

WORKERS SACKED AT MASTERTREADS

Mastertreads is one of the factories in Cape Town which has an active factory committee with the full confidence of the workers. This committee has already negotiated improvements in pay and working conditions.

The bosses have obviously become afraid of the united workers at Mastertreads. They have tried to divide their unity and break their resolve to struggle. Recently a number of workers were sacked from their jobs at Mastertreads. Management refused to tell the factory committee about the dismissals. The bosses also did not give the dismissed workers their unemployment cards.

The complaints of the workers were taken to management. Management rejected the new demands of the workers. The head of the factory committee was also dismissed. Both he and the workers in the factory rejected the reasons given for his dismissal. They felt that he was being victimised for representing the interests of the workers.

The workers protested strongly about the dismissal of their leader. Management refused to re-employ him and so the workers went on a one-hour strike. The strike was only intended to show management the unity of the workers.

There are two important lessons to be learnt from the dismissals at Mastertreads.

A: Unity amongst the workers in a factory may give them strength to fight on some matters. However the unity in Mastertreads was not enough to prevent the dismissal of workers by the bosses. Unity of all workers in all factories will give greater strength to workers demands. The workers at Mastertreads should organise workers in other factories in order to build a greater workers' unity.

B: The dismissed workers were all Blacks. They have mostly been replaced by 'coloureds'. This does NOT mean that Black workers must see 'coloured' workers as being enemies who have taken their jobs. Coloured workers also need jobs. The bosses have tried to employ jobs. The bosses have tried to employ more 'coloured' workers in order to divide the unity of the workers. They hope to make workers fight between themselves and prevent them from fighting against management. Workers must face this problem with greater energy. They must fight against being divided by government and management into opposing groups of Black workers and Coloured workers. Only by increasing the unity of all workers can the factory committees increase their strength and prevent dismissals of workers by management.

THE WORKERS' COUNCIL - A PREGNANT TRIUMPH.

The forty workers from 15 factories who have been meeting over the last months to form the Workers' Council have brought to form the Workers' Council have brought about a great triumph - but it is a pregnant triumph, and triumph that has yet to bear its fruit.

*It is no good having a Workers' Council
It is no good having a Workers' Council on paper, or in the imagination - it must become a living force, a force that will make the bosses sit up and listen!*

There are two great obstacles to the workers in the Western Cape - the first is

*that only 15 factories have joined the Workers' Council. The second is that the African workers are temporarily divided from the Coloured workers. The first obstacle makes it easy for the boss to defeat the workers in his factory - he has nothing to fear from the workers i
to fear from the rest of the workers in Cape Town. The second obstacle makes it easy for the boss to use the Coloured worker against the African worker when it suits him, and to use the African worker against the coloured worker when he think he can make mischief in that way.* **CONTD.**