

Workers at Pilkington Bro. in Springs near Johannesburg were recently involved in a dispute with management. Management refused to reemploy 21 workers after there had been a work stoppage.

Management said the workers had resigned but the workers said that this was not true and the workers had been dismissed because they were on the works committee and had taken part in the work stoppage. Five workers then decided to take the matter to court to be settled. A settlement was reached in court and both management and workers had to make promises.

The management promised:

- .to consult the works committee in future before they dismissed workers
- .to allow workers to belong to Trade Unions if they wanted to,
- and, to provide training programs for their workers.

The workers promised to

- .not take part in any actions which would lead to strikes, work stoppages or go-slow strikes.

The workers were then re-employed. If we look at what happened, we see that what happened is what usually happens in disputes.

The disputes start off with a strike or a work stoppage. Management then has to take action to stop the strike and make sure that it doesn't happen again.

Managements want peace and negotiation. What we must ask ourselves is what workers want when they strike and when a dispute is settled between workers and management, how satisfied are the workers that their voice has been heard?

The settlement that the workers and management came to may look like a victory for the workers at first. But if we read the settlement carefully we see that the workers have agreed to their power being taken away. The only way they can seek improvement is to hope that management will listen to their requests. What power will the workers have the next time negotiations fail?

Cape Steel Construction ...Epping.

At the above factory, up to the time of writing, there had existed only a liaison committee. As early as 1974, the workers of this factory requested the management to allow them to form a works committee.

For a long time we could not get the green light from the management, it showed signs of fear. After much reluctance it yielded. He requested us to cooperate with it and avoid all trouble. This the workers promised the management

Then together with the management the workers set December the 4th, 1974 as the day when we would meet to set up the works committee.

The management told us that there would be a certain government official whom he did not give his name. We presumed that it must be one from the harbour department. We are then looking forward to that day with hope and interest.

A story about Globe engineering workers

Workers from Globe Engineering happened to know about the Western Province Advice Bureau through reading the workers magazine "Abasabenzi" early in 1974 and seeing how many industries the advice bureau organised into works committees, the importance of being organised and the achievements following that, a few workers tried to find the advice bureau and ultimately found the advice bureau secretary who tried to tell them about the function of the bureau and their present system of organising workers into factory committees. Due to the complicated system under which Globe workers work like being in the sea and all that it was decided that the workers themselves should devise means of communicating with other workers in order to spread all the information as addressing workers in the docks would have been difficult for the advice bureau organiser. This was done and within no time groups of workers visited the advice bureau and also attended the training courses where they happened to be reasonably informed about how to organise. This was followed by four hundred workers joining the advice bureau and also bringing complaints that they had heard about in the firm