

## FAWU BULLETIN

Electronic Newsletter For Members and Staff

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## Why FAWU Votes ANC

The African National Congress (ANC) is the oldest liberation movement, not only in South Africa but also, in Africa. It is **97 years** old and has experience and reputation of being a champion of freedom-loving people's struggles for liberation, freedom, dignity and better life.

It is the ANC that saw its cadres and leaders making huge sacrifices in fighting for our freedom. People such as Luthuli, Tambo, Mandela, Motsoaledi, Goldberg, Mbeki, Kathrada, Fischer, Hani and Slovo are among many heroes who belonged to this glorious ANC of the people and helped bring this freedom we enjoy today. We can't play with it.

It is only the ANC that we trust with our lives. It has **stood the test of time, from 1912 to 2009**. It is only the ANC that can do better than others. We do not know these new-comers/late-comers political parties and cannot trust them with our freedom. Only the **ANC lives and Leads** as it has done over 97 years.

After voting the ANC in 1994, 1999 and 2004, we have witnessed positive changes to the lives of workers and the poor.

- We got progressive labour legislation, like the LRA and Basic Conditions as well as Skills Development and Employment Equity/Affirmative Action.
- We have seen more electricity and water in our communities.

- We have seen more clinics and hospitals in our townships and villages, and children and pensioners are getting free health care.
- More of our children are at schools as more schools are built and more teachers are employed.
- Child Support, Old Age and Disability Grants cover more and many people who are poor and unemployed

We want the ANC to get people's mandate by winning the elections by **more than 75% this year's (2009) elections**. It is this victory that will make the ANC to even speed up change for the better and to ensure living standards of the poor and workers are raised better quality levels.

We **agree and support the ANC Manifesto** for 2009 and highlight the following among others:

- Faster Land Reform Programme and Agricultural Transformation
- Rural Development and Poverty Eradication in our Villages
- Better Working and Living Conditions fo Farm Workers and Dwellers
- Food Security and Lower and Affordable Food Prices
- Quality Jobs, Decent Work and Regulation of Labour Brokers

For those who are still to register please do so in your municipalities and council offices. Go out and vote the ANC during the elections in 2009 and **guarantee** our freedom. Our freedom is **only safe** if in the hands of the **ANC** – the Organization that brought us this **FREEDOM**.

**We Will Forever Vote the ANC**

**Eer Sal Ons Vir die ANC Stem**

**Sohlala Sivotela iANC**

**Re Tla Dula Re Voutela ANC**

**Hita Tshama Hivoutela ANC**

**INDEED VOTE THE ANC!  
THE REAL CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE!  
THE REAL CUSTODIAN OF FREEDOM  
CHARTER**

**VIVA ANC! VIVA FAWU! VIVA  
COSATU! VIVA SACP!**

## **North West Farm Workers Protest Against Evictions**

About three hundred farm workers from Ottosdal and surrounding areas staged a successful protest march against evictions on Wednesday, 4 February 2009.

The workers, organised by the North West provincial office, are aggrieved at the number of evictions taking place and demanded that all eviction court cases should be withdrawn. The local provincial secretary Solly Phetoe, also called on the Department of Land Affairs to help out those workers who face evictions. In

**addition, the workers also demanded the right for workers to bury loved ones on the farm where they live.**

**Workers took a few hours off from work last Thursday to be able to participate in the march and hand over memorandums to the Departments of Justice and Agriculture. Afterwards, they demonstrated in front of the Ottosdal Magistrates Court.**

**Some workers who participated in the march said that they have worked on these farms for a very long time and it is thus that the farmer can just evict them as they please. Provincial Secretary, Tseleng Tau says, “The march was very successful in the sense that farm workers stood up for matters that are closed to their hearts. It has given us, as provincial leaders, encouragement to attend to the matters of farm workers urgently.”**

## **FAWU Dissatisfied In Budget Speech**

The Food and Allied Workers' Union [FAWU] is disappointed by some key features of the budget speech by the Minister of Finance, T Manuel, on the 11 February 2009. While welcoming the cautious expansionary fiscal stance on the expenditure side, we condemn the practice of tax cuts for the well-paid, and by implication the 3.8%

budget deficits.

On the revenue side, the Minister should have dropped this morally repugnant practice of personal income tax cuts to the wealthy and well-paid (earning above R250 000 per annum) and we welcome increased tax exemption to the poorly paid. If anything, the Minister should have raised both this type of high personal income and the corporate income taxes by a 2 percentage points.

On the expenditure side the Minister should have increased the value and volume of social grants much more than he did in this 'non-redistributional' budget. For instance, while 9% increase in child support is better than a 5.7% increase in old-age grant, it is disappointing to note that the sixteen and seventeen year-old children and the 62, 61 and 60 year old poor adults would remain outside the grant system yet the wealthy and well-paid (those earning above R250 000) received just over 33% of the R13 billion in tax cuts. It would have taken R5.6 billion to widen the child support grant to children below 18 years before this 9% increase in child grants.

It remains a policy blunder for fiscal policy direction to take aggressive reduction in taxes to European standards level in a country experiencing record level unemployment, poverty and inequality. The past reduction of corporate tax to so-called international norms levels of 28 percent remains unjustified given that the expected foreign direct investment (FDI) has not followed such a tax policy stance. The same goes for tax relieve on personal income

tax to the wealthy and well paid individuals. We welcomed tax exemption to the poorly paid low-income earners, some of who earns less than the old-age grant.

FAWU calls on parliament to summon the Minister and insist that the executive consider raising corporate taxes by two percentage points to 30 % and to raise personal income tax by the same margin, such that the top income-earning bracket pays 42%. This would have reduce the budget deficit from 3.8% which is a burden to the future generations, something he is fond of 'preaching but not practicing'.

## **FAWU Unveils Dr. Neil Aggett House**

The Food and Allied Workers' Union will be paying tribute to the memory of struggle hero Dr. Neil Aggett by naming its recently acquired building after him. He was the first white person to die in detention during this time.

The unveiling of the Dr.Neil Aggett House, as it is known now, was preceded by a **commemorating service** at the Johannesburg **City Hall at 13h30 on 6 February 2009** where National Office Bearers from COSATU, ANC and FAWU has addressed an audience of about five hundred shop stewards. This is meant to honour this hero who has not

receive the recognition he deserves for his heroic contribution to the struggles of workers in this country.

After the service, some four hundred shop stewards and NEC delegates staged a short march to the building where the unveiling took place. The building is situated at 90 President Street (Jhb) and was previously known as Cambridge Place.

Comrade Neil was a dedicated medical doctor and trade unionist who organised the Transvaal branch of the Food and Canning Workers' Union in the late seventies, while practicing medicine and dealing with occupational injuries faced by workers at the Baragwanath, Tembisa and Umtata hospitals. He was deeply involved in trade union activities and instrumental in the organisation of the famous Fatti's and Monis strike led by Food and Canning Workers Union (now FAWU). After harassment by the security branch during the apartheid regime, he was detained in November 27, 1981 and died in detention on 5 February 1982. FAWU strongly believes he died as a result of police torture instead of committing suicide as the apartheid regime claimed.

## **FAWU Calls For Regulatory Policies and Price Control on Food Prices**

The Food and Allied Workers' Union [FAWU] would be submitting a proposal, to the COSATU's central executive committee (CEC) meeting scheduled for the 23-25 February, for a three-day strike action in support of nationalization of some food-chain companies and for price controls on some selected food products. Certainly, Sasol Ltd has to be renationalized given its key role as an input supplier for fertilizer manufacturing.

The current debates between retailers and manufacturing on the issue of high food prices simply reinforces our position that there is much more than meets the eye on the recent immoral skyrocketing food prices. At the NEDLAC negotiations on the issue in 2008, organised business (including both the food manufacturers and retailers) simply rubbished away our arguments that rising food prices was nothing but a result of excessive pricing and price-fixing by super-profit chasing companies, taking advantage of the price inelastic demand, or even income inelastic to some extent, of basic food.

It is sad that rising food prices occur in a country where household food insecurity is on the rise and hundreds of thousands of people going to bed hungry or living on less than one meal a day on average. Yet, chief executive officers of both manufacturing and retailers, particularly the latter, have been receiving huge bonuses as their enterprises have scored windfall profits from such morally repugnant pricing.

If retailers are serious about lower food prices, then they need to return back to the NEDLAC process of negotiations and simply give serious



thought to labour's demands.

Meanwhile, we call on government to set processes in motion, such as drafting legislative framework, in order to get price control and regulatory policies in place as a matter of urgency.

**end**