



Living Wage Campaign

Mintek workers win

Cosatu News interviewed a Mintek shop steward after their victorious sleep-in strike.

CN: Tell us briefly about your strike ?

SS: Our struggle against the Mintek bosses lasted nine months. We were demanding a 30% increase to move towards a living wage. The bosses final offer was 7%.

Workers said we could not talk forever. We must let the bosses feel our united strength as workers. We must go on strike to pressurise them into making another offer. Workers decided to sleep-in at the factory during the strike. This was mainly to protect our jobs against the use of scab labour by the bosses.

CN: What is the power of the sleep-in strike ?

SS: The power of the sleep-in strike weapon is that it helps force the bosses to negotiate; it prevents scab labour; it brings production to a total stop and it asks everyone - bosses and workers - who is really in control of this factory? After all, that is what we are fighting for - worker control of production.

CN: What is the way forward for Mintek and NUM workers now the mine bosses are attacking the union so hard ?

SS: The way forward is to stay united and to fight for a living wage for all mineworkers. We know that the only way we can fight bosses and succeed is through unity and united ac-

tion. Also we need to build solidarity action with every strike. In our strike, T&GWU members gave solidarity support. They gave donations to Mintek workers and helped us inform people looking for work outside our factory that we were on strike.

During the Mintek strike, Mintek workers and COSATU produced a pamphlet to help build solidarity through COSATU structures. This is from the pamphlet.

Comrades - the Mintek strike is a taste of what is to come for workers this year... The agenda of the bosses and Botha for the working class is clear. More repression under the state of emergency; more political trials and political prisoners; more detainees; more bannings of our organisations and newspapers; more wage freezes; more privatisation; more deregulation; more co-option of puppets through municipal elections and upgrading; more JMC's control over our lives; more attacks under the Labour Relations Act; more mass dismissals; more suing of unions; more retrenchments; more unemployment; more poverty; more suffering. This is the price the bosses want to make workers pay so that they can get richer and richer from profits stolen from us.

COSATU's response is just as clear. We will fight all these attacks. We will use our organised strength and unity to defend ourselves and go forward to win what we need as workers. How ? Our slogan is : "An injury to one is an injury to all". We must

make this true for every single struggle. With every strike, like the Mintek strike now, we must struggle to build the maximum solidarity action. No group of workers must be left to fight the bosses alone. The COSATU Locals are the main place to build the solidarity we need.

Viva Mintek Workers!



Unite and fight for a Living Wage!