**9 May**

**Employment and Labour budget vote**

**FF Plus: H Denner**

Hon minister, you have sketched a very positive picture here today and credit must be given where its due. But lets now beat around the bush. We are facing an unprecedented unemployment crises. We have been facing one for years and its getting worse. We have a department with entities, except for one, that are unable to deliver on its mandate. The unemployment rate is 42.6% and let’s not fool ourselves by excluding discourage work seekers. More than 11 million South Africans who are able to work are excluded from the labour market and the Department of Labour and its entities have fallen short of turning this situation around and supporting workers in need.

Daar is verskeie redes waarom die Departement van Arbeid bydrae tot die werkloosheidskrisis in Suid Afrika eerder as om by te dra tot die oplossing daarvan. Die agbare minister is gou om met my te verskil as ek verwys na die beperking wat striemende en selfs drakoniese arbeidswetgewing op die privaatsektor se werkskeppingsvermoë plaas. Daar word dan gewoonlik agter die raskaart geskuil met uitsprake soos dat die onreg van die verlede terstond en met oortuiging nou, 30jaar later deur die regering reggestel sal word. Maar agbare voorsitter, een onreg, kan nie deur ‘n ander reggestel word nie. Die gevolg daarvan is die werkloosheidskrisis waarin ons nou sit. In plaas daarvan om ekonomiese welvaart te skep, dwing hierdie regering gefaalde politieke ideologië op die werklike werkskeppers van hierdie land af en dies te meer op die oog op volgende jaar se verkiesing.

Die wysigingswet op bilikke indiensname is die nuutste voorbeeld van sosiale ingenieurswese en omgekeerde apartheid. Waarom leer die ANC nie uit die geskiedenis nie? Hierdie ondeurdagte, sinnelose wetgewing wat aan ‘n minister die mag gee om aan privaat besighede voor te skryf wie hulle waar moet aanstel is nie net absurd nie maar dit is ongrondwetlik en die VF Plus het sy stem by talle ander gevoeg wat hierdie wetgewing in die Hof gaan aanveg.

Voorsitter, ek kom terug na die entiteite van die department.

The Compensation Fund, an entity that manages billions of rands, and one that is currently in a financial turnaround process, because of among other reasons, its failure to submit statements to the AG for audit purposes for the past 11+ years, has not submitted an annual performance plan for oversight by this committee either. Neither has the unemployment insurance fund. I am glad to hear from the minister that success from turnaround strategies can apparently be seen but you will excuse me minister if I don’t take your word for it. Where are the APP’S? Where is the accountability? Where is the management of this department? Why are these 2 largest entities allowed to get away with this? Where are you minister?

I am glad to hear you, minister, acknowledge the problems with these funds. But there is also a large question mark hanging over the UIF and its decision to push through a payment of R5 billion to a questionable company for a questionable project that even the PIC did not feel comfortable with and when the minister is questioned about this, his timelines quite don’t match up. So, it makes one wonder, how sincere is this acknowledgement really? Productivity is as it seems not so productive itself. The entity has been trying to get a single source of funding for the past four years with the same observation and recommendation made by this committee year in and year out, yet it seems no movement in this regard. The same is true for supported employment enterprises and I think the hon committee chair mentioned this as well. Year after year the committee recommends that national Treasury is engaged to develop and implement a preferential procurement policy for government departments to procure from SEE programmes, but the same recommendation is made this year again with no clear progress in the matter.

The only truly functional entity of the Department of Labour is the CCMA but the serious lack of funding and resources is threatening to cut the only thin line of credibility that this department has left.

Voorsitter, ek het begin deur te sê dat dit nie sal help om mooi broodjies te bak nie. Ons is midde in ‘n werkloosheids krisis en ons sal nie hierdie krisis die hoof bied met ‘n department en ‘n minister wat die krisis ontken ter wille van politieke redes nie. Die realiteit staar ons in die gesig. Suid Afrikaners is desperaat om vir hulself en hulle gesinne te sorg. Maar die regering kies die ANC elke keer bo die mense van hierdie land en dit gaan julle duur te staan kom.