

UNEMPLOYMENT A CURSE

By David Brooks

This article takes a look at the terrible condition called "unemployment". A new look at the subject is required and it is suggested that the conventional economic scholars' answers are neither good enough nor acceptable. Socialism is dead. It only remains to bury the adherents. Capitalism should be the next to fall. Are the Aboriginal people the only ones with a land problem? Perhaps the white man needs to recognise the value of the land.

It comes as a shock when the foreman, or department head, walks up to you and, with a sad look, hands you a letter. "Sorry, the market you know, please be off the premises within ten minutes." It had been rumoured for over a month . . . "They've fired 60" someone says. But it doesn't matter. I'm one of them. What do I tell the missus? What about that trip I promised the kids? How do I pay the mortgage? Hell I've been doing this job for fifteen years now. What do I do now?

Wonder what they've paid me?

Two weeks and one week for every year of service, less tax, (that bastard always gets his cut no matter what the circumstance). Won't go hungry for a few weeks. Let's clear out my locker . . .

The story is not new. It's an event that has been played out many times over many years by far too many people. The results are devastating for those affected. Far too many lose their home; suffer a marriage breakup; lose their self respect; some even suicide. They have been rejected by society; denied the right to earn their own living; forced to be idle; refused the chance to feed even their own belly. The situation in some cases is eased. After a K.G.B. type interrogation you may be allowed to claim a "job search" allowance. But

please remember, we have to keep the figures as low as possible, so . . . any excuse . . .

The political events of the past few years have been only a little short of amazing. The fall of the Berlin Wall and subsequent re-unification of Germany. The demise of the Soviet Union and defeat of Socialism. It has been well shown that anything is possible in the world of politics. And it does not have to take a lifetime. Even the long awaited demise of capitalism is a possibility. The reasons we elect people to parliament is to sort out the right from the wrong. To clearly stand in support of that which is good. To bring about reforms which will see the end to such injustices as unemployment. What we have got ourselves, as with just about every other parliament in the world, is a bunch of red and blue chooks with large mouths, no brains, and our well being to play with.

Only you, the voter, can change things for the good. And then only if you know what is and what is not good. To leave it to others is akin to leaving the crown jewels in the care of Ned Kelly.

Unemployment. Is it caused by fiscal policy? If so it is man-made. And the present federal government controls all fiscal policy. Have they really deliber-

ately put men and women out of work?

Perhaps there is another answer. Inability to pay the high price required for land can cause a total block in the economic system. This is a continually expanding society. How is it that a land shortage, created by high price, can be allowed to impede the progress and welfare of the people? And how is it that our political system continues to ignore this most basic of wrongs? Unemployment does no good for anyone, whether they be employee or employer. If there is a 15% unemployment rate then sales of everything are reduced by 15%. That is food, clothing and housing. (A new car! What's that?) The fear engendered into the rest of the working population reduces even further those sales. (Buy only what is absolutely necessary, we may be next.) Cash in hand is the only asset.

No one gains from unemployment. Many suffer needlessly. The "conventional" scholars in economics have failed us. Who will stand for change? Who will stand for justice? Reform does not come from the top. It comes from those afflicted with injustice. And there is a damned lot of them around in Australia at this time.

With acknowledgements to

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