

⊕ The "Friendly" SPAR Unfriendly to Workers

There are two of us in the bakery section, both of us women. We have to do all the work - loading heavy trays into the oven, taking ready bread rolls out, packing, pricing, selling and cleaning. Customers always swear at us and we cannot cope. We are supposed to have tea break and lunch time but we always end up not having it at all most times. There used to be different people for all these jobs. Our backs are always aching - BAKERY STAFF

Trucks from the warehouse used to come with their own worker to offload. Now they have been done away with and we are forced to offload for no extra pay as they make us do this during our normal working hours. We are still expected to pack and fill up the shelves and if they are not there is trouble for us. Sometimes they make us work till 6p.m. for no overtime pay - A PACKER

These and many other problems that the SPAR workers had made them even more determined to get their union, CCAWUSA recognised by the bosses

For over a year the bosses were delaying the progress. They took down names of union members under the pretext that they were going to check whether they were their workers. The bosses started questioning workers one by one so that they get frightened about being union members.



They tried to divide Indian from African workers - built a new cloakroom for Indian workers while African workers remained in the dirty, crammed one. Indian workers have supervisory and sitting down jobs while African workers stand all day as cleaners and packers. The bosses kept on delaying and the workers were getting impatient.

THE WORKERS FELT THAT THEY HAD HAD ENOUGH

So when talks with the bosses broke down after so many months the workers felt they had had enough.

At a shop stewards meeting they decided to go on strike so as to put pressure on the bosses. The workers were demanding that:-

- *The bosses recognise their union without further delay
- *A wage increase of R80 a month
- *Reinstatement of two dismissed workers



THE BOSSES DID NOT SCARE US

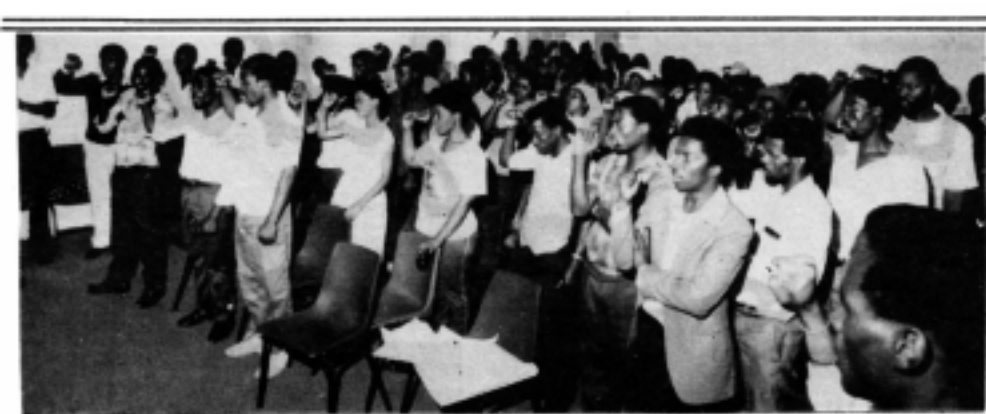
'Somehow the bosses got to know about the strike and our plans soon. They started threatening us with laying us off work. Once we were on strike they started asking us about what we were going to do with our children, food, rent. This did not scare us.

THE BOSSES TRIED TO DIVIDE US

At one SPAR shop on D- day the bosses opened the front door for the cashiers and other Indian staff to come in. One shop steward there told us:" Four of the cashiers came with me to join the strikers outside the shop, as we had planned. The boss came to confront me. He accused me of forcing the cashiers to join the strike. I told him that he was the one who was putting fear into the workers when they wanted to join the other strikers. We shouted at each other and he managed to pull two of them away.

THE BOYCOTT IS WORKING

The SPAR shoppers at Hammersdale are workers at factories in the area and also union members. They have organised themselves and are boycotting the SPAR shop there. The bosses at the SPAR there says that this boycott is not working. They gave out pamphlets asking shoppers to end the boycott. This shows that the boycott is working. They are losing a lot of money.



A support committee has been set up to look into all ways of helping the SPAR workers. A boycott of all SPAR shops has been called. The striking workers also need a lot of financial help. If you feel you can give help no matter how little, please contact:-

CCAWUSA ,
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West Street
Phone 316320 ■



SPAR WORKERS STRIKE

