

Editorial.

It is clear that establishing a factory committee is only the first step towards changing the position of the worker. There are many dangers to be faced and overcome.

We have often seen how management does all it can to prevent workers from forming a factory committee. Similarly, management often tries to decrease the power of an established committee in many ways. One way that is common in Cape Town is to prevent factory committees from holding meetings with all the workers, or when there are meetings, intimidating the workers. The committees receive their power from the workers. Without the workers they have no power. So it is easy to see why management tries to stop committees from holding meetings with all the workers.

Another way is to trick workers into thinking that there is no need to be organised. By giving into some of the workers demands or raising wages a little management tries to convince workers that they will always get what they need. So some workers forget about the need to be organised and lose interest in having a factory committee. This has often happened to workers all over the world. We must ask ourselves what happens when workers organisations are weakened in this way. After a while, management stops taking notice of workers and conditions get worse. Very soon workers are back to where they started.

Any workers' organization is useless unless it is representative of all workers and responsible to them. The only way to ensure that a factory committee is carrying out the will of the workers that elected it, is to have regular meetings between the workers and their committee. The workers must be able to change the committee if they think it is failing in its duties.

Here is another danger - workers sometimes think that once they have elected a factory committee it will do the job of all the workers. But this is not possible. A workers' organization like a factory committee is only for the use of workers. All workers must help in the work of the factory committee. ALL the workers must decide what the factory committee should do. If all workers unite to use their factory, the committee has great power. If they do not it is useless.

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BARCLAY'S BANK.

At a recent meeting of workers of Saturday afternoon at the B.E.S.L. Hall in Athlone one worker from Barclay's Bank said that he and the other workers at the bank did not want to form a factory committee. He said that a factory committee would only help the management to discipline the workers.

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These statements show that some workers still do not understand certain problems. Must a factory committee be formed to help the management control dissatisfied workers more easily? The answer is NO! A factory committee is a body of workers' representatives. It must represent the workers' interests and not become the stooges of management. It is up to the mass of workers to see to this. They must be involved in the workings of their factory committee. They must question all its decisions and they must elect new representatives whenever the old ones prove unrepresentative. A factory committee which works for management is unacceptable to workers.