership and an administration filled by Zulu businessmen and politicians appointed by Buthelezi.

The position of the **Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA)**, one of the oldest federations, changed over the years from that of spokesman for liberalism to apologist for the ruling party. TUCSA affiliates saw in the early 1980's that their federation was becoming a barrier to progress. TUCSA's reliance on centralized bargaining through an industrial council system (opposed by the black unions), its demands that illegal strikers (usually black) be fired, its demands that unregistered unions be refused recognition, and its reliance on union shop clauses of mandatory check-off all contributed to direct confrontation between TUCSA and the emerging black unions.

Many TUCSA affiliates rethought their position. Major unions in the metal, motor, furniture and garment industries disaffiliated. These unions revamped their structure and were successful in maintaining and increasing membership and becoming more democratic.

By the end of 1986, TUCSA had been so decimated by disaffiliation that it finally disbanded. The early disaffiliates retained their independence. The smaller unions, however, had relied on TUCSA for their administrative and other day-to-day needs. It remains to be seen if these unions will join another federation, remain independent or disappear.

What probably precipitated the demise of TUCSA was the formation of the **South African Federation of Textile , Garment, and Leathers Workers Union (SATGLWU)**. Three garment unions, one textile union and two leather unions, representing over 200,000 workers, all disaffiliated from TUCSA. The six unions then formed an industry-based federation. Other industrial-based groups, such as the South African Coordination Council of the International Metalworkers Federation, do not have the cohesiveness this new grouping has. The strength of SATGLWU lies in the fact that it can control a whole industry because it is not divided along racial, skilled or unskilled workers lines.

## AALC ACTIVITIES: MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE

The AFL-CIO has channelled and will continue to channel funds through the ICFTU for project activities in conformity with its policies.

In 1985, funds were channelled through the ICFTU to the Urban Training Project (UTP).

The Urban Training Project serves as an educational resource for most of the black labor unions. It is closely identified with the Council of Unions of South Africa but its services are also available to non-CUSA unions. Assistance, going to strengthen and enlarge the scope of the program, included funds for hiring an additional staff instructor and for leadership seminars.

The AALC sees the educational input of the UTP as vital to the development and strengthening of a free democratic labor movement in South Africa. In addition the strengthening of the labor movement in South Africa has a direct impact on development in the neighboring territories because of the pervasive migrant labor system that operates in that part of the world. Consequently, the AALC has gone to great lengths to provide advanced training to UTP instructors in specialized areas in the trade union field.

From May 30 to July 14, 1985, the AALC sponsored a training program in the U.S. for two UTP educators. The program covered: organizing techniques, occupational safety and health, mediation and conflict resolution, communication and union administration.

From October 21 to November 15, 1985, two senior officials of the UTP attended an advanced trade union leadership seminar conducted jointly by the AALC and the Labor Studies Center of the University of the District of Columbia. The seminar covered: an introduction to American trade unionism, occupational health and safety, an introduction to collective bargaining, industrial relations in Africa, trade union administration, comparative industrial relations systems, comparative worker education, collective bargaining exercises, job classification and incentives, and economics for trade unionists.

During the period January 1985-January 1986, the AALC provided funding to the Urban Training Project to enable it to conduct specialized and residential courses. The UTP conducted a program of specialized and residential courses servicing well over 6,000 workers in their day courses and close to 4,000 workers in specialized courses.

With this assistance the UTP continued to encourage leadership and service among workers, teach people about their rights as workers, engender a spirit of self-help, self-determination and reciprocity among workers, and promote the acceptance by the community of internationally recognized trade union principles.

In 1986, funding went to the ICFTU for the UTP and to help South Africans attend the ICFTU's regional meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, where ICFTU's campaign against apartheid was further refined.

## AALC ACTIVITIES: BILATERAL ASSISTANCE

1. In the union-to-union and ITS programs, various U.S. unions were involved, the major ones being the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, United Farm Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Service Employees International Union, United Steelworkers, and American Federation of Teachers.

2. In 1985, the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), a civil rights organization closely linked to the AFL-CIO, sponsored a conference in Washington that brought together more than 300 U.S. trade union activists with a representative group of 12 black South African trade unionists. They explored what the American labor movement in conjunction with trade union movements in other parts of the free world can do to assist the emerging black unions in their fight against apartheid and what the black trade unions see as the priorities in their ongoing struggle for their human and trade union rights in South Africa.

In 1986, funding was granted to APRI for program development in South Africa. This included providing education opportunities for South African trade unionists in the U.S. and providing assistance through CUSA to community centers in the townships.

3. Another component of the program was direct AALC assistance. The AALC's representative for South Africa lived in Lesotho where he received requests for assistance. He would then discuss the assistance with the S.A. unions, submit the requests with appropriate comments and recommendations to AALC/Washington for approval, and control the flow of assistance and supporting receipts. The representative, possessing a South African visa, was able to enter South Africa on a regular basis, meet frequently with unions as well as with organizations involved in labor or the anti-apartheid movement.

A broad range of aid was offered:

- assistance to open a union branch office to expand a union's jurisdiction;
- assistance to hire and maintain organizers to build up a union's membership;
- establishment of education departments and support training components;
- provision of vehicles to facilitate union organizing and service to members;
- assistance to expand offices and the purchase of office equipment;
- assistance with literacy and language courses to union members;
- seminars on organizing, collective bargaining, and the role of shop stewards;
- purchase of books and publications to start or contribute to union libraries.

In addition, the AALC representative advised unions on specific organizing strategies, contract language, legal interpretations, education models and grievance procedure methodology.

The advantage of the direct assistance program was that it provided the AALC with a better understanding of the situation in South Africa on a day to day basis and the ability to assess the validity or viability of the requests received and the organizations making them. It also enabled the AALC to evaluate the results of its program in a timely manner.

Since the program began, 32 unions have requested and received assistance. In 1986, 21 of these received initial or ongoing support (marked by \*):

1. African Miners & Allied Workers Union (AMAWU)\*
2. African Railway Harbour & Allied Workers Union (ARHAWU)\*
3. African Workers Association (AWA)
4. Bakery Employees Industrial Union (BEIU)
5. Black Allied Workers Union (BAWU)\*
6. Black Allied Workers Union of South Africa (BAWUSA)\*
7. Black Domestic Workers Association (BLADWA)\*
8. Black General Workers Union (BGWU)\*
9. Black Health & Allied Workers Union (BHAWU)\*
10. Black South African Transport Services Workers Union (BSATSW)\*
11. Brushes & Cleaners Workers Union\*
12. Chemical Workers Union (CWU)\*
13. Domestic Workers Association of South Africa
14. Electrical & Allied Trade Unions of South Africa (EATUSA)\*
15. Engineering & Allied Workers Union (EAWU)\*
16. Food Beverage Workers Union of South Africa (FBWUSA)\*
17. General Workers Union of South Africa (GWUSA)\*
18. Hotel, Liquor Catering & Allied Workers Union (HOTELICA)
19. Motor Industry Combined Workers Union (MICWU)
20. National General Workers Union (NGWU)
21. National Sugar Refining & Allied Industries Employees Union
22. National Union of Workers of South Africa (NUWSA)\*
23. Orange Vaal General Workers Union (OVGWU)\*
24. Plastic, Rubber and Allied Workers Union (PRAWU)\*
25. South African Boilermakers, Iron & Steelworkers, Shipbuilders & Welder's Society (SAB)
26. South African Domestic Workers Association (SADWA)
27. South African Laundry, Dry Cleaning and Dye Workers Union\*
28. South African Scooter Drivers Union (SACDU)
29. Steel Engineering & Allied Workers Union of South Africa (SEAWUSA)\*
30. Teammates Workers Union (TWU)\*
31. United African Motor and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (UAMAWUSA)\*
32. United Mining Metal & Allied Workers of South Africa (UMMAWSA)\*

In general 1986 proved to be a year of setbacks for the opponents of apartheid. The state of emergency in South Africa was tightened, the relationship between Pretoria and Washington deteriorated, and press censorship was enacted.

This situation finally began to force the hand of the international community. The U.S. Congress moved toward restrictive sanctions against South Africa while U.S. companies doing business there bowed to the demands of investors and public interest

groups, including the AFL-CIO, to disinvest or divest their holdings.

The AALC's representative for South Africa became a casualty of Pretoria's anger in reaction to the calls for disinvestment. At the start of 1986 he possessed a multi-entry business visa that was to be renewed in April. Unfortunately, he fell gravely ill in February and was hospitalized for several months. Rather than go through the visa renewal process when the time came, Pretoria issued a medical visa until he was ready to return to work. However, he remained in the hospital until July and returned to the U.S. in September.

The new representative assigned to replace him in June applied for a business visa for South Africa which Pretoria refused to grant. Needless to say this has seriously hindered program implementation and evaluation. Direct assistance was handled from Washington until the new representative arrived in Lesotho. Because of the change in representatives and the handicap imposed by the South African government it has been necessary to devise a new strategy for implementing the program. This strategy is now in place and the program is operating relatively well.

## APPENDIX I

### SOUTH AFRICAN UNIONS RECEIVING DIRECT SUPPORT

#### African Miners and Allied Workers Union (Independent)

AMAWU was formed in 1984, not to challenge the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) but rather to attract workers in geographical and industrial areas neglected by NUM. AALC assistance went to helping the union's organizing efforts. However, against the advice of the AALC, the union's leader, V. Madolo, attempted to organize anyone anywhere and mix unionism with politics. This divided potential members. Madolo was later detained for his outspokenness. The union grew substantially from 500 to 10,000, but maintaining membership and collecting regular dues was impossible. This also put AMAWU in direct competition with NUM, which held all the advantages. In 1985, AMAWU had limited access to the mines but after nine months AMAWU could claim recognition of only one. When challenged by the miners, AMAWU could show a majority with only the guards. AMAWU's initial intent was sound but never followed. With NUM joining COSATU and the merger of CUZA-AZACTU with its Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers Union, AMAWU has little chance for success. The failure of this union is not without impact. NUM must recognize that it is not the only game in town and representing workers is far more important than signing them up; there is room in the mining industry for alternatives to NUM and many non-union workers got a glimpse at differences in union style and leadership.

#### African Railway, Harbour and Allied Workers Union (Independent)

ARHAWU was formed in May 1985 to respond to the needs of black workers employed by the South African Transport Services (SATS), in particular the 63,000 black workers in the railway industry. SATS is the largest government-run business. An in-house union exists for the benefit of the skilled white workers at the expense of the black majority, which has no direct representation. This was evident in 1982 when 700 SATS workers demanded representation by the General Workers Union in Port Elizabeth and were immediately fired and replaced.

ARHAWU's base is in Johannesburg, and the AALC's assistance was directed at administrative support and organizing. The local AALC representative worked with the union's organizing department in training, developing an organizing strategy, and designing an overall plan of execution.

One difficulty ARHAWU faced was to wait until it had a strong infrastructure before making demands to SATS. A number of events in 1986 upset ARHAWU's plans. Efforts were made to improve the appearance of SATS' in-house union. Besides international affiliation, the in-house union created the impression of being black controlled. However, centralized and gathering 95% of all dues, this new black union only had token leadership of a few highly paid officials. Rather than exposing this union, ARHAWU created militancy within the ranks to take it over and bring it into the mainstream of the black trade union movement. ARHAWU found itself not only competing against the in-house

union but also against the militants within that union. Unexpected competition came from the relatively dormant South African Railway, Harbour and Allied Workers Union, an affiliate of the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU). SAAWU has its headquarters in Johannesburg but concerned itself more with community and political issues than straight trade unionism. Their activism was motivated not by ARHAWU's activity but by the threat that they would be swallowed up by the Transport and General Workers Union as COSATU attempted to achieve their goal of "one union, one industry". The final challenge to ARHAWU was its ability to remain viable in the face of these opponents. ARHAWU did participate in the early merger discussions between CUSA and AZACTU but declined to join. AALC assistance helped this union to grow and maintain itself.

#### Black Allied Workers Union of South Africa (Independent)

BAWUSA was formed in 1985 in Port Elizabeth in reaction to the violent black rivalry of the UDF and AZAPO, the devastating consequences of the economic downturn in the area, and the bitterness coming from the boycott of white stores. Initial AALC assistance focused on administrative support enabling BAWUSA to purchase office desks and chairs, a duplicating machine, a typewriter and supplies. BAWUSA, although a general workers union by design and community-based in philosophy, successfully attempted to limit its organizing and representation until adequate bases of strength could be built. Additional assistance from the AALC was directed toward organizing. With AALC assistance BAWUSA was able to expand its membership significantly.

#### Black Health and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (Independent)

BHAWUSA contacted the AALC in 1985 to gain assistance in its dealings with a recalcitrant U.S. multinational, G.D. Searle. It needed support to expand both its administrative capabilities and educational needs. This assistance allowed the union to have a full-time secretary in Johannesburg, move its office to larger accommodations, buy additional office equipment, expand its offices into other areas and provide education, primarily through their own efforts and those of the Urban Training Project (UTP). BHAWUSA President Komape was able to attend the convention of the Service Employees International Union in the U.S. and visit the AALC office in Washington. Early in 1986, the AALC representative was requested to give a week-long seminar on organizing to the staff of the union. Continuing administrative assistance has added members to the rolls, increased the number of recognition agreements, and negotiated contracts.

#### Black Domestic Workers Association (CUSA/AZACTU)

BLADWA was formed in 1985 in Johannesburg to meet the needs of domestic workers. AALC assistance enabled the association to expand its office and purchase equipment, train staff in both trade unionism and rights of domestic workers, and provide the field staff with the necessary equipment and training to assist these activities. The long range plan of the union is to create an

educated and vocal group capable of collective bargaining. Short range efforts are aimed at creating effective communication networks, increasing basic skills (reading, writing, speaking, cooking, etc.) and improving the domestics' situation.

#### Black General Workers Union (CUSA/AZACTU)

BGWU was an affiliate of AZACTU that disregarded the federation's opposition to American assistance. The general secretary of the union, R. Gumede, was most willing to accept administrative assistance, travel to the U.S., receive U.S. visitors, and have the AALC representative conduct courses for his union. This relationship changed in 1986 when Gumede was ousted and the new leadership did not continue in the relationship with the AALC. With the merger of CUSA and AZACTU, BGWU had to accept the principle of industrial rather than general unions. BGWU was thus assigned observer status, pending the resolution of placement of its membership.

#### Black South African Transport Services Workers Union (Independent)

The AALC representative was requested to attend a meeting in Durban in late 1985 held by the Natal branch of BSATS. Members felt that they were not getting the representation they should by their union nor were they involved as they felt they should be in the mainstream of the black labor movement. The Natal branch, being the largest, felt it could take over the union with support from some of the other branches if the constitution was followed and enforced. Assistance was requested with a training program to adequately inform members of their constitutional rights, legal rights, and labor legislation of the country.

#### Brushes and Cleaners Workers Union of South Africa (CUSA/AZACTU)

BCWU was formed in 1983 following the release from detention of Mary Ntseke. She became general secretary of the new union, which attempted to organize low wage workers in the broom and brush industry as well as office building cleaners. Beginning with just three hundred members in Johannesburg, the union now boast almost 5000 members in Johannesburg, Durban, Pretoria, Vereeniging and Potchestron. Assistance from the AALC went to administration and organizing.

#### Chemical Workers Union (CUSA/AZACTU)

Originally, CWU was a small chemical union catering to coloured workers. A major shake-up within the CUSA-affiliated South African Chemical Workers Union (SACWU) in 1984 caused some members to go to CWU. The ousted SACWU general secretary, Dan Tau, soon became the general secretary of the union. After participating in a weekend seminar on contract negotiations conducted by the AALC representative at the request of the CUSA affiliated South African Laundry, Dry Cleaning and Dye Workers Union, Mr. Tau requested administrative support to upgrade the union's office in the headquarters of CUSA and to hire a full-time organizer.

### Electrical and Allied Trades Workers Union (Independent)

Prior to 1985, the electrical industry was dominated by three quasi-independent, racially segregated unions. This group was headed by the white union which publicly nodded approval to a racially free union, but balked at a merger request pushed by both the black and coloured unions. This action led the International Metalworkers Federation to disaffiliate the white union. The black and coloured unions wasted no time in setting the stage for a formal merger. The general secretary of the coloured union, T. Oliphant, became the first general secretary of the merged unions and contacted the AALC. Without the white union, the newly-merged union lacked the offices and infrastructure previously provided. With a combined membership of 18,000 it was imperative for this new union to proceed with programs, representation, servicing, and training which could attract new members and involve the union more in the mainstream of progressive trade unionism. With AALC assistance in 1985, and continuing into 1986, the new electrical union was able to open and expand its offices in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Durban, East London, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. The aid enabled the union to purchase office equipment and supplies needed in increasing its representational ability and communications network. Being the largest union solely representing electrical workers, the EATWU has become an attractive independent for the major federations. This union will decide whether or not to join an existing federation at its April 1987 convention.

### Engineering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CUSA/AZACTU)

EAWUSA, a former FOSATU affiliate, experienced many problems until a new leadership committed to reviving the union and bringing it back into the mainstream of the progressive black trade union movement came into office in 1984. With AALC assistance, EAWUSA was able to stabilize its administrative position and restore its ability to service its membership from the East Rand south to Vereeniging and into the Orange Free State. The union later felt strong enough to affiliate to AZACTU. EAWUSA readily accepted the ongoing talks between AZACTU and CUSA and was willing to merge with CUSA's Steel Engineering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (SEAWUSA).

### Food Beverage Workers Union of South Africa (CUSA/AZACTU)

Initial assistance in 1984 focused on organizing, transportation and administrative support. In 1985-1986, it focused on creating a stronger education department within FBWUSA and an educational facility to enhance the training of union members and local union leaders. Although it has effectively increased its membership and staff, educational programs, recognition agreements, and contracts, FBWUSA still faces very strong competition from the newly formed Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU). This union, a COSATU affiliate, resulted from the merger of the old FOSATU affiliate, Sweet Food and Allied Workers Union, and the former independent union, African Food and Canning Workers Union, which has successfully brought together approximately 45,000 workers under one umbrella organization and is by far the largest union in the food industry.

General Workers Union of South Africa (COSATU)

GWUSA is a sister union to the Motor Assembly Component Workers Union of South Africa (MACWUSA), and was formed as a general workers union for workers from all industries. The AALC has been assisting the most prominent branch of GWUSA, in Pretoria, since 1984. GWUSA has been very successful in the Northern Transvaal in three areas: union activities, relationship with other unions (particularly community-based unions) and political/social/economic activities in the black townships. GWUSA, as a general workers union, was capable of organizing workers from any industry. What separates GWUSA from other unions of the same mold was GWUSA's willingness to register as a union, its attempt to organize workers in one place of business, gain check-off facilities, and service those members. AALC assistance was directed toward administrative support and organizing activities outside Pretoria. With the political situation in Pretoria, the organizing campaign never materialized but GWUSA was able to maintain its membership and increase its visibility in the area.

South African Laundry Dry Cleaning and Dye Workers Union (CUSA/AZACTU)

The highly-exploited and low paid workers in this industry are difficult to organize. Assistance to SALDCDWU has been in the areas of administration, office equipment, staff, organizing and training. The AALC representative has given courses to this union in both shop steward training and contract negotiation. The membership has increased.

National Union of Workers of South Africa (CUSA/AZACTU)

NUWSA was an AZACTU affiliate and sister union to the Hotel Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (HOTELICA) when it first received assistance in 1985. That assistance carried over to 1986 and involved administrative support and training. With the CUSA/AZACTU merger, NUWSA, as a general union, was granted observer status until its members can be placed in appropriate industrial unions.

Orange Vaal General Workers Union (Independent)

OVGWU is one of the dominant community-based unions. AALC assistance has involved administrative support and training. The OVGWU general secretary, Philip Masia, traveled to the U.S. in 1986 and met with American trade unionists. Masia has been active in the coalition of labor and community groups attempting to address local problems. AALC assistance to the Orange Vaal General Workers Union has allowed the union to be flexible, to address the problems of its membership and to engage in community projects and issues relevant to the union members.

Steel Engineering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CUSA/AZACTU)

SEAWUSA is a major force in the metals industry. AALC assistance has been directed at branch office expansion. 1984-1985 assistance allowed SEAWUSA to open an office in Peitermaritzburg. Along with the office, assistance provided for staff, transportation, organizing drives, training, and office equipment. With this branch functioning and self-sufficient, SEAWUSA requested assistance to open a branch on the East Rand outside Johannesburg during 1985-1986. The office is in the process of being established and is expected soon to be fully functional.

Teammates Workers Union (Independent)

AALC assistance was directed at administrative, organizing, and training support. With this assistance TWU was able to expand to Bloemfontein, Bethlehem, and Welkom. The union's success in the Orange Free State Province in organizing workers and gaining recognition agreements has led to a willingness of workers outside the transport industry to seek out TWU as their representative.

United Mining Metal and Allied Workers of South Africa (COSATU)

UMMAWSA was formed in 1984 as a spin-off union of the then FOSATU affiliate, Metal and Allied Workers Union. The MAWU members who started UMMAWSA took 13,000 members with them and brought their membership figures up to 17,000 within one year. It was in 1985 that UMMAWSA approached the AALC for assistance, which provided for administrative services and organizing activities. In 1986 the general secretary of the union, Sam Ntuli, was detained for almost nine months. The reins of the union were picked up by David Sabebe. At the union's last convention the delegates voted to join COSATU. However, these same delegates voted not to join the International Metalworkers Federation and did not address the question of what to do about COSATU's one union one industry commitment which would put UMMAWSA back with MAWU.

The AALC assistance has successfully helped to hold this union together and allow it to expand in the face of adversity.