

AROUND THE UNIONS

For over a hundred years workers all over the world have fought for the right to organize, to appoint spokesmen, to bargain with management for more pay and better working conditions.

In South Africa this struggle is in its early stages, especially for African workers. Many employers are still against Trade Unions. So were employers in other countries. But because workers stood together and were determined, the employers had to co-operate. The same will happen here if workers stand together also.

Every month in Isibenzi we will give news of the Unions which are leading the struggle. We can only tell about Unions that we have contacted. We would like other Unions that we do not yet have contact with to send us news about their progress and problems so we can tell people about them. There are many Unions, but there is only one struggle. When we see the problems that our brothers have met and have overcome, we can gain strength for our own struggle.

INYONYANA YABASEBENZI BENSIMBI (MAWU)

LeNyonyana isanda kuba sematheni ngenxa yesiteleka sase Sterling ePinetown.

Imenenja yavuma ukucubungula amaholo abasebenzi neNyonyana yeNsimbi kokuba yabuye yathi abaqondisi befumu qobo nabo kufanele bavume futhi negaphambi kokuba namanye amaxoxo. UNlungile, ngabasebenzi abazonquma ukuthi bafuna ukukhulunyelwa ubani."

ELeyland abasebenzi babonisa ngokuthi kufanele bakhophe incwadi eya kubaphathi bomsebenzi esayinwe abasebenzi bonke becela isiphakamiso sabo behlangene esayinonywa efemini. Lesisiphakamiso sasiyoveza ukuthi abasebenzi bayomelwa yi Works Committee, yi Liaison Committee noma yiNyonyana yabasebenzi beNsimbi. Abasebenzi base bevumile ukuthi bayothatha izwi leningi.

INYONYANA YABASEBENZI BEFANISHA NABAMAPHULANGWE

LeNyonyana yona isanda kusungulwa. Eyabasebenzi boMdabu ezimbonini zeFanisha nezamapulangwe.

THINK BEFORE YOU BUY

With a corporation wage of R14 a week, minus R8 a month for rent, and a wife and three schoolgoing children, Mr Khuzwayo was not a rich man. But his wife was sick and he decided to buy her a transistor radio.

Every day he passed a shop which sold transistor radios. They had large signs in the windows advertising low deposits and repayments.

On Friday he received his pay and went to the shop. There was a huge selection of magnificent radios and radiograms. He stopped to admire one.

"That's a beautiful radiogram," said the salesman. "Look at this and this," he said, pointing out the extra-special features. "Would you like to buy it?" Khuzwayo hesitated; he had wanted something much smaller. "How much money have you got?" asked the salesman. "R14," said Khuzwayo, though he had never meant to spend it all.

The smoothtalking salesman did not tell Khuzwayo the full price of the radiogram, but told him that the deposit was only R10, with weekly instalments of R2. "You had better decide quickly, we have other customers interested," lied the salesman.

"SIGN HERE"

"I'll take it," said Khuzwayo on the spur of the moment. "Just sign here," smiled the salesman. "I'll fix the rest of the form later."

Mr Khuzwayo was very proud of his fine purchase and paid his instalments for many weeks. Later he became worried that he would not be able to pay every week, because his wife had to go to hospital and his son needed schoolbooks. He began to wish he had bought a cheaper radio.

The hospital bill was R20 and he was given a month to pay for it. Money was scarce for Khuzwayo, he could not pay four instalments on the radiogram.

He had to decide between buying schoolbooks for his son, and paying his instalments; and still he had a debt of R8. Khuzwayo began to despair.

REPOSSESS

He received a letter from the shop threatening to repossess the radiogram unless he paid his debt. He went to the shop to explain but they weren't interested, and repeated their warning. He continued paying weekly, but four weeks later he arrived home to find that his radiogram had been taken away. The next day he went to the shop. The manager told him he could have the radiogram if he paid the balance, which was R84. He asked for his money back. The manager laughed and told him to read the form he had signed. Khuzwayo had paid R52 already and this meant that the cost actually came to R136 which was R26 more than the actual price.

There was nothing he could do. He had lost the shop on the other hand had made R52 and could sell the radiogram again.

This is no isolated case. It happens to hundreds of people every day. How can a person protect himself against the dangers of hire purchase?

TEXTILE WORKERS INDUSTRIAL UNION

At the last Industrial Council for the Textile Industry the representatives of the Frame group made it clear that they did not want increases in wages for workers. They threatened other managers with cutting off of raw materials if they put up their workers' wages.

At one factory there was an immediate result. When the workers at Natal Cotton got to work the day after the Industrial Council meeting they expected a rise. The manager explained that he could not give a rise because Frame would not agree to it. The workers said: "We work for you, not for Frame!" and they left their looms and went home.

Textile Union officials spoke to management and an increase of R1,00 per week was granted to workers immediately so they would return to work. Now negotiations for a bigger increase are underway.

INYONANA YABASEBENZI BEZINGUBO NOKUSANGUBO (NATAL)

Umsebenzi onzima wokuba unobhala kanye nomgqunguzeli kuleNyonyana wenziwa uNkaz. Joyce Gumede. Kumanje sekukhona abasebenzi ababalelwa emaphesentini angamashumi ayisithupha (60%) (okusho ingenye yabasebenzi sebebonke jikelele ezimbonini zezingubo) asebenzamalunga eNyonyana.

GARMENT WORKERS' UNION

During March, Garment Workers are to vote whether to remain affiliated to TUCSA or not. The Union has threatened to withdraw following TUCSA's refusal to associate itself with the mass protest over the four bannings.

INYONYANA KAZWELONKE YABASEBENZI BE TEXTILE

Inyonyana kazwelonke yabasebenzi beTextile isingqume ukungena eRopes and Mattings ekutheni isinyathelo sesibili sokuhlenganisa abasebenzi abangama 30,00 basezimbonini ze Textile, eNatal.

EDano ukuxoshwa ngokungemthetho kwabasebenzi emva kweziteleka zika January kwaphela ngesikhathi uMnu. Barney Dladla ephinda engena ukuzosize abasebenzi ngokuzobonisa nabawashi.

ESmith & Nephew inyonyana seyenze isivumelwano sangaphakathi esiyodingidwa nabaphathi bomsebenzi bese samukelwa ngo March.

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Here are a few SUGGESTIONS:

1. If you do not have much money, then decide whether or not the thing you desire to buy is absolutely necessary. If it isn't, don't buy it.
2. If you have decided to buy a certain item then do not buy it immediately you walk into the first shop. Walk around the shop and see what other similar items they have and how much they cost in comparison. Also go to other shops to see how much the item you want costs there.
3. When you are looking at an article in a shop do not allow the salesman to force you into buying something you do not in fact want. Beware of salesmen - they want your money and you do not have a lot of it.
4. Compare the price of the article if you had to pay spot-cash for it with the full amount you will have to pay if you buy it on Hire Purchase. Tell the salesman you want him to calculate the full Hire Purchase price so that you can make this comparison. If he refuses, leave the shop immediately.
5. When you buy on Hire Purchase you are going to pay much more than the actual value (cost) of the item. If you can possibly do without the item for some time, rather save your money until you buy it for cash. It is much cheaper this way and if you pay cash, you may be entitled to a cash discount - you pay even less.
6. Once you sign a Hire Purchase form you have to pay the instalment each week or month as the case may be, otherwise the shop may repossess the item.
7. When the salesman asks you to sign the Hire Purchase form, ensure that it has all been completed. Make sure that all the details of the goods you are buying and the prices, hire purchase charges, and the total amount that you will eventually be paying, appear on the form. Do not sign the form until all the details are clearly shown.

8. If you get behind with your instalments, then you are obliged to bring your account up to date by paying the amount that you are behind.
9. If somehow you get behind with your instalments and it is impossible to catch up, then the goods will be repossessed. The shop cannot repossess them unless they show you a court order demanding you to return the goods. If they do not come with such an order, refuse to give them the goods.
10. If any goods are repossessed, then you lose all the money you have paid up to the date of repossession.
11. If you finish paying for goods bought on Hire Purchase before the time of the last instalment mentioned on your Hire Purchase contract, then you ask for some money back.

It is obvious that anyone, including you, can get into trouble with Hire Purchase. Beware!!! Read and remember these tips.

If you have any problems with Hire Purchase then come to:

The Legal Clinic,
basement of Students' Union
University of Natal
King George V Avenue
Durban

Every Friday from 12 noon - 2 p.m.

or at: Durban East Primary School
Austerville

Every Wednesday from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

THESE LEGAL CLINICS ARE FREE