

WHY WORKERS SHOULD SUPPORT THE UNEMPLOYED

ANTI-POVERTY
NETWORK
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



The Myth Of The “Dole Bludger”

The political and media caricature of the “dole bludger” is another right-wing lie. Just like the “selfish”, “greedy” unionist. It is designed to destroy workers’ sympathy for the unemployed and justify punishing them with poverty-payments.

What the “dole bludger” myth ignores is that most people who are unemployed want to work. Indeed, they are forced to apply for jobs to keep their measly payments.

But there are **NOT ENOUGH JOBS**, let alone secure, decent jobs.

Australia has a 3.5-4.5% unemployment rate, and there are structural barriers that make it difficult for unemployed people to find work: geography, illness, employer discrimination.

Did you know 40% of unemployed people have a diagnosed disability that makes it harder for them to find and hold down jobs? These people, because of bureaucratic hurdles, are not eligible for the higher (but still paltry) Disability Support Pension.

The fact welfare payments are below the poverty-line makes it even harder for the unemployed to find work. It gets hard to pay for a car and petrol, haircuts and clothing for interviews, a computer, phone, and stable internet connection.

And what happens to your ability to look for work, if you cannot look after your health? The 24/7 stress of living in poverty literally makes people sick.

We know raising payments above the poverty-line would relieve this health-damaging stress and make it easier for people to look for work.



We need your help to make this happen!!



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And it is wrong to think that the unemployed do not work. Many choose to volunteer. Unemployed for long enough, and you are **FORCED** to volunteer, or worse, **FORCED** to participate again in the highly-exploitative and dangerous Work For The Dole. And for no extra money!!

Many others are also single parents, carers for their parents, or doing other types of socially-necessary care work. All this unpaid labour is still labour. The capitalist system depends on this free labour. But the system only financially rewards labour that is profitable.

And many people on JobSeeker are underemployed: they do not earn enough from work, and so have to rely on Centrelink to top-up their incomes.

Welfare Rights Are Workers' Rights

In work or out of work, we all have to fight the same battles against the wretched capitalist system and if welfare payments are raised above the poverty-line, this is good for workers.

Workers will not have to fear a life in poverty if they choose to leave exploitative or unsafe jobs. And the boss cannot threaten to replace them with someone in poverty who is so desperate they will take any job, however bad the pay and conditions.

Raising welfare payments will help increase workers' bargaining power. Employers will be forced to provide better wages and conditions if workers feel financially secure enough to demand them.

It is no surprise, then, that the rich despise both of us. They smash the rights of workers and smear our trade unions, at the same time that they attack the poor and vulnerable.

This all makes sense. What they fear most is a united, organised working class. We must act in solidarity with each other, then, if we are to create a better society.



Contact us to join the struggle!!



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