

# JOB FOR ALL



Whites work for R5 a day.



Unemployed.

## AT A LIVING WAGE

The population of South Africa is about 33 million. Only 12 million have jobs.

6 million other people are, at present, unemployed. Many of those will never get jobs. Many more who are working now will lose theirs in the future.

Thousands of youth coming out of school will swell the ranks of the unemployed because they, too, will not be able to find jobs.

Under the present system, the problem of unemployment is growing worse. Six years ago there were 'only' 2.5 million unemployed.

Unless something dramatic happens, the number of unemployed is going to keep going up.

It is a fact that the population is growing fast, and the economy is just about not growing at all. We need a fast-growing economy to make sure that many new jobs are created to cater for this population increase.

The population is growing 3 percent per year - that is, by over 1 000 000 people per year. To cope with the population increase, it has been estimated that we need to create about 5 000 new jobs every day. This job increase would not even begin to provide jobs for the 6 million people presently without jobs.

To do this we need an economy that is growing fast - by over 5 percent every year. But last year the economy grew by only 0.1 percent. It hardly grew. In the past five years, there was only one year when the economy grew significantly. For the rest, the size of the economy got smaller.

The present system is not going to solve the unemployment crisis on its own. The government and the bosses just do not have the interest or the programme to do so.

The bosses are not trying to combat unemployment. Instead, they are making the situation worse.

In their drive for profits they are replacing many workers with machines and laying off workers in times of 'profit problems'. The workers they lay off are those very same workers who contributed to the big profits made in good times.

In the metal sector alone, 25 000 people have been laid off in the past year - which is one retrenchment every 20 minutes for a whole year.

In the time that it takes you to read this article many other workers around the country will have been retrenched in other sectors as well. One worker has been retrenched every 14 seconds for the past two years.

It is because bosses are interested only in profits that this situation exists.

Their government will do anything they can for the bosses to help them make profits. But they do nearly nothing for the workers who are the first to suffer during bad times.

The government points out that it is paying increased benefits to about 1 million unemployed workers 'of all races' - the past year totalling over R450 million. Assuming that whites and blacks got the same benefits, this means that unemployed benefits received were under R40 per worker per month.

If we take the total unemployed as 6 million, it means the government is providing R6 per month per unemployed worker.

This is not a benefit to survive on. It's a "benefit" to die on. Unemployed workers, organised under the banner of the Unemployed Workers Coordinating Committee (UWCC), are campaigning for a living unemployment benefit for the unemployed. A living unemployment benefit is the same as employed workers want - a living wage.

COSATU workers will, as part of our living wage campaign, be fighting for a 40 hour week on full pay and a ban on overtime. We work too much already. Let all the extra work be shared among those who need it.

The Cosatu policy on unemployment and retrenchments is the 'other side of the coin' of the living wage policy.

Practically, we put forward the following proposals to combat retrenchments: prevent the closure of the factories; there must be worker control over technology; prevent productivity drives; a 40-hour week; a ban on overtime; work-sharing on full pay.

In the long term we believe an effective end to retrenchments will not be possible without a change in the political and economic system.

On unemployment, we demand: free, increased benefits; co-operatives; a subsistence fund for the unemployed to cover rent, transport and medical costs; and a state-run employment programme of public works.

We agreed that in the long term unemployment can only be ended with an end to production for profits. We organise unemployed workers to unite with employed workers in the struggle for jobs for all at a living wage.

The Cosatu 1985 Congress resolutions on unemployment and retrenchments is:

Believing: that all able-bodied men and

women have a right to work

Noting: That under capitalist conditions of exploitation, unemployment is a reality facing every worker at all times.

That these unemployed workers are used as a reserve pool of labour by the bosses to keep wages low and to provide a source of scab labour in the event of strikes.

That the interests of all workers, whether employed or unemployed, are the same - the right to a job at a decent living wage.

That under capitalist conditions of exploitation, unemployment is a waste of the human resources of the country

That in South Africa there are millions of unemployed - a number that is increasing daily through retrenchments.

That the introduction of new technology for profiteering purposes is making the whole unemployment situation even worse. This is further aggravated by pressures from employers for higher productivity.

That many are abandoning all hope of finding suitable employment in the near future

That for thousands of school-leavers there is virtually no prospect of getting employment and

therefore no possibility of drawing UIF benefits

That unemployed workers are not organised in South Africa

Congress therefore resolves to:

- \* Fight as one united force to defend all jobs threatened by retrenchments; fight the closing of the factories; and fight for participation in and control over - right from the planning stage - the implementation of any new technology. And fight all attempts by employers to make workers work harder and attempts to rationalise production, because in the present system this always leads to unemployment.

- \* Campaign for a 40 hour week at full pay and a ban on overtime.

- \* Fight for free and increased unemployment benefits and that these benefits be paid in South Africa.

- \* Fight for a subsistence fund, in addition to unemployment benefits, supplemented by rent, transport and medical concessions for all unemployed workers

- \* Demand that the state initiate a national programme of public works to provide jobs for the unemployed and to improve services and facilities in working class communities

- \* Fight for work-

sharing on full pay whenever workers face retrenchments.

- \* Establish a national unemployed workers union as a full affiliate of the new federation to struggle for the realisation of the right of all to work and to security

- \* Struggle for a fair, democratic and rational political and economic system which can guarantee full employment for all people in Southern Africa at a living wage.

- \* To give full support to efforts by retrenched and dismissed workers to establish co-operatives based on the principles of Cosatu."

### CAPITALIST CRAZINESS

This is how the bosses profit system works. We need houses - 500,000 according to the boss of Barlows Rosholt.. We need jobs - about 6 million are unemployed.

But the big brick monopoly Corobrick closed down a whole lot of plants last year and retrenched hundreds of workers. Because they were not making much profit.

Under workers management we would build more brick plants to create more jobs to build the houses we need so badly. We are the class that creates everything of value. Their class destroys these things for the sake of profits.