

## Foundry Workers In Bitter Union Struggle

In May the entire workforce of 55 was fired and work ground to a standstill at Rely Precision Castings. The dispute was over the alleged unfair dismissal of a Metal and Allied Workers (MAWU) Shop Steward who was accused of going to the factory gate during working hours to tell his wife that he had to work overtime.

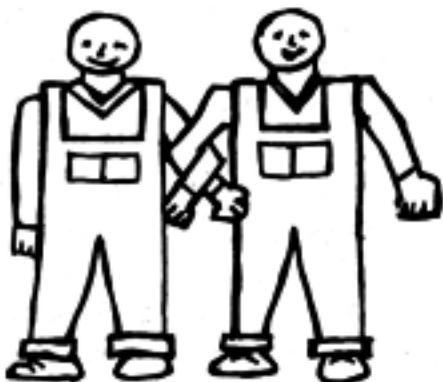
The incident followed a 14 month campaign by the union. The "won't talk" management called in the police to resolve matters by arresting workers. But they soon were obliged to re-employ some of the workers to restart the foundry. Nevertheless its hard line seems to have silenced angry workers for the moment.

The workers were charged with an illegal strike and they allege that they were assaulted by police after their arrest.

More than two months later the union is still battling to assist its members. It laid out several thousand rand in bail money, union members in other factories raised money for unemployed Rely workers and came forward with offers of accommodation for those expelled from hostels; several dismissed workers have been placed in employment in other in other union organised factories and union lawyers have moved both to defend workers on strike charges and to pursue the assault claims.

Their struggle clearly shows that unions of working men are harder than ever to break up as workers grow more and more conscious of their right and duty to organise themselves.

**Your union is  
as strong as  
your support**



**SUPPORT IT!**

## New Worker Regulations

After months of enquiry the Government has amended and supposedly relaxed the pass laws. It all sounds very progressive but in practice we wonder.

The first requirement is legal accommodation but as this is at a premium workers with urban rights have limited chance of employment outside the town they always lived in, notwithstanding the right of Section 10 1 (a) and (b) workers to move from one area to another.

The regulations ignore workers' families. If a worker gets employment and residence in an area other than his own, can his family accompany him? Previously this has not been the case unless they too have Section 10 rights.

Some of the 'red tape' has been removed in that workers do not have to register as workseekers or report to labour bureaux more than once. This is hardly a concession as for example, in Natal virtually all townships have been incorporated in the Homelands so nobody can acquire section 10 1 (a) or (b) rights and this concession only applies to such workers.

Should contract and migrant workers (who have no urban rights) gain employment they will be required to carry another "scrap" of paper legalising their presence in town.

Temporary Identification Certificates now cannot reflect employment contracts. Thus migrant workers are doubly open to the possibility of prosecution. Duplicate reference books often take 6 months to arrive and so in the meantime what proof has the worker that he is legally employed?

Employers should hand out certificates reflecting this but they cannot always be relied upon to do so as is often seen in their disregard of other regulations which are supposed to protect their employees.

Employers never go to jail; pass law offenders do.

The new system is to be divided between the departments of Co-operation and Development, Manpower Utilisation and the Administration Boards.

## Frame - Worker Leader Assassinated.



S.Cele(right) J.Gwala, M.Nzama

On Friday 11th July Samson Cele was shot dead by a masked gunman as he waited at a Clermont bus rank. Samson Cele was 28 years old with a wife and two young children. He had worked at the Frametex mill in New Germany since 1974. As a Shop Steward of 4 years standing he was one of the 3 worker leaders arrested as they left the negotiating table during the recent strike.

The newly formed National Executive of the NUTW has called for a thorough investigation into the murder in view of the surrounding circumstances. The Union has also expressed its sympathy and support for his family. Cele was due to appear with Gwala and Nzama in court on 15th July. Owing to his murder the case was postponed to Wednesday 16th July where the magistrate dismissed the charges because of the unreliability of the State's evidence.

The Court's decision should make it finally clear that the strike was caused by angry and frustrated workers and not agitators as the State and management would like to claim. Unfortunately Samson Cele was not present to enjoy this one small victory in our long struggle.

### UNION RATING

Score out of 5:

- 1 - Are you a management spy?
- 2 - You're a good parallel union member!
- 3 - It is time you started going to union meetings.
- 4 - We need you in the struggle.
- 5 - Hey! No cheating!