

themselves have to be organised. But how can they do so without falling into the same practices as the faction to which they are opposed?

The right to organise open tendencies

The dismissed officials and expelled workers of FAWU have not broken away to form a splinter union. Instead they call themselves the Campaign for Democracy. The significance of the Campaign for Democracy in FAWU is that it is a beginning of the organisation of open tendencies within the unions.

For the only way to prevent faction of a clandestine kind is to permit the organisation of open tendencies. That is a tendency with its own programme, and its own leadership, but operating in an open way.

It seems to me that this is a development which is justified, not only because it would force clandestine activity into the open, but because the sheer size of unions makes it very difficult to safeguard democracy in the structure of the union without some form of informal organisation.

The experience of the Campaign for Democracy shows that it will not be easy to bring this about, given the authoritarian political culture still prevailing. Indeed the viciousness of the attacks on the Campaign seems in part to be because it is trying to operate as an open faction. Yet what alternative is there, for workers who are looking for democracy in their union?

What alternative is there, if unions are to continue to con-

tribute to an alternative political culture, and if workers control and democracy are to be more than a slogan? If for this reason alone, they deserve the support of progressive-minded people.

An appeal to workers

What has happened in the union can not be seen in isolation from what is happening around it. The meeting that removed the branch office-bearers took place a matter of days after the unbanning of political organisations.

Now that there is the prospect of meaningful political change, it is more important than ever that workers be united. Unity is the best safeguard of workers interest.

But unity from the bottom up cannot be built in a culture of fear, where there is no workers' control and democracy. The kind of democracy that workers want in their country should be the democracy they are building in their own organisation now. Workers, look what is happening to your own organisation and take control. ☆



Initial response to the article from the general secretary of FAWU

Response to Jan Theron's article on Food and Canning Workers' Union

The National office-bearers of FAWU will only be able to respond fully to former general-secretary Jan Theron's document after it has been discussed at a regional and a branch level of the union.

The document will be tabled at our NEC meeting of 24 - 26 August as part of the general secretary's report. As it is the first time it is tabled, it cannot be discussed. The document will have to be referred to the regions and branches for discussion.

We are, however, disappointed by his biased and one-sided account of developments in our union. We are saddened that he chooses to air his views in public, before even raising any of his concerns with the union. The Eastern Cape conflict, for example, was at its height more than a year ago. The former general secretary did not once approach the union for any discussion around this issue.

As is normal practice in the union, the document will be debated amongst workers and they will formulate a response. We will then be in a position to give a point by point response to the document., if the workers so decide.

Mandla Gxanyane
General secretary

Joe Slovo's article, **'Has Socialism Failed'** published in *Labour Bulletin* Vol 14 No 6, has provoked wide debate. In this edition, we publish several responses.



Jeremy Cronin, member of the SACP Central Committee, argues that Slovo did not go far enough in explaining why the errors of Stalinism occurred. He also assesses the 'mild Stalinism' of the SACP.

Pallo Jordan, a leading member of the ANC, discusses a long history of Marxist opponents and critics of Stalinism, beginning with Trotsky and Bukharin. Communists can only come to terms with their history, he

believes, if they take into account what the suppressed tradition of criticism has said.

Michael Burawoy, American sociologist, has worked for several months in a Hungarian steel factory. He argues that the regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed because of the contradiction between the unjust reality and the pretty picture painted by Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Adam Habib and Mercia Andrews, members of WOSA, argue that Stalinism is more than an organisational style. It is also a theory and a specific strategy. In particular, they attack the 'two-stage theory' and the national democratic strategy.

Karl von Holdt suggests a re-examination of Marxist theory. He argues that Leninism lacks an adequate theory of politics and democracy, and that this gap gave space for Stalinism to develop.