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On January 1, 1965, Legislative Act No. 2557 reorganizing and redefining a social welfare fund for unskilled labor known as the Fundo de Acção Social no Trabalho, went into effect in Mozambique. This legislation had been preceded by that of May 1963 creating a fund known as Fundo de Acção Social no Trabalho Rural de Mocambique (Social Action Fund for Mozambique Rural Labor) pursuant to the directive of the Ministry for Overseas of July 19, 1962, but which never became actually operational.

The purpose of this legislation is to provide educational, social welfare and recreational facilities among Mozambique laborers and their families.

Educational facilities are to provide general education, professional training for workers and family members, in-service training by employers, development of arts and crafts; disseminate information by means of leaflets, posters and press, radio and motion pictures; and organize small libraries and a museum.

Social welfare facilities are to provide for the training of skilled workers, call for improvement and modernization of tool and equipment; require improved housing, mess and kitchen services; provide holiday centers; give health, unemployment and death benefits; encourage the employment of handicapped; establish payment of bonuses; establish consumers' cooperatives, mutual assistance associations, and maternity and child welfare centers.

Recreational facilities are to provide the organization of general sports activities, shows, folk dancing and musical groups and excursions.

Financing for these activities is to come from percentages, taxes, fines or other charges, including forfeited deposits, as set forth in the Rural Labor Legislation.
Labor Code; annual budgetary appropriations (for 1965 it is US$38,395); any credits that may be decided upon by court order; the Fund's own surplus accounts; unused balances from unclaimed estates of deceased workers, compensation for work accidents, and unpaid wages or benefits, particularly to mineworkers in South Africa and Rhodesia.

The Fund is to have administrative and financial autonomy. Its annual budget estimates are to be submitted to the Governor General for approval and its final budget accounts are to be submitted to the Fiscal Court (Tribunal Administrativo) for approval.

It is to be governed by an Administrative Board composed as follows:

President of the Institute of Labor (who is to act as the Board’s Chairman)

Chief Inspector of the Bureau of Labor and Social Security

Treasury Director, 3rd Class, to be designated by the Mozambique Government

Chief of the Bureau of Social Action of the Institute of Labor

A representative of the Department of Health and Welfare

One representative of Management

One representative of Labor

The Assistant, First Class, of the Institute of Labor (who is to act as the Board’s Secretary).

Until now management and labor have not been classified into groups or types. Hence, management's representative will be selected by the Mozambique Government from among three nominees chosen by the industrial, agricultural and commercial associations of Mozambique, while labor will be represented by a Catholic missionary proposed by the archbishop. By labor is meant all rural and urban unskilled (including domestic) African labor.

Comment:

This legislation makes it apparent that the Government is making an effort to promote welfare and advancement among the mass of unskilled Mozambique Africans. More attention is also being given to promotional activities among women who, as elsewhere in East Africa, take longer to become assimilated into the so-called modern way of life.

J. Alfred LaFrenière
American Consul