

5. Where to take your problems

What do you do with your problems? Either at work or in your personal life, problems will occur which are difficult to solve by yourself. Do you know who might help you? The following is a list of people who try to help with the various problems which arise - some of them deal with domestic difficulties such as pensions; others with pass laws; others with labour problems and so on.

Do not be afraid to go to the person who deals with your type of problem. They are there to help you.

\* Athlone Advice Office:

2 Tigns Place, Klipfontein Road, Sybrand Park, Athlone  
Bus stop 10  
Phone 693150  
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 12 noon  
Deals with: pass laws, contract workers, housing

\* Western Province Workers Advice Bureau:

1st Floor, Benbow Building, Beverly Street, Athlone  
Monday - Friday 9.45 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Deals with: advice to workers including  
Workmens Compensation  
wages  
sacking and unfair dismissal  
unemployment insurance and any other  
matters related to working conditions such  
as forming works committees

\* Division of Bantu Welfare in Langa:

Deals with: Social welfare  
Recreation, amenities and community services  
General information

\* Department of Labour:

Fir Street, Observatory  
Phone 552921  
Deals with all the various problems except  
salaries/wages - Bantu Labour Bureau phone 20171  
personal problems such as maintenance  
phone 533161 (Langa)  
771171 (Guguletu)  
779187 (Inyanga)

\* Legal Aid Officer:

Mr. Sandler, 103 Plein Street (Room 211)  
Phone 455033  
Deals with legal advice when workers wish to sue. white or  
coloured employers

\* Shawco Legal Aid Clinic

Elsies River

Phone 982519

Deals with: All legal advice such as divorces, housing etc.

\* Care:

Corner of Klipfontein & Comet Rd.

Bus stop 24 or 25

Phone 63870

Open Monday - Thursday 6 - 9 p.m.

Deals with: Legal problems

Domestic problems

Pensions

General advice on official procedures

\* Citizens' Advice Bureau

516 CTC Building, Plein Street, Cape Town

Phone 411305

For general information.

6. African Metal Workers Union Formed

At a meeting in Pietermaritzburg in Natal on 28th April, 1973, 300 metal workers voted unanimously for the formation of an African Metal Workers Union. This Union is the first African trade union in Natal. The workers elected a five-man interim committee to draw up a constitution for the trade union.

Speakers at the meeting included Mr. Barney Dladla (Kwa Zulu Minister of Community Development), Mr. Tom Mashinini (Branch Secretary of the National Union of Clothing Workers) and Mrs. Harriet Bolton (Secretary of the Garment Workers Industrial Union, Natal).

Mr. Dladla urged the workers to unite and not to be afraid. He emphasised to the workers that it was not illegal to form African trade unions.

Mr. Mashinini informed the workers of the activities of the National Union of Clothing Workers. He said that the Union had always received strong support from the registered Garment Workers Union of South Africa and because of this, employers had learnt to respect the Union in its bargaining.

Mrs. Bolton warned the workers not to expect the support of the Government and of their employers in forming trade unions.

"They may not like it because it will make you very strong and give you a powerful voice", she said. But it was foolish to wait for the State to give legal recognition to African trade unions before going ahead and forming them. In no country in the world had the State given legal recognition to trade unions before the workers had organised themselves and become a force to be reckoned with.