

1. Workers Protest Against Wage Board Recommendations

At a meeting of unskilled workers at St. Marks Hall in Athlone during the last week in May, it was decided to object to the Wage Board about the new wage levels that had been recommended.

All the workers felt that the new minimum wages were too low and that it was impossible to properly look after their families on such low wages. The workers signed a petition addressed to the Minister of Labour which said:-

We are workers covered by the Unskilled Labour Determination. We are dissatisfied with the new wage of R14.50 per week. Our cost-of-living is very high and we are no longer able to keep a civilised standard. We object to the proposals of the Wage Board, and we ask the Minister of Labour to give us higher wages.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. Norman Daniels of the Textile Workers Industrial Union who explained what the new recommended wages meant in comparison to the old wages. He told the workers that the new wages were still too low and that TUCSA had objected to the Wage Board and asked the Board to increase the wage levels.

Mr. Gordon Young of the Wages Commission also addressed the workers and emphasised to them that the wages laid down by the Wage Board were minimum wages and that there was no law preventing employers from paying higher wages. Workers at individual factories and businesses should talk to their own employers and try to get them to increase their wages. In order to do this, workers should form works committees as this gave the workers a stronger voice and also protected them against victimisation. It was only if workers stood together in a strong and united way that their voice would be listened to.

2. Training Course for workers

There will be a training course for workers, on how to form and run works committees, next month. The course will be on the weekend of 20th, 21st and 22nd July, and it will be held at the Christian Institute (Opposite the railway station, Mowbray).

All workers are welcome, but members of works committees are especially welcome. Workers will be given lectures by experts on how to form works committees, how to negotiate with the employers, how to approach the Dept. of Labour, how to get the committee registered, how to deal with a worker's complaint, and how to represent the workers. They will also learn all about Unemployment Insurance, Workman's Compensation, and all the laws that protect workers.

If you want to attend this course, give your name in at the WP Workers Advice Bureau. Transport from the Christian Institute back to the townships will be provided, and meals.