

A Shoal Of Complaints From Special Fisheries Inspectors At Coast

WE ARE sea-going Fisheries Special Inspectors employed by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources as temporary workers for the past four-year period (1991 - 1996) at both Walvis Bay and Lüderitz.

The aim and objectives of the Fisheries Special Inspectors roles are:

- To provide information on Namibia's fisheries in respect of vessel compliance with its laws and submit information that may be used in developing Namibia's strategies for its fisheries within its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

- To observe, record and report to the Ministry as well as to monitor and maintain law and order on all Namibian and foreign vessels.

The aim of writing this letter is that we have regrettably to complain that since 1991 we have been suffering at the hands of our Ministry and our problems have not been solved. These problems, which need to be solved as soon as possible, are that:

- We have been employed as temporary workers for four years and we do not have ben-

efits such as medical aid, pension benefits, security, etc.

- We are paid by private fisheries which we inspect as part of our daily tasks.

- Payment of our wages is often delayed - we go up to three or four months without receiving our pay,

- No overtime is paid to us. We work 12 hours a day and sometimes, when at sea, we work 24 hours a day for a whole month.

- Our wages have been reduced without any valid reason. In July last year our wages were reduced from N\$12,28/hour to N\$11,25/hour. Later they were again reduced to N\$7,96/hour and then we returned to the old system with no back-pay.

- The tax deduction for Special Inspectors is 19 per cent.

The six questions we are asking Government to deal with are:

1. When will the Government appoint Special Inspectors on a permanent basis?

2. Why are the Spe-

cial Inspectors being paid by the private fishing company when they are employed by the Government? How can a policeman arrest you today and then come to you tomorrow for his pay? This is ridiculous.

3. Why is the payment of wages to Special Inspectors delayed for up to four months and not paid regularly at the end of each trip or month?

4. Why is there no overtime pay while we do not receive benefits or allowances? Why can't we be paid for all the hours we spend at sea?

5. Why are our wages summarily reduced?

6. Why are our tax deduction so high at 19 per cent? Are all the inhabitants of the country subject to deduction at the same percentage?

We would like the Government to introduce a bill in parliament on this issue to remove the system or at least send a Commission of Enquiry to investigate as this is a very bad system and not good for us at all.

**FISHERIES
SPECIAL
INSPECTORS,
WALVIS BAY**