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**DISGRUNTLED** Richmond employees picketing outside the company's Dawn Meat store in Heretaunga Street, Hastings, yesterday afternoon.

HB TODAY PICTURE: TIM WHITTAKER

10 Hawke's Bay Today, Wednesday, November 24, 1999

# Meatworkers keep picketing

ROGER MORONEY

Meatworkers would continue to picket Richmond Ltd's head office in Hastings despite talk of black-listing and what union representative Eric Mischefski said were "veiled threats" to move processing offshore.

Mr Mischefski said both union and non-union employees were protesting over the company's refusal to change its contract for work at the \$14 million FoodTech lamb cutting plant at Takapau.

One of the main sticking points, which is being pursued by the Meat Workers Union and the Services and Food Workers Union, is a lack of provision in the contract for a bus service or travel allowance for Hastings and Napier-based workers.

Mr Mischefski said what was significant about the

protest was that about 200 workers, who were not in a union, had approached him for help.

Up to 50 people have been protesting outside the company's Eastbourne Street offices, with support from passing motorists beeping their horns "deafening" at times, Mr Mischefski said.

He said some on the picket line told him they had been approached by company representatives and told they would be blacklisted from any new jobs at the Takapau plant if they continued to protest.

He was also concerned over a letter written by Richmond Ltd's chief executive John Loughlin which appeared in Hawke's Bay Today on Monday.

On the subject of processing, the words "it can be done on-shore or off-shore" were perceived by Mr Mischefski as a veiled threat that if workers did not tow the company line jobs could go overseas.

Mr Loughlin was not available for comment.