

What is behind the bosses scheme to share?

MANY workers have accepted free shares (ESOPs). However, the bosses are not giving these away out of the goodness of their hearts.

The old Greek proverb says "Look a gift horse in the mouth". In other words, what are the bosses trying to do? Workers should be aware of what is behind the giving away of shares.

The mine bosses believe that by offering workers free shares and productivity related pay (PRP) workers will feel more loyalty to the company and work harder.

It is not surprising these schemes were introduced immediately after the Great Miners Strike of August 1987. These schemes are imposed as alternatives to trade unionism - in this case the NUM.

Share schemes are intended to bribe workers away from socialism and worker control.

The strategy is designed to give capitalism a human face.

Who owns what

The Anglo American Corporation, which owns more than half the shares on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, is a leader in the campaign which pretends to divorce apartheid from capitalism.

The free shares they are offering black miners will not make any difference when it comes to who is to have control over the ownership of that giant monopoly because workers are given "preference" shares which do not carry any voting right.

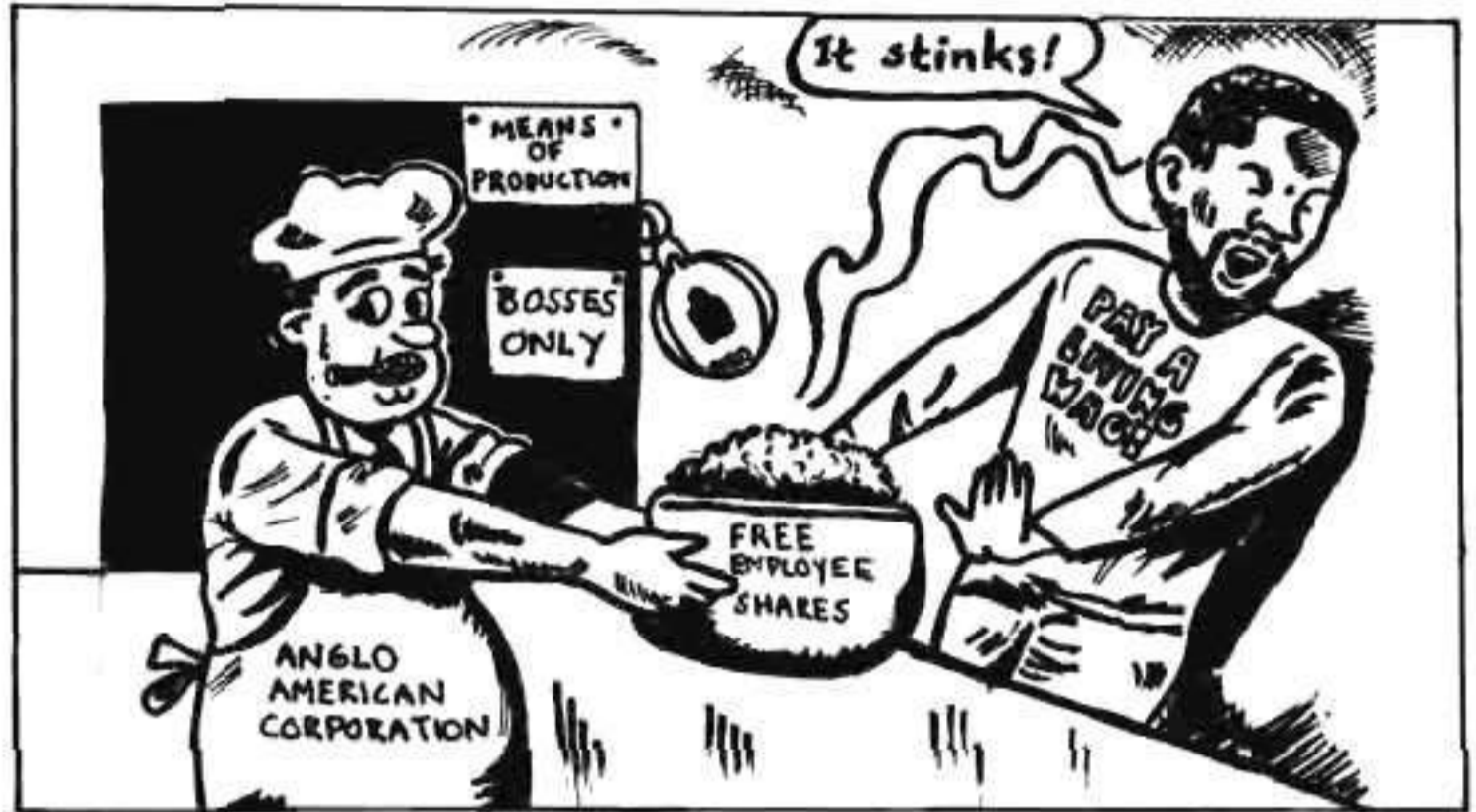
Cde Cyril Ramaphosa, General Secretary said "The Anglo American Share Ownership Scheme stinks... if every worker does actually take up the shares offered, this would amount to 0,6% of the total AAC share portfolio. This is the most degenerated tokenism".

Living wage

"The workers' demand for a living wage remains. Workers demand that a bigger share of the profits should go towards wages and not to share ownership schemes... This scheme is a ploy to undermine unions".

"We view the share schemes and the productivity pay as part of the multi-pronged attack. We see the LRA, deregulation and privatisation, restriction on foreign funding, and the latest detentions, bannings and restrictions as the main weapons being used against democratic organisation at this time."

The evidence from the productivity related pay schemes in



other countries show that they are designed to make it easier for employers to manipulate wages and reduce pay during economic slumps.

The bosses would like workers to believe that ownership of a few shares means that workers become part owners of the factories and mines.

False sense of security

It gives workers a false impression of security in their jobs and creates the illusion that they are participating in the decision-

making process of the mines. The workers are in fact just as threatened by the retrenchments, physical assaults by their white supervisors and mine security personnel, inadequate compensation, health and safety and mass dismissals as before.

The mine bosses hope that if they successfully sell the idea of share ownership or the productivity related pay schemes to the workers, workers will then help intensify their own exploitation.

Comrade Jay Naidoo, the General Secretary of COSATU

says: "We are essentially opposed to the ESOPs and PRP Schemes. Fundamental issues must be redressed first. We are struggling for a living wage, let alone considering buying shares which are seen as perpetuating inequality."

Most trade unions have reacted with hostility to these schemes. Unions have recognised that they offer little more than a bribe to continuing apartheid and class oppression.

There can be no real equality until the workers really share in the ownership of the means of production.

PEOPLE IN THE UNION

MAPULE MAKWELA, a finance officer of NUM keeps a tight check on the union's finances. NUM News interviewed her as part of our series introducing union officials to members.



Mapule, how has your background influenced your choice to work in trade unions?

I come from an ordinary Soweto family. My childhood was happy and normal.

It was only in June 1976 that I first really came up against the apartheid system and felt real anger and bitterness.

It was my first experience of police brutality.

Describe to us what happened that day - 16 June 1976.

I was in form 1 at Seanamarena

High School in Mapetla.. A group of children came to our school, and asked us to join the march against inferior Bantu Education.

The march was supposed to be peaceful. The students were excited: some were shouting slogans and others were talking.

We marched until we reached Central Western Jabavu, close to Morris Isaacson High School. And then all hell broke out. There were helicopters above and teargas below.

What do you feel about those times now?

It still makes me very angry when I think about it. I felt the

Boers were unfair.

They didn't give us a chance to say what our demands were. Nothing since then has changed my opinion of them.

When I left school my first job was with the African Allied Workers Union. I started working for NUM in 1986.

What does your job as finance officer involve?

I handle aspects of the union's finances and money affairs. Keeping a close guard on petty cash is my special responsibility. I am also responsible for monitoring stationary, and looking after transportation.

Why is looking after the union's money so important?

The money is from subscriptions that NUM members trust to us to look after their interests. It is a great responsibility.

We have to make sure the money is well spent and properly accounted for. Not a cent must be wasted or stolen.

The property of the union is the property of our members, and we have to guard it carefully. Without money we will not be able to take up the cases of members, or develop their interests and fight against the bosses.

Mgedezi saved but more to hang

THE petition signed by thousands of mineworkers calling on the State President to show mercy for the life of Comrade Tyelovuyo Mgedezihis succeeded.

However, Comrade Mgedezi - who was a shaft chairman at Vaal Reefs Mine - still has to languish in jail for 20 years.

The efforts of miners nationally and internationally to save our patriots from the barbaric state legislated killings are not in vain.

Comrade Lucky Nomnganga who was sentenced on the basis of "common purpose" has been granted leave to appeal against the two death sentences imposed on him for his alleged complicity in the death of two Western Holdings Mine senior white managers. He was shaft secretary of the union then.

There are over 200 patriots and compatriots awaiting executions at the Pretoria death row - which is called by many the killing capital of the world.

At our 6th Biennial National

Congress NUM passed a resolution to fight the barbaric death sentence

The congress noted trade union leaders and members are more than often sentenced to death for their alleged participation or having a "common purpose" in strike-related killings.

The democratic world was recently astounded when the judge sentenced to death 14 residents of Upington under the "common purpose" doctrine.

Among the accused was an old lady of 60 years, which shows that apartheid knows little humanity or morality.

The hangings of political prisoners is a gross violation of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Convention and Protocols.

NUM has resolved to see to it that the Save the Patriots Campaign is actively taken up in all structures of the union.

NUM further resolved to join other unions and community organisations in protesting against the hanging of people, irrespective of their alleged offences.