



marxistworkersparty@gmail.com

www.marxistworkersparty.org.za

081 366 7375

# COUNTDOWN TO UNION BUILDINGS! MARCH FOR **PERMANENT JOBS** & **R12,500**

**ASSEMBLE 08H00, WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY**

**Bloed Street, Marabastad/Old PUTCO depot (near Tshwane Events Centre/Show Grounds)**

Around 1,000 EPWP workers attended six mass meetings across Gauteng over the past two weeks. Nearly 400 attended in Soweto alone. In one workplace, Careltonville Hospital, over 100 came. In every meeting, the cry "Enough is enough!" was heard. Workers are angry. But they are determined to fight against the super-exploitation they suffer under the EPWP programme.

Across the board workers embraced the programme that the Forum leadership proposed to them. On 12 February, they will march to Union Buildings for an all-night vigil to welcome in the day of President Ramaphosa's SONA Address. As Ramaphosa stands in Cape Town, giving the ANC's 'good story', hundreds – we hope thousands! – of EPWP workers will be on his front lawn in Pretoria. They will be an uncomfortable reminder of the ANC government's **failure** to tackle poverty and unemployment. They will be a reminder of the ANC government's **willingness** to exclude hundreds of thousands of workers from the limited legal protection of basic labour laws and the minimum wage. **They will be the proof that the ANC is NOT a party of the working class.**

Karl Marx, the founder of scientific socialism, said in the *Communist Manifesto* that the capitalist class creates "its own grave-diggers". Over 170 years later, through disciplined organisation and working

class methods of mass action, the EPWP workers are determined to **BURY** the **EXPLOITATIVE** Public Works Programme. Every one of the 1,000 workers that attended the mass meetings is now an **ACTIVIST** spreading the word that **THE FIGHTBACK HAS BEGUN!**

Increasingly, workers want to be armed with clear political ideas – **THE IDEAS OF MARXISM** – to guide their struggle. This was demonstrated by the sale of 100+ copies of the Marxist Workers Party's *Izwilabasebenzi* magazine and other Marxist pamphlets in the general meetings. We encourage workers, even as the struggle is being fought, to take time to study the ideas of Marxism and socialism and attend MWP meetings and political education schools (see box below).

The capitalist economy is stagnant. Unemployment is growing. New retrenchments are announced every day. Ramaphosa's SONA speech is a rehearsal for Finance Minister Mboweni's budget at the end of the month. This budget will almost certainly prepare the ground for an attack on the pay and conditions of permanent workers in the public sector and state-owned enterprises, like Eskom and PRASA. **We appeal to other working class organisations to join the march and bring their own grievances and issues to make them part of the action.**

## **BUILD UNITY – BUILD STRENGTH**

**"Our first and foremost strategy is to fight and to unite."**

– **Executive Mukwevho,**

Provincial Co-ordinator of the EPWP Forum and member of the Marxist Workers Party at the Boipatong general meeting.

There are many programmes under the umbrella of EPWP. For example, Working on Fire, Community Health Workers and Early Childhood Development. Workers in all of these programmes need to unite into **ONE POWERFUL MOVEMENT** that refuses to allow one group of workers to be played-off against another.

Across the country, 300,000+ workers are under the EPWP umbrella. We appeal to EPWP workers in every province to follow the example of Gauteng and organise their own Forums that link-up with Gauteng.

The **National Union of Public Sector & Allied Workers** (Nupsaw), an affiliate of the Saftu trade union federation, responded to a letter sent by the EPWP Forum which appealed for support. At a joint leadership meeting on 23 January it was agreed that the march to Union Buildings would become a **JOINT PROGRAMME** of Nupsaw and the Forum. Nupsaw has done excellent work organising Community Health Workers in Gauteng and is mobilising them for the march. They are setting an example to the entire workers movement of how to organise the unorganised.

## **TOO LITTLE TOO LATE FROM THE DEPT. OF HEALTH**

On 10 January a letter began circulating from the Chief Director of the Gauteng Department of Health. In the letter the Director instructed all the District Chiefs to **EXTEND** the contracts of all Community Health Workers for another twelve months.

### **What should we make of this in the EPWP campaign?**

**(1) It is too little, too late!** CHWs are not interested in another year of the same precarious working conditions and poverty pay. The demand now is for permanent jobs. Especially through Nupsaw, the CHWs remain committed to unity with other EPWPs and the Union Buildings action.

**(2) The Department is admitting that the work of the CHWs is ESSENTIAL.** The letter came long after the news broke of the EPWP Forum campaign. The Department was hoping that if they give the CHWs some crumbs they can peel them away from downing tools on 12/13 February.

**They are wrong!**

## **WHERE IS THE MONEY FOR PERMANENT JOBS?**

In the 2018/19 financial year, there was R1.2 billion of "irregular expenditure" at the ANC-run Gauteng Department of Education. Almost all of this was linked to tenders! For example, tenders for school furniture and the 'nutrition' programme. In other words, the money taps were turned on for politically connected business people to loot public money.

R1.2 billion could employ 96,000 EPWP workers in permanent jobs on a salary of R12,500 per month. There are only 5,000 workers on the entire Zivuseni programme! Employing them would only take a tiny fraction of the money handed-out to the bosses in dodgy tenders.

**SO DON'T TELL US THERE IS  
NO MONEY FOR PERMANENT  
JOBS & DECENT WAGES!**

## **MWP'S GAUTENG BRANCH MEETING**

**Arm yourself with an understanding of the political context of the EPWP workers Struggle**

**DATE:** Saturday 8 February **TIME:** 10h00-13h00 **VENUE:** Newtown, Johannesburg

**Contact 081 366 7375 to confirm venue and attendance.**