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No To Privatisation!

Workers' Solidarity Federation

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1996

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Privatisation is not Black Empowerment!

The government says that privatisation will contribute to “black employment.”

But only a tiny elite of Black businessman and politicians have money to buy shares. Black economic empowerment must mean more than a few rich Motlanas and Mosenekes. It must mean an improvement in the living conditions of the workers and the poor. It must mean real grassroots democracy.

We Call For:

- Mass actions and strikes against privatisation.
- Workplace occupations and strike action by workers threatened by job cuts. This must be backed up by maximum solidarity from other unions. We must demand continued unemployment with no cuts in pay or workers rights.
- Workers in the service sector must fight attempts to erode, privatise or cut off services. We must fight for more and better services to the communities of the workers and the poor.

Forward to Socialism

We say no to privatisation. But nationalisation is also not socialism because the government will never serve the workers. It was built to serve the bosses and the rulers and still play this role. We must fight for real worker control of the economy through our trade unions.

Phantsi ngeCapitalism! (Down with Capitalism!)
Phambili basebenzi! (Forward Workers!)

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In early December 1995, the government announced that it was going to privatise many State assets. It wants to sell off part of SAA, Telkom and Airports Company, and all of Autonet, Sun Air and Transkei Airways.

This was met by opposition by the unions, spearheaded by the 1,6 million strong COSATU federation (Congress of South African Trade Unions). Mass actions were organised in the postal and public transport sectors. COSATU also called a general strike for January 16 1996. This strike was called off at the last minute when the government agreed to halt its privatisation plans and enter into negotiations with the unions over economic restructuring.

Privatisation Means Job Cuts!

The government says privatisation will “create new jobs” in the “medium- to long-term.”

Lies! We have had privatisation in South Africa since the 1980s. And there is still mass unemployment! Nowhere in the world has privatisation created jobs. Privatisation means job losses. It will put us and our families on the streets.

Privatisation Will Undermine Essential Services!

The government says that there must be some privatisation of services. They say this will help “deliver services”.

But business only cares about one thing – **profits!** It won't deliver services to people who cannot afford to pay charges. And business will erode the quality of the few services we do have so it can make more money. They will not improve services to the poor because the poor are not a “financially viable proposition.”