



JOIN THE MARXIST WORKERS PARTY

Effective struggle demands a clear Marxist political perspective that lights-up the road ahead. If the capitalist profit system lies behind all of the suffering of the working class then workers need to be armed with a clear alternative - a socialist alternative. In the MWP we are committed to building the mass organisations of the working class and campaigning to win them to a fighting revolutionary Marxist programme.

The Marxist Workers Party has organised a POLITICAL EDUCATION PARTY DAY SCHOOL in Johannesburg on Saturday 22 February - to attend sign-up at our table or call 081 366 7375.

SOLIDARITY WITH EPWP, CHW & ECD WORKERS PERMANENT JOBS CAN BE WON!

WORKERS MUST NOT PAY FOR THE CRISIS OF THE CAPITALIST PROFIT SYSTEM

Today EPWP, CHW and ECD workers declare their struggle for permanent jobs and a living wage to the world. The march to Union Buildings is the result of weeks of hard-work and sacrifice by hundreds of worker-activists. Memoranda will be delivered to three national departments and also the Treasury and the Presidency.

But we must be clear on one thing - the ministers, directors and senior managers in these departments will **NOT** be thanking workers for coming today! They may be polite when we hand the memos to them (if they are brave enough to come out of their offices) but do not forget that the slave-labour EPWP, CHW and ECD programmes have operated all of these years with their **FULL KNOWLEDGE**. But we are not marching to open the eyes of the politicians or to make an appeal to their better sides - **we are marching to build pressure to force them to accept our demands!**

The problems facing workers are not caused by 'a few bad apples'. Behind the ministers, directors and senior managers stands the real enemy of the workers - the **CAPITALIST PROFIT SYSTEM**. The very foundation of capitalism is the exploitation of wage-labour, i.e. workers. The ANC-government long-ago committed itself to defending capitalism at all costs. Its billionaire leader, Cyril Ramaphosa, has not hesitated in the past to call for the use of deadly-force to suppress workers' struggle. All the parties represented in parliament, the provincial legislatures and the municipalities stand for the continuation of capitalism. Workers do not have their own political voice. The struggle to create one - to build a **SOCIALIST MASS WORKERS PARTY** - is the task of the current generation.

Capitalism has its own logic, and it will be this logic that determines how the ANC government responds to workers' demands. What response can workers expect to their legitimate demand for permanent jobs and R12,500?

Excuses

After years of a stagnant economy and money disappearing into the pockets of tenderpreneurs and 'captured' politicians, the government's finances are a mess. It is estimated that state-capture cost R1.5 trillion during Zuma's second term (when Ramaphosa served as deputy president). As a result, the ANC government has been borrowing more and more money to pay for (inadequate and poor quality) service delivery and to pay the (low) wages of teachers, police officers, nurses and other government workers.

The government already owes R3 trillion and borrows an additional R850 million every working day. They then pay interest on all this borrowed money. This year alone the bill will be R204 billion. And who is this bill paid to? The super-rich bankers in South Africa and around the world! **The working class is being robbed from the left-pocket by the corrupt politicians and from the right-pocket by the greedy bankers.**

At this point in the story we need to introduce a new flock of anti-working class vultures: the international credit ratings agencies (like Moody's). These 'agencies' are not public institutions performing a public service. They are private profit-making companies. The people that run them are unelected and unaccountable. Their self-appointed job is to keep an eye on the investments of the capitalist class - to make sure they are safe and get re-paid with interest (profit).

They are worried that the ANC government has borrowed so much money to plug the holes in its budget caused by years of failed capitalist economic policies, corruption and state capture, that their capitalist clients' loans might not get repaid. So they are putting enormous pressure on the ANC government to set-aside the money. How? By cutting department budgets, cutting public sector jobs, freezing the pay of public sector workers and privatising (selling-off) state-owned enterprises like SAA, Eskom and Prasa. The money that is 'saved' can then be sent to the bankers. In other words, the working class must bail-out the very thieves that exploit and rob them daily! This might become official ANC policy if the Cosatu leadership's plan to pay Eskom's debt with public sector pension savings is approved.

The ratings agencies apply pressure for the adoption of their austerity programme by threatening to "downgrade" South Africa to "junk". This simply means issuing advice that investors should pull their money out of South Africa and not put any new money in. If this were to happen and the ANC government stuck to its neo-liberal economic policies (which it would), it would have disastrous consequences for the working class - speeding-up deep cuts to public sector services, wages and social grants and pushing up the price of food and other necessities as a weak Rand pushes-up the price of imports. These consequences are then used to scare the working class into taking their bitter medicine - workers and their families are damned if they do and damned if they don't!

Clear Message

This is the economic and political landscape in which EPWP, CHW and ECD workers are demanding permanent jobs - i.e. demanding to be added to the public sector pay-roll that the ANC government has already committed to cutting. **The stagnant economy, the growing government debt and the threat of a Moody's "downgrade" will be the EXCUSES used to refuse to meet the legitimate demands of the workers for permanent jobs and R12,500. WORKERS MUST REJECT THIS! The mess in the South African economy is a man-made disaster. More accurately a capitalist-made disaster! The working class must not be made to pay for the failings of the very system that exploits and robs them.**

THE MONEY EXISTS TO PROVIDE PERMANENT JOBS & R12,500. In Bulletin No. 4 we pointed-out that last year the ANC-run Gauteng Education Department alone had R1.2 billion of "irregular expenditure" (i.e. corruption) and that this money was enough to employ 8,000 workers on R12,500 for one year. The 300+ big businesses listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange have cash-hoards of R1.4 trillion. But the ANC government has been reducing their tax rate for years. In 1994 the ANC government inherited a corporate tax rate of 40%. Today it is down to 28%. But this is still not low enough for big business - they moved R1.7 trillion out of South Africa between 2004 and 2014 in untaxed "illicit financial flows".

So the line that "there is no money" is nothing more than an anti-working class policy choice. Workers must give the ministers, MECs and directors a clear message:

CAPITALISM IS YOUR SYSTEM AND WE TAKE NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS FAILURES. WE KNOW THE MONEY IS THERE. IF YOU DO NOT MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO FUND PERMANENT JOBS AND R12,500 THAT IS YOUR CHOICE. BUT KNOW THAT OUR STRUGGLE WILL CONTINUE UNTIL OUR DEMANDS ARE MET.