

ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK SOUTH AUSTRALIA



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE: The 15km Trek For Jobs, Justice, And Dignity

MONDAY OCTOBER 23RD

START: 10am, Port Adelaide Lighthouse. FINISH: 4pm, Light Square.

At the end of Anti-Poverty Week, welfare recipients will march from Port Adelaide to the City, to protest the increasingly unjust treatment of the 800,000 Australians currently unemployed, and other attacks on those receiving Centrelink payments.

Sole parents, Age and Disability Pensioners, job-seekers, carers, students, and others will follow the footsteps of the 1931 Beef March, when 2,000 unemployed people walked from the Port to the CBD, during a period of mass unemployment, and shocking treatment of those out of work.

This unique mobilisation takes place at a time when there is 1 job for every 11 job-seekers, at a time when the welfare system is punishing recipients and trapping them in poverty, instead of supporting them.

“Our Trek will highlight the assaults on those out of work, attacks such as cashless welfare, forced drug-testing, and the stressful, time-wasting obligations imposed by government-funded job agencies”, Anti-Poverty Network SA State Coordinator Pas Forgione said.

“Our meagre welfare payments contribute to 1 in 7 adults and 1 in 6 children living in poverty. Newstart is \$269 per week – \$160 per week below the poverty-line. Yet the government tells us as our welfare system is somehow too generous and too lenient, and that this is the source of unemployment, not the grim ration of jobs vs. job vacancies.

Things have come a long way since the days of the Great Depression, when unemployed people had to fight for decent food, for beef instead of mutton, but our welfare system is heading in an alarming direction, away from being a safety-net, and towards being a site of frustration, humiliation, and suffering”, Mr. Forgione said.

The Trek will include two stops for speeches: 1) outside the job agency, Job Prospects, on Commercial Road, in Port Adelaide; 2) outside the soon-to-be closing Coca Cola Amatil factory, on Port Road, Hindmarsh. These stops will highlight the unfair treatment meted out to the unemployed and others receiving Centrelink payments, and the worsening labour market.

FURTHER INFO: Anti-Poverty Network SA State Coordinator Pas Forgione, on 0411 587 663, or at antipovertynetwork.sa@gmail.com.