



Non-Governmental Public Action Programme

Published on 19 February 2008
ISBN: 978-0-85328-228-0

www.lse.ac.uk/ngpa/publications

9

The Politics of Unemployment: Employment policy, the Unemployed Workers Organisations and the State in Argentina (1991-2005)

Ana C Dinerstein

LSE

www.lse.ac.uk/ngpa
tel +44 (0)20 7955 7205
fax +44 (0)20 7955 6039
email ngpa@lse.ac.uk

E·S·R·C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

General introduction to NGPA Working Papers

Editor: Professor Jude Howell

The **NGPA Working Paper (NGPAWP)** series provides a vehicle for disseminating recent and ongoing research of researchers based at, or linked to the Non-Governmental Public Action Programme (NGPA). It aims to reflect the range and diversity of non-governmental public action, and understand the impact of public action.

Researchers on the Non-Governmental Public Action research programme work with advocacy networks, peace groups, campaigns and coalitions, trade unions, peace-building groups, rights-based groups, social movements and faith-based groups to understand the impact of non-governmental public action. They are based in universities, think-tanks, civil society organizations, projects and networks around the world gathering data, building theory, and strengthening co-operation between researchers and practitioners.

For further information of the work of the programme and details of its publications see:

www.lse.ac.uk/ngpa

Non-Governmental Public Action Programme
c/o The Centre for Civil Society
Department of Social Policy
London School of Economics and Political Science
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE

Tel: +44 (0)20 7955 7205/6527 Fax: +44 (0)20 7955 6038 Email: ngpa@lse.ac.uk

The London School of Economics and Political Science is a School of the University of London. It is a charity and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee under the companies Acts (registered number 70527)

©2008 Ana C Dinerstein, NGPA, London School of Economics

The text of this publication may be freely used for educational purposes. For other purposes quotations may be used provided the source is credited.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.
ISBN: 978-0-85328-228-0

Contents

Introduction	6
1. The Politicisation of Unemployment: Neoliberal Reforms and the Emergence of the UWOs (1991 - 2001)	9
From the Factory to the Roads: New Actors and 'Welfare Policy from Below'	10
2. Crisis, Social Mobilisation and the Response of the State (2002-2003)	13
Devaluation and the Mega Plan 'Male and Female Unemployed Heads of Household'	13
The Massacre of June 2002 and the Political Shift	16
3. The 'Depoliticisation' of NGPA against unemployment under Kirchner (2003-2005)	19
Back to the 'Culture of Work'	20
When 'Welfare Policy from Below' enters the state agenda	21
The 'Divide-Co-opt and Rule'	23
Conclusion	25
Notes	
References	

Abstract

This paper explores the contested relationship between the unemployed workers organisations (UWOs) and the state around employment policy reforms during the last decade. The paper argues that in addition to the UWOs experience of mobilisation and community work which is paramount in the history of NGPA in Argentina, the impact of UWOs action on policy-making cannot be ignored. First, they opened a public debate on unemployment, poverty and the inefficiency of focused policies and the conditions for the implementation of inclusive and universal policies engaging a variety of actors. Secondly, they have influenced policy-making in that the new broad policy framework embraces the principles of 'social economy' and a policy ethos based on the principles of solidarity and autonomy, key to the UWOs politics. Yet, the need for a different kind of engagement between UWOs and the government seems to be imperative.

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) award RES – 155 – 25 – 0007: The Movement of the Unemployed in Argentina under the Non-Governmental Public Action programme (NGPA). I would like to thank the ESRC for this support. I would also like to thank all the interviewees, workers from the organisations of the unemployed and senior functionaries from the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Social Development for the valuable information provided and for facilitating access to material and documentation used in this article. Gratitude also goes to those who attended the presentations of an earlier version of this paper at the UK Social Policy Association Conference, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath (June 2005).

The Author

Ana C Dinerstein [BA (Hons) Buenos Aires, MA and PhD (Warwick)] is a Lecturer in Political Sociology, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath, UK. Her research focuses on the relationship between social and labour movements and state institutions and policy making in Latin America, with a particular focus on the transformation of labour in Argentina. (<http://www.bath.ac.uk/soc-pol/staff/profiles/ana-dinerstein.html>) Contact: A.C.Dinerstein@bath.ac.uk.

Introduction

The relationship between non-governmental public action and social reforms is complex and cannot be understood as a one way process. Rather, it must be seen as “the product of a dual movement: pressures from below and reforms from above” (Gough cited in Gough and Wood, 2004: 320). Policy reforms can be grasped neither as a top-down process, where policy-makers have the initiative and mobilisation is considered in terms of the ‘impact’ of changes produced in policy according to established indicators (Martin, 2001); nor as a bottom-up process, where reforms and policies are the result of social struggles, as they are understood by the radical tradition; nor as a form of social control, where reforms are a fundamental aspect of broader political strategies aimed at transferring the basis of social domination and legitimisation by reorganising the distribution of power within the state and in society (Topalov, 2004):

“In other words, both terms are the result of the interaction marked by vacillations and surprises, between practices and popular movements, and the initiatives of the managerial class... the forms of this relationship varies according to countries, areas of reform, historical epochs and groups of workers” (Topalov, 2004: 46, author’s translation).

The Investigation of the political processes underpinning policy reforms may make apparent the ways in which institutional changes and the reorganisation of the collective action of new and traditional social actors shape each other as a result of a struggle for power and resources. On the one hand, “the ways in which the state might seek to organise and reorganise its population for convenient, limited policy concessions can itself produce new solidarities and social bases for critical and social action” (Gough and Wood, 2004: 322)

On the other hand, social actors’ acceptance, collaboration with, resistance to and alternative proposals to policy reforms (or several of these simultaneously), may produce changes in the reforms themselves. As the state seeks to achieve order and stability, and a certain degree of consensus is formed, policy reforms are the temporary resolution of ongoing conflicts or, better, their crystallisation in time.

This article explores the politics of unemployment in Argentina by looking at the contested relationship between the recently created unemployed workers’ organisations

(UWOs) and the state around employment policy reforms during the last decade. Despite government efforts to suppress it, unemployment continues to be one of the most significant political issues in present-day Argentina. During the latter half of the 1990s, and as a continuation of the transformation initiated during the dictatorial period of 1976-1982, the neo-liberal policies were successful in breaking the strong and well-developed social insurance institutions and corporate power of trade unions. Structural adjustment policies and the creation of mass unemployment had a threefold effect. First, the fragmentation of the working population into a variety of sub-groups, ranging from unionised employees to the marginalised informal sector workers. Second, the crisis of traditional forms of union representation and the emergence of attempts by some unions to represent the marginalised and the unemployed. Third, the crisis of the relationship between the state-sponsored labour movement and the state. Rather than achieving the depoliticisation of policy-making surrounding work and employment by emasculating the trade unions, the effect of reforms was to unleash new social actors who have sought to make the issues political. The article shows that, whereas the neo-liberal restructuring of the 1990s was expected to depoliticise labour, the opposite appears to have been the case. The neo-liberal reforms of the 1990s set in motion the *politicisation* of the issue of unemployment as they facilitated the emergence of new regional, decentralised and consistently non-institutionalised forms of opposition, protest and organisation, which became paramount to the politics and policy making in the country.

The paper is organised into five sections. Section one addresses the neo-liberal reforms of the early 1990s which led to the politicisation of the issue of unemployment. Section two explores the period 2001-2003 under President Duhalde. The crisis of December 2001 intensified the confrontation between the UWOs and the provisional government, as the latter attempted to harness the mobilisation of the former amidst an unprecedented financial and political crisis. Section three investigates some of the current developments in the relationship between the UWOs and the state, and new efforts to depoliticise unemployment since the arrival of President Kirchner in May 2003.

A Methodological Note

The data presented below is based on the author's ongoing ESRC research project (2005-7) 'The Movement of the Unemployed in Argentina' (RES – 155- 25- 0007) within the framework of the ESRC Programme 'Non-governmental Public Action' (NGPA),

Centre for Civil Society, LSE. The analysis is supplemented by previous research carried out by the author in 1997-2001, dealing with the transformation of the subjectivity of labour in the 1990s, and in 2001-2004, dealing with popular mobilisation and political and policy changes in Argentina. The data in all cases is based on case studies which have used in-depth, semi-structured interviews with top level civil servants (at the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Social Development), trade union leaders (at the national and local levels) and participants from UWOs in five regions of Argentina. The reliability of information in all cases was assured by avoiding conflicts of interest and concerns over the anonymity of the subjects. To enhance the accuracy of the information verification procedures were put in place, such as periods of direct observation in meetings, assemblies, committees, etc, and participant observation in organised actions. In the most recent project, focus groups, involving the members of UWOs, were also used. Additional information was obtained from official statistics and surveys, as well as published and unpublished sources from the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Social Development, trade unions and UWOs.

1. The Politicisation of Unemployment: Neo-liberal Reforms and the Emergence of the Organisations of Unemployed Workers (1991-2001)

The core of the neo-liberal reforms was undertaken during the 1990s, under the umbrella provided by the dollar-peso parity (convertibility) plan. In the context of tight monetary policy, the reforms consisted of privatisation of 93 state-owned enterprises, reduction of public expenditure and decentralisation of health and education services, deregulation of healthcare, financial system and the labour market, privatisation of the pension and safety at work systems, and implementation of strict provincial economic adjustments. These 'stabilisation' policies stifled inflation but fostered destructive labour market conditions. By the second half of the 1990s, unemployment acquired a structural form, increasing from 6 to 18 percent in only four years (1991-1995) (see Beccaria and López, 1996; Palomino and Schvarzer, 1996). Unprecedented double-digit rate of unemployment was combined with flexibilisation and casualisation of labour and the emergence of poverty as a 'new social issue' (Castel, 1997; Rosanvallon 1995).¹

Whereas the government presented unemployment as a 'new and significant state affair' (MTEySS, 1995), it simultaneously treated it as a temporary phenomenon without considering its social costs (Di Leo 2005). The rationale behind institutional changes and employment policies was to solve a seeming 'paradox' of successful economic policies and increased unemployment (Dinerstein, 1999). However, it soon became apparent that rather than a negative side-effect, unemployment and casualisation of labour provided the bases for better economic performance at least until 1997. In other words, productivity levels were increased by the rationalisation of labour, reduction of labour costs, mostly without any significant investment in new equipment (Bustos, 1995), the expansion of the informal economy, the casualisation of work, underemployment and increasing vulnerability of those at the margins of the labour market.

At the core of employment policy reforms was a new employment law, the creation of new Departments within the Ministry of Labour (e.g. the National Direction of Employment), Job Centres, and new policies aimed at fighting non-registered employment. A new unemployment benefit and active employment programmes completed the picture. Whereas the former only covered those who had previously been employed, leaving out women entering into the labour market for the first time, the young

and those who work in the shadow economy,² the active policies were inadequate in preventing the deep transformation of the social structure that was taking place. These reforms did not tackle the vicious circle of unemployment and poverty: the competitive disadvantages of those already socially excluded to be reinserted into the labour market (see Feletti and Lozano, 1997). IMF-inspired reform reinforced fragmentation and individualisation of the unemployed and the poor by age, sex and geographical area.³ As work became more scarce, the absence of universal employment policy resulted in greater corruption, paternalism and clientelistic relations.

1.1 From the Factory to the Roads: New Actors and 'Welfare Policy from Below' ⁴

Between the late 1990s and 2000 there was a considerable rise in the mobilisation and organisation of unemployed workers at the local and national level. Since entire localities became affected by privatisation, state reforms and company closures, the unemployed and the wider communities in which they lived came to form new organisations voicing opposition or actively resisting these developments. The opposition to neo-liberal reforms took new forms, which were characterised by regional, decentralised and consistently non-institutionalised protests (such as roadblocks), organised by public sector workers, the unemployed, local communities and community-based organisations, with support from local trade unions. These innovative forms of protest, which moved resistance from the factory to the roads, allowed a variety of groups to present a common strategy to make themselves 'visible' to the eyes of society. They put forward a diversity of demands ranging from employment programs to 'genuine job' creation and investment, accompanied by demands for political inclusion and participation in the management of social and employment programmes (Dinerstein, 2002).

The capacity of UWOs' to influence policy was believed to be very limited, largely due to the prevailing idea that these 'sub-proletarians' (Bourdieu, 1998) were 'excluded' from the productive system and, therefore, from those institutionalised forms of representation that allow workers to participate. But their collective action challenged scepticism.

In addition to voicing opposition, the UWOs devised collective survival strategies up to the present day, and to which the participants attribute social meaning up. The implementation of 'community projects' (*proyectos productivos*) by the UWOs often accompanied by the democratic discussion among members of the short- and long-term

meaning of their collective action for social change, can be seen as 'welfare policy from below' (see Steinert and Pilgram, 2003). The range of self-help alternatives are most of the time collective, including literacy campaigns, popular education, school diners, land occupation and housing construction, and the creation of work cooperatives (brick factories and carpentry), community farms (*huertas comunitarias*), recycling activities. Negotiations for temporary jobs for the local unemployed and the creation of *ad hoc* job exchanges are also included. These 'informal sites of social and political interaction' became 'transformative spaces' (Ellison, 1999: 72). The UWOs combine political, social cultural and union functions. The rationale behind their action is to recover the link between the capacity to produce and the satisfaction of needs, by breaking the individualistic logic of the state-focused social policies and clientelistic relations and transforming them into a collective and communitarian projects.

Managing resources from Federal Employment Programmes and/or generating their own sources of income allowed the UWOs to challenge the foundations of individualised benefits, to redefine the content of workfare, and to create community-valued public works. Whilst accepting that beneficiaries receive a monthly cash transfer of \$150 (pesos) per capita, the UWOs demanded that workfare be in line with the local organisations' own design. In these cases, the UWO administrate the programmes and the beneficiaries worked in their own bakeries, brick factories, popular education schools and polytechnics, nurseries, and housing co-operatives. The *proyectos productivos* are varied and have collectively defined local needs in order to recover a sense of community which made people's abilities truly useful, giving an incentive to many of the unemployed to join the UWOs.

After the popular upheavals in Cutral-Co and Plaza Huincul (Neuquén) in 1996-1997,⁵ Tartagal and Mosconi (Salta), and Libertador General San Martín (Jujuy) the roadblocks widespread throughout the country became a new form of resistance and negotiation. During the 1990s, negotiation of more programmes per area and a redefinition of workfare could more reliably be achieved by protesting at the roadblocks, often in the context of heavy repression. It is deemed that between 1989 and 1996 there were around 2,000 protests throughout the country. Most of them resulting in the prosecution of the participants (Pérez 2001; also CELS 2003a, IDEP-CTA 2004).⁶

Between December 1999 and December 2001 the confrontation between the government and the UWOs intensified. Particularly important was the participation of the latter against Minister Cavallo's 'zero deficit' plan launched in May 2001 to conform to the latest IMF demand further to reduce public expenditures. Between 31 July and 17 August 2001, three national roadblocks coordinated by the First National Assembly of Popular, Territorial and Unemployed Workers Organisations brought together 50 UWOs. The mobilisation of the unemployed contributed to the collapse of the alliance in power, led by President de la Rúa, when the ongoing controversy within the Cabinet – between those who advocated dialogue with the protesters and policy reforms, and those who prioritised the country's financial performance and advocated repressive control of the unemployed – became unsustainable (Dinerstein 2001).

2. Crisis, Social Mobilisation and the Response of the State (2002-2003)

“We realised that we were hungry and miserable. It was then that we placed dignity at the centre of our work against humiliation and conformism”
(Unemployed Worker cited in MTD Solano and CS 2002: 248).

The financial collapse of December 2001 marked a turning point in Argentina's politics. The failure of the neo-liberal reforms promoted by the IMF and World Bank instantly became apparent. The period 2002-2003 was marked by political confusion, deep crisis, and the recomposition of both political elites and civil society. In December 2001, the country's economy collapsed, produced the biggest default in world economic history. Social mobilisation forced the resignation of national authorities demanding '*¡que se vayan todos!*' (out with them all!). Direct and radical forms of action (such as factory occupations and neighbourhood assemblies) rejected representative and institutional politics. The provisional government found itself in a difficult bind of having to re-establish financial and political stability sought by the financial institutions and politicians, and the need to rein in social mobilisation driven by anger at the same creditors and politicians.

2.1. Devaluation and the Mega Plan 'Male and Female Unemployed Heads of Household'

The financial crisis and the social mobilisation that followed it led to changes in the economic and social policy. After declaring a 'National Occupational Emergency' in January 2002, and following the advice of the Church, employers' organisations, political parties, trade unions, human rights and other NGOs gathered in the 'Roundtable for Argentine Dialogue' and a new programme was launched by Decree 565 in April 2002. The plan 'Male and Female Unemployed Heads of Household' (*Jefas y Jefes de Hogar Desocupados*, JyJHD), funded by a World Bank loan of \$600 million and from export taxes, sought to assist male and female heads of household with children under 18, pregnant women or disabled persons of any age, who were not beneficiaries of other social programmes. The plan intended to achieve 'constitutional family rights to social inclusion' (art. 75, 22, of the National Constitution) by offering a cash transfer of 150 pesos (£30) per month to eligible individuals who registered to receive it. In return, almost two million beneficiaries of the plan must engage in productive work or training, and ensure that their children are in education.⁷

The plan was launched as a response to both the political mood favouring universal and inclusive policies and the critical social and economic situation. On the one hand, four days before the financial collapse, the National Front against Poverty (*Frente Nacional contra la Pobreza*, FRENAPPO), an umbrella group which includes the Argentine Workers Confederation (*Central de Trabajadores Argentinos* CTA), some UWOs, such as the Land and Housing Federation (*Federación Tierra y Vivienda*, FTV) and other NGOs, organised a four-day popular referendum on universal unemployment benefit of 380 pesos per month for all bread-winners, a minimum pension and a child benefit of 60 pesos per month (see IDEP-CTA, 2002). Astonishingly, nearly three million people participated voluntarily in the referendum, 1.7 million out of them voted in favour of the universal benefits.

On the other hand, the abandonment of the dollar-peso parity advised by the IMF in January 2002 shortly after the financial crisis, aimed to contain inflation, to minimise the fall in industrial output, and re-establish trust in the financial system. Duhalde's devaluation policy simultaneously favoured concentrated economic groups with a new 'rescue plan' (see Basualdo et al, 2002) and perpetuated poverty. Following the devaluation of the peso in January 2002, the rise of 10.4 per cent in the consumer prices index and 19.4 per cent for wholesale prices in April 2002 (MECON, 2002: 2) perpetuated the decline in workers' incomes and increased poverty. In addition, the rate of unemployment was at 21.8 per cent in February 2002. Seven million people fell under the poverty line between October 2001 and 2002, bringing the total to 21 million (out of a population of 37 million), ten million of these being destitute. Fifty seven per cent of Argentines did not have sufficient income to cover their basic needs.⁸

Soon after the devaluation, wages continued to decline vis-à-vis the rising value of the US dollar and the constant increase in the cost of the family food basket.⁹ Poverty deeply affected the young. In February 2002 the national rate of unemployment stood at 21.8 percent. Thirty-nine percent of the young had been unemployed for more than six months and more than one million of those aged 15-24 neither studied nor worked (Lozano and Hourest, 2002). The impact of the crisis on household welfare was also considerable. A World Bank survey covering 2,800 households in different regions of the country, including rural areas that looked at main changes in the labour market and job situation, income, vulnerability and social security, showed the emergence of three different forms

of 'coping strategies': adapting (changes in consumption patterns), active (involving new use of human assets, from migration to working more hours) and social network strategies (assistance from friends, NGOs, organisations, etc). Individual participation in various forms of social protest also increased in the period following the crisis from 7.6 percent before October 2001 to 16.2 percent (Fiszbein et al, 2002).

Policy-makers presented the JyJHD as a shift towards a more inclusive policy ethos. Yet, analysts echoed the UWOs in that the plan was a temporary tool to control social unrest, having further negative implications rather than representing a 'new logic of policy' that would 'transform benefits into rights' (MTEySS, 2003). The first virtue of the plan was its alleged power to reduce poverty and unemployment by inserting beneficiaries into the labour market through workfare and increasing overall employment through increased local consumption (see MTEySS 2004). However, the results are more mixed than the government's claims. First, the cash transfer of \$150 per month was unlikely to have a substantive impact on regressive income distribution, consumption or poverty levels.¹⁰ Secondly, initial evaluations of the impact of the plan on job creation were misleading. For example, the government's claim that unemployment declined from 21.5 percent in May to 17.8 percent in October 2002 is accurate only if JyJHD beneficiaries in workfare were counted as 'employed,' whereas the rate of unemployment over the same period remained more or less the same when beneficiaries are counted as unemployed (Di Leo 2005; Giosa Zuazúa 2004; CELS 2003b).

Secondly, whereas the government claimed that the program would provide quick financial help to vulnerable families and improve labour market management the plan encouraged informality, illegality and inequality. On the one hand, there was a substantial increase in the number of beneficiaries (almost two million) and whole families began to benefit from policies as a result of targeting heads of household. On the other hand, the plan inadvertently encouraged precarious working conditions and deteriorating labour relations, as formally unemployed workers with children under 18 registered for benefits while working in the shadow economy. These workers often were better informed to access the plan than the unemployed (López Zadicoff and Paz, 2003; also CONAEyC 2004). Furthermore, the stated aim of 'universality' was not reached, as rules for the selection of beneficiaries in similar circumstances were not always applied uniformly (CELS, 2003b).¹¹ A vicious cycle of informalisation and policy ineffectiveness

contradicted the government's two main goals: to help the most vulnerable sectors of society and to end unregistered employment.

The third attribute of the plan was said to be its ability to introduce new methods of collaborative decision-making at the local level, thus helping to break clientelism. Indeed, the newly created Local Consultative Councils (*Consejos Consultivos Locales, CCL*) (1,873 out of 2,150 localities), were meant to allow local authorities and NGOs to work in partnership to distribute, implement and monitor programmes (MDS, n/d-2). However, UWOs and analysts point out that the lack of infrastructure and resources, problems of representation, erratic participation of NGOs, the overlapping of local authorities' and CCL's diffuse functions and excessive bureaucracy, made CCLs flawed.¹² Moreover, the lack of transparency often encouraged clientelism, as political connections and relations with UWOs or local politicians became key to obtaining benefits or avoiding workfare altogether, making in many cases, the CCLs powerless.

2.2. The Massacre of June 2002 and the Political Shift

The politicisation of unemployment reached its height in the first six months of 2002, when the confrontation between the administration of President Duhalde and the radical sectors of the UWOs ended in a massacre. The events leading to this massacre are outlined in this section. The financial crisis had deepened the political divisions within the movement concerning what form of organised action to take vis-à-vis the recomposed elites within the state. There were, roughly speaking, three distinct sectors. Closely related to left political parties, the 'hard' sector [*duros*], advocated revolutionary change and chose mobilisation at any cost as its main strategy. Independent from political parties and trade unions, the 'autonomous' sector advocated the construction of 'counter-power' vis-à-vis the state and the use of roadblocks to negotiate with the government (as well as seeing this as a tool to increase their number and strength). Working together with the trade unions, the 'soft' sector [*blandos*] advocated the re-construction of working class power and mobilised for employment programmes and income distribution as a foundation for a new national project (Dinerstein 2003b).

The deepening of the economic crisis pushed the UWOs to demand more programmes, job creation and income distribution. The mobilisation of the UWOs fitted well within the intense political climate of early 2002, when participants in neighbourhood assemblies,

workers in occupied factories, savers' organisations, trade unions, students and human rights organisations were protesting against the IMF, international creditors and corrupt politicians.

Against this backdrop, the provisional government was determined to harness protest as a condition to stabilise the economy and the country's politics. In tune with the 'war on terror' launched by the US and British governments, and the Bush administration's obsessive concern with the 'volatile region' of Latin America (*La Nación* 7.2.2003), President Duhalde sent to the Parliament a Bill (project 5-02-2239) which would see the use of intelligence services to suppress 'domestic terrorism'. This was defined as 'all those activities that take place within the national territory' involving 'groups or individuals who use force to achieve political, social, religious, economic or cultural objectives.' (Verbitzky, 2003)

The political project of the autonomous sector of the UWOs, the Unemployed Workers' Movement *Aníbal Verón* (MTDAV), was regarded by the government as particularly alarming, especially given the rebellious spirit ensuing from the crisis of December 2001. The MTDAV represented a relatively small sector within the movement, comprising a dozen organisations from the south of Greater Buenos Aires. The group operated under the slogan 'Work, Dignity and Social Change,' and was qualitatively different from the rest, insofar as it was driven by notions of dignity and autonomy in achieving social change.

On June 26, the MTDAV activists challenged President Duhalde's threats. They blocked one of the main arteries connecting Greater Buenos Aires and the capital city. At the Avellaneda Bridge, the unemployed demanded an increase in the amount and number of subsidies to the unemployed, a family subsistence allowance, health and education, the end of criminalisation of protest and repression of the UWO activists. Underpinning their demands around the issue of unemployment there was a clear intention to defy the Peronist elite in power and their project based on clientelism and continuing economic adjustments. The government's response to the roadblock was blunt: brutal repression. The uncontrolled police operation labelled by the government as a 'manhunt', led to the murder of two young activists, Maximiliano Kosteki and Dario Santillán, and the injury and hospitalisation of hundreds of others.

The implications of the massacre were numerous. First, it led to cross-class solidarity with the unemployed and the mobilisation of thousands against both unemployment and repression under the motto '*Piquets* [protests] and pot pans, the struggle is only one! (*Piquetes y Cacerolas, la lucha es una sola!*). Secondly, it allowed the government to introduce a split within the movement, dividing the 'good' and the 'bad' *Piqueteros*, that is those groups who accepted the boundaries imposed by the government (such as the FTV) and those who had crossed the threshold, respectively. Thirdly, it unleashed a political scandal which forced the provisional administration to call for national elections. The July 2002 call for national elections produced anxiety within the Movement of Unemployed Workers. Whereas all organisations agreed that elections would not bring about real change and condemned the increasing repression of protests by the government, their attitude towards the elections varied. Whereas those close to unions and left-wing parties participated in the elections of April and May 2003, the autonomous sections had refused to vote, maintaining the idea of building counter-power and rebellion against power as the vehicle of change.

3. The ‘Depoliticisation’ of NGPA against unemployment under Kirchner (2003-2005)

“I prefer to have ten thousand workers demanding a wage increase than ten thousand poor demanding social programmes”
(Minister of Labour, Carlos Tomada cited in *Página/12*, 4.8.05: 10)

Whereas under Duhalde the gap between the political elite and civil society seemed insurmountable, President Kirchner’s appointment in May 2003 had a positive impact on the trustworthiness of democratic institutions and the system of political representation. By December 2003, 64 percent of Argentines held a positive view on the new government and believed that the rate of unemployment was going to fall soon. They considered that the demands by the UWOs were fair and the government’s approach towards dialogue was correct (CEOP in *Clarín*, 28.12.03: 3).

President Kirchner publicly recognised that employment programmes such as the JyJHD provided limited assistance to those with deep needs but would not work as a long-term strategy. The new administration considered the solution to unemployment and poverty as an urgent priority. Despite an 8 percent growth in GDP since 2003 (MDS, 2004), high levels of unemployment, job problems and great social inequality persisted. Even though the unemployment rates were lower in the first trimester of 2005 than the first trimester of 2004 (13 percent vis-à-vis 14.4 percent), open unemployment remains very high, standing at 1.3 million people as of 2007.¹³ Unemployment severely affects the young: in 2004, six out of 10 people between 15 and 29 years of age (more than 5.5 million) were poor, and only 37% of them work (National Department of Youth in *La Nación*, 22.11.04).

It is expected that sustained economic growth and the improvement of the taxation system will be continuously translated into job creation and the stimulation of the domestic market. Yet, in addition to unemployment, there are two further issues in need of being urgently addressed: regressive income distribution and unregistered employment. With regards to the former, a comparison between the levels of economic activity in 1998 and 2005 shows that they are similar, suggesting that there has been significant recovery since the crisis of 2001. However, in 2005 there were 30 percent more unemployed, the average income was 30 percent lower and there were five million more poor people than in 1998. Whereas the gap between the incomes of the richest and poorest 10 percent of society was on average 20 times in the 1990s, it is presently 35

percent higher than in 2005. Poverty grew by 96 percent and indigence by 300 percent in the same period of time (Lozano, 2005).

As for unregistered employment, only a minority of workers, that is 3.4 million, are registered as waged. Another 3.3 million workers are registered as 'unwaged'. Although the latter group could be seen as self-employed, in most of the cases this term is a smoke-screen to disguise unregistered employment in the shadow economy. By the end of 2004 there were five million workers with no legal rights and social security. In addition, in the last seven years there has been an expansion of child labour and child homelessness, reaching 1.5 million (MTEySS and UNICEF in *La Nación* 9.5.05). In view of these indicators, the government has implemented three strategies in the hopes of depoliticising issues around unemployment: the encouragement of the 'culture of work' and job creation, the incorporation of principles and practices proposed by the UWOs into official social policy, and attempting to divide, by co-opting or isolating, the movement of the unemployed.

3.1 Back to the 'Culture of Work'

First, job creation and the restoration of the culture of work have been placed at the centre of policy-making. A clear line between active employment policies and social programmes – conflated into one in JyJHD – is intended to be drawn in order to make clear the functions of different state departments. Although JyJHD was extended until December 2005 (Decree 1506/2004), the aim is to end the programme. The first step to ending JyJHD is to reclassify beneficiaries on the basis of their employability (CCNPS 2005). Those considered 'employable' will remain beneficiaries of this or other benefit programmes administered by the Ministry of Labour.¹⁴ Those considered 'unemployable', particularly women in poverty with more than three children, will be transferred onto Families for Social Inclusion programme, run by the Ministry of Social Development. The transition is voluntary and the conditions for eligibility are (i) to be a beneficiary of JyJHD and (ii) to have three or more children.

Second, two new programmes have been launched by the Ministry of Labour: the 'Plan for the Promotion of Employment: More and Better Jobs' (*Plan para la Promoción de Empleo: Más y Mejor Trabajo*) and the 'Plan against Unregistered Work' (*Contra el Trabajo no Registrado*). The former consists of facilitating the re-insertion of beneficiaries

from all employment programmes the formal labour market and promoting self-employment in collective enterprises, by means of local, sectoral and regional agreements between the Ministry of Labour, UWOs and local employers' associations. The latter consists of measures aimed at penalising employers who use unregistered labour at the end of 2005 (EPH, INDEC). Four hundred inspectors from the Federal Administration for Public Income (*Administración Federal de Ingresos Públicos* AFIP) have been commissioned to monitor 17,000 companies. A third programme, 'Programme for Training' (*Programa de Entrenamiento Laboral*, PROEL), completes the picture. As a result, it is argued that registered employment grew by ten percent in the last three years and, more importantly, nine out of ten jobs created between September 2004 and September 2005 were in the formal sector.¹⁵

3.2. When 'Welfare Policy from Below' enters the state agenda

The second strategy has been to launch new social programmes which take on board the communitarian and solidarity principles and social practices that underpin the implementation of *proyectos productivos* and other forms of collective action of the UWOs and NGOs since the second half of the 1990s, and provide technical and financial support to them. Mirroring the new trends in social policy in Latin America, which are argued to be moving "away from income poverty to embrace social aspects of well-being and human development" (Molyneux, 2005: 5) by incorporating the voice of the poor, the government claims that it is committed to consolidating a network of economic, human and institutional resources to respond to demands for social inclusion. The traditional family unit is placed at the centre of inclusive policies, recognising the youngest and the eldest as the most vulnerable. The new programmes intend to create a new policy ethos, central to which is the integrated intervention by the state locally, promoting bottom-up decision-making processes and encouraging the principles of the 'social economy' (MDS, 2004). Three substantial, and interlinked, programmes constitute the government's new approach.

- i) The 'National Food Security Plan: The Most Urgent Hunger' (*Plan Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria: El Hambre Más Urgente*) offers essential food provision according to needs and local customs of families with children under 14, pregnant women, disabled and adults in extreme poverty who suffer 'nutritional vulnerability' (MDS, 2004; MDS, n/d-3). In addition to

direct assistance, the plan provides government financial support to community projects encompassing food provision (e.g. soup kitchens, community nurseries) and technical assistance to the local and communal production of food.

- ii) 'Families for Social Inclusion Plan' (*Plan Familias para la Inclusión Social*) aims to promote family integration and development. The plan provides a cash transfer to poor families with children below the age of 19 of \$ 150 (pesos) per capita up to \$ 200 (pesos) proportional to family size. It is central to the plan that the beneficiaries (usually women with more than three children, as above) ensure their children stay in education. It also sees as its goal the integration of families into communities by means of complementary activities such as orientation in health and education (MDS, n/d-1).
- iii) The 'National Plan for Local Development and Social Economy: Let's Work!' (*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Local y Economía Social 'Manos a la Obra'*) promotes the 'social economy' – local development with a social impact. The explicit aim of the Ministry is to be 'thinking of policy from below... taking on board the social knowledge of the population' (MDS, 2005: 15). This plan, which envisages support to (i) community enterprises (*emprendimientos productivos*) and (ii) productive chains, has two main components. The first component is financial and material, consisting of loans for local micro-enterprises, and tools, equipment and inputs valued up to 15,000 pesos (£3000 circa) to group or family projects which are expected to be consistent with the development strategy of the region (See Goren 2005; also Baccarelli *et al* 2005). Credit and micro-credit is also provided via Solidarity Funds for Development (*Fondos Solidarios para el Desarrollo*), and Social Capital Funds (*Fondos de Capital Social, FONCAP*)¹⁶. Grants are also provided by Institutional Strengthening for Socio-Productive Development plan (*Fortalecimiento Institucional para el Desarrollo Socio-Productivo FIDSP*) (MDS, 2005). The second component consists of technical assistance and training. By December 2004 there were 33,861 community projects (agricultural, manufacture, artisan industry, services) with 425,671 beneficiaries involved for a total investment of 164 million pesos (MDS 2005).¹⁷

The impact of these programmes on poverty and unemployment reduction has not yet been assessed and doubts have been cast about their potential to produce a radical shift in policy (see Baccarelli et al 2005; Goren 2005).

The programmes seem to be having the effect of disempowering UWOs by institutionalising their social activities, which are an essential constituent of their politics. This happens in at least two ways. First, the clear split between social and employment programmes, and the emphasis on the culture of work, are leading to a new institutional division of labour, wherein the Ministry of Labour is revitalising its historical relationship with trade unions, while the Ministry of Social Development deals with the UWOs and any other organisations representing the 'unemployable' unemployed, the less politicised stratum among the unemployed. Second, the success of the UWOs' productive products (*proyectos productivos*)— which is vital for their organisational growth — depends mainly on resources from the local and national governments, and the manner in which the resources are allocated. However, financial, material or technical support for community projects is not received directly from the government, but channelled through NGOs. This forces groups undertaking community work either to become NGOs (by legally registering, being authenticated by government inspectors, and being assessed as to the worth of their proposed project), or to negotiate with an existing NGO to be included in their fold to receive state funds. Though the intention is to make the allocation of funds more transparent, it allows the government to diffuse the political power of UWOs by, on the one hand, equating them with any voluntary organisation, and, on the other hand, making them compete for funds with local politicians and a host of NGOs, thus encouraging clientelism.¹⁸

3.3. The 'Divide-Co-opt and Rule'

President Kirchner's approach to having a 'dialogue' with the Piquetero Movement led to new realignments among UWOs. On the one hand, the project of counter-power by the autonomous sectors is weakening under pressure from the government's effort to co-opt the UWOs, resulting in further divisions within this group. On the other hand, two other sections of the movement have become politically significant for different reasons. The 'Kirchneristas', have accepted the new policy line, believing that a close relationship with the government will bring more financial and political power to their organisations. They are civic associations which manage substantial projects with high social impact. Two

examples of such projects are a coordinated system of housing co-operatives in La Matanza run by the FTV, and Centres for the Promotion of Literacy run by *Barrios de Pie*. Some of the UWO leaders have identified politically with the government (e.g. leaders of FTV). Others have been co-opted into the government and have become key figures in designing and delivering social policies (e.g. leaders of *Barrios de Pie* occupy high level posts at the Ministry of Social Development).

The 'anti-Kirchneristas' (among whom are *autónomos* and *duros*) have actively opposed the government from the outset. Their way of voicing their demands for more employment programmes and an increase in the cash transfer from pesos 150 to pesos 350 per capita have been direct and radical. For example, in October 2004 the 'National Piquetero Block' (*Bloque Piquetero Nacional, BNP*), gathering UWOs from left political parties, occupied the building of the Ministry of Labour preventing the national authorities, including the Minister of Labour, from exiting (*La Nación* online 26.10.04). Whereas the Kirchneristas campaigned for Kirchner's candidates in the October 2005 parliamentary elections (being accused by opposition MPs of helping the government to buy votes by distributing domestic appliances and cash to the unemployed and the vulnerable), the anti-Kirchneristas disrupted the pre-election campaigning by 'camping out' at the historical Plaza de Mayo during the 'Piqueteros Week of Struggle' (*Semana de lucha Piquetera*).

Despite their forceful mobilisation, the UWOs were politically isolated by the government's use of police and legal threats, political ridicule and 'emergency funds' being informally channelled by the key people from the President's entourage to different Departments (some former activists) who bargain directly with the leaders of social organisations.¹⁹ The issue at stake is that demands for more employment programmes and an increase in the amount of money allocated per capita put forward by the *duros* in the Plaza de Mayo contradict the government's stated medium-term plans to end employment programmes and concentrate on job creation. From the perspective of the government, the end of focused programmes would prevent UWO leaders managing them for their political purposes. However, it is unlikely that this will happen, as focused programmes have been an important tool of social control used by the government at all levels effectively to date.

Conclusion

This article looked at the process of the politicisation of the issue of unemployment in Argentina since the 1990s, with particular emphasis on the contested relationship between successive governments and the Unemployed Workers' Organisations. The investigation of the political processes underpinning policy reforms in Argentina make apparent the ways in which policy reforms created new subjects of politics which became, by putting new pressures on the state, new subjects of policy. The emergence of UWOs is explained by mass unemployment and the crisis of the relationship between traditional forms of representation, like political parties and trade unions, and the state. It has been shown that policy reforms are better grasped as the temporary crystallisation of a movement of struggle, wherein institutions/policy reforms and identities, organisation and forms of collective action are re-shaped.

Despite the fact the neo-liberal reforms were underpinned by the idea of depoliticising labour, the reforms led to the emergence of new parameters for the politicisation of society, in this case unemployment. The politicisation of unemployment took different forms in different periods, from blunt confrontation to collaboration. The notion of politicisation, as used here, captures both the phenomenon of the mobilisation of the unemployed and their communities at the roadblocks, and their organisation of 'social policy from below' in the face of the inadequacy of state policies.

The period that immediately followed the crisis of 2001 intensified the process of politicisation of unemployment and increased the level of repression of the movement of the unemployed in an atmosphere dominated by economic ruin and social discontent. Albeit inefficient and flawed, new employment policies, like the JyJHD, tacitly took on board the political demands for inclusive policies and state intervention put forwards by UWOs. The massacre of unemployed activists in June 2002 contributed to a further political shift towards a policy where a combination of dialogue, co-optation and intimidation would prevail.

The Kirchner administration has been relatively successful in controlling UWOs by implementing new policies which, on the one hand, attempt to integrate the spirit and practices of communitarian projects and encourage the 'culture of work' and, on the other hand, aim to co-opt, subordinate and/or isolate those sectors of the movement which are

not prepared to surrender. However, the end of the long-term political contention around the issue of unemployment does not depend on the implementation of the 'right' policies or the achievement of a more 'moderate' attitude from UWOs. In the Argentine case politics is constitutive of policy – the creation of UWOs in the 1990s is indisputably rooted in a process of deep crisis and structural transformation of the world of work, workers' organisations and the relationship between trade unions and the state. Citizenship has historically been subsumed under the category of labour in a context of full employment. At the same time, as universal policies are almost non-existent, social policy depends on the capacity of labour and social movements to mobilise, demand and negotiate. Powerful trade unions have traditionally been political actors in the negotiation of policies around labour. The responses of trade unions to the structural crisis of the world of work have been varied but, overall, have failed to confront the new challenges.

Predominantly urban, the UWOs found new ways to organise and represent new segments of the working class and society in a changed social context. They inherited the historical strength and mobilisation capacity of the working class and trade unions but they mirror the complexity of the present reality of the world of work by combining political, social, cultural and union functions. As the social crisis presents a wide range of 'vulnerable' situations without state protection, their intervention at local levels within situations combining unemployment, poverty and 'relational fragility', have prevented the transition of many from unemployment to destitution or what some refer to as "social disaffiliation" (Castel 1997).²⁰ However, UWOs have also reproduced the negative features of Argentine labour, such as clientelistic relations with their members and with the government. When programmes are managed by UWOs, obtaining or continuing to receive monthly benefits by the unemployed individuals has often depended on their participation in a roadblock or an assembly, or contribution of a small amount of their monthly benefit to the organisation.

The impact of UWOs action on policy-making cannot be ignored. First heard during the first wave of roadblocks in 1996-7, the critique of the destructive power of neo-liberal reforms and the demands for democracy and universal policies are still paramount. In addition to having revitalised networks of solidarity and contributed to the recovery of a deeply damaged social fabric, the action of UWOs helped to open a public debate on the inefficiency of focused policies and the conditions for the implementation of inclusive and

universal policies engaging a variety of actors, from international organisations such as ILO to politicians and citizens (Lo Vuolo et al, 2004; Lo Vuolo, 2005; del Bono, 2004). Following Abel and Lewis (2002: 52 and 53) “the emancipatory potential of social policy will be realised only if negotiations about priorities and allocations engage the entire citizenry, not only policy-making elites and organised lobbies...[policy] will have to take into account the vitality and popular strength of newly empowered actors from the social movements.” So long as unemployment, underemployment, and informality affect more than half of the working population of Argentina, and clientelism and chance prevail in social policy, unemployment will remain the most significant political issue in the context of crisis in the world of work. Whilst policies still depend on the capacity of the working class and other social actors to organise, demand and negotiate, the need for a different kind of engagement between UWOs and the government seems to be imperative.

References

- Abel, C. and Lewis, C. (2002) Exclusion and Engagement: A Diagnosis of Social Policy in Latin America in the Long Run. In Abel, C. and Lewis, C. ,eds. *Exclusion and Engagement. Social Policy in Latin America*, ILAS, London
- Baccarelli D *et al* (2005): Análisis del Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Local y Economía Social 'Manos a la Obra IDEP-CTA accessed 5.5.05, <http://www.cta.org.ar/instituto/index.shtml>
- Barbeito, A. and Lo Vuolo, R. (1995) *La Modernización Excluyente. Transformación Económica y Estado de Bienestar en Argentina*, UNICEF/CIEPP/Losada, Buenos Aires.
- Barrientos, A. 2004 Latin America: towards a liberal-informal welfare regime. In Gough, I. and Word, G. ,eds. *Insecurity and Welfare....*121-168.
- Basualdo, E. *et al* (2002) 'Las transferencias de recursos a la cúpula económica durante la presidencia Duhalde' *FRENAPO* Discusión paper, Buenos Aires .
- Beccaria, L. and López, N. (eds.) (1996) *Sin trabajo. Las características del desempleo y sus efectos en la sociedad Argentina*, UNICEF/Losada, Buenos Aires.
- Bertolotto M and Clemente A. (eds.) (2004) *Espacios Multiactorales y Políticas Públicas. De la experiencia a la conceptualización*, CBCPS –CENOC-IIED, Buenos Aires.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998) *Acts of Resistance. Against the new myths of our time*, Polity Press, Cambridge
- Bustos, P. (1995) 'Argentina: nuevo capitalismo emergente?' in Bustos P (1995) (ed.) *Más allá de la estabilidad. Argentina en la época de la globalización y la regionalización*, Fundación F. Ebert, Buenos Aires: 13-37.
- Castel, R. (1997) *La metamorfosis de la nueva cuestión social*, Paidós, Buenos Aires.
- CCNPS (Consejo Consultivo Nacional de Políticas Sociales) (2005) *Noveno Informe al Poder Ejecutivo Nacional*, Buenos Aires, Marzo, un published report
- CELS (2003a) *El estado frente a la protesta social 1996-2002* [The state and social protest 1996-2002] Siglo XXI, Buenos Aires.
- CELS (2003b) 'Plan Jefes y Jefas. Derecho Social o beneficio sin derechos?' 6th National Conference of Labour Studies, ASET, 13-16 August, Buenos Aires, unpublished
- Clarke, S. (1992) 'The Global Accumulation of Capital and the Periodisation of the Capitalist State Form' *Open Marxism* Vol. I. 1992: 133-179.
- CONAEyC (Consejo Nacional de Empleo y Capacitación) (2004) 'Octavo Informe al poder ejecutivo nacional. Programa Jefas y Jefes de Hogar', MTEySS, Buenos Aires.
- del Bono, C. (2004) 'Renta mínima garantizada y seguro de empleo y formación en Argentina', IDEP-CTA, accessed 30.7.04 <http://www.cta.org.ar/instituto/politsocial/rentaminima-cdelbono.rtf>

- Di Leo, P. (2005) "Plan Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados" y régimen social de acumulación neoliberal: una aproximación a sus articulaciones político-simbólicas y estructurales, *IDEP - CTA*, accessed 15.6. 2005, <http://www.cta.org.ar/instituto/index.shtml>
- Dinatale, M. (2004) *El festival de la pobreza. El uso político de los planes sociales en Argentina* La Crujia ediciones, Buenos Aires.
- Dinerstein, AC. (2003b) 'Power or counter power? The Dilemma of the Piquetero movement in Argentina', *Capital & Class* 82: 1-8.
- Dinerstein, AC. (2003a) 'A Silent Revolution: The Unemployed Workers Movement in Argentina' *Travail, Capital & Société*, CDS, McGill University, Vol. 34 (2), Montreal: 166-183
- Dinerstein, AC. (2002) 'Regaining Materiality: Unemployment and the Invisible Subjectivity of Labour' in Dinerstein, AC. and Neary, M. (eds.) (2002) *The Labour Debate. An investigation into the theory and reality of capitalist work*, Ashgate, Aldershot: 203-225.
- Dinerstein, AC. (2001) 'Roadblocks in Argentina', *Capital & Class*, 74: 1-7.
- Dinerstein, AC. (1999) 'The Violence of Stability: Argentina in the 1990s' in Neary M (ed.) *Global Humanisation: Studies in the Manufacture of Labour*, Mansell, London - New York, 46-75
- Ellison, N. (1999) 'Beyond Universalism and particularism: rethinking contemporary welfare theory' *Critical Social Policy* Vol. 19(1): 57-85
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1994) 'The emerging realignment between labour movements and Welfare states' in Regini, M. (ed.) *The Future of Labour Movements*, Sage, London: 133-149
- Feldman, S. (1995) 'Contratos temporales de trabajo promovido: su uso en el sector privado' *Estudios del Trabajo* Vol. 8/9, ASET, Buenos Aires: 109 – 131.
- Feletti, R. and Lozano, C. (1997) *Desempleo y pobreza en la Argentina*, IDEP-CTA, Buenos Aires.
- Fiszbein, A. et al (2002) 'Argentina's crisis and its impact on household welfare', *World Bank Office for Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay*, Working Paper n.1/02, November
- Galasso E. and Ravallion M. (2004) 'Social Protection in a Crisis: Argentina's Plan Jefes y Jefas' *The World Bank Economic Review*, Vol. 18. No. 3: 367-399.
- Giosa Zuazúa N. (2004) 'La evolución del empleo en el corto plazo. Recuperación o nuevo patrón de crecimiento' *CIEPP, Serie Análisis de Coyuntura* no 3, June, accessed 15.5.05 (<http://www.ciepp.org.ar/CIEPP%20 analisis%20de%20coyuntura.htm>)
- Goren, N. (2005) 'Plan Nacional Manos a la Obra: Promoviendo el desarrollo local o asistiendo a la pobreza?' *7th Nacional Conference of Labour Studies*, ASET, August, Buenos Aires.
- Gough, I. and Wood, G. (2004) (eds.) *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

- IDEP-CTA (2004) 'Apuntes sobre el Plan Jefas y Jefes de Hogar Desocupados,' *Mesa de Políticas Sociales*, accessed 30.7.04
<http://www.cta.org.ar/instituto/politsocial/apuntesplanjefesjefas.rtf>
- IDEP-CTA (2002) *Shock Distributivo, autonomía nacional y democratización IDEP-Editorial La Página*, Buenos Aires.
- Lindemboim, J. (1995) 'La desocupación: un flagelo insuperable?' *Realidad Económica* 134, IADE Buenos Aires: 53-66.
- López Zadicoff P. and Paz, J. (2003) 'El desempleo inteligente. Elegibilidad y participación en el PJyJHD en condiciones record de pobreza y desempleo', *6th Nacional Conference of Labour Studies ASET*, 13-16 August, Buenos Aires.
- Lozano, C. (2005) 'Los problemas de la distribución del ingreso y el crecimiento en la argentina actual' *Mesa Nacional CTA*, CTA-IDEP, accessed 5.5.05
<http://www.cta.org.ar/base/IMG/doc/distingargmar05.doc>
- Lozano, C. and Hourest, M (2002) 'La democracia y el FMI: entre la mentira y el crimen' *Realidad Económica* 187, IADE, Buenos Aires: 36-55.
- Lozano, C. (1997) 'Desempleo y pobreza en la Argentina. La situación de los próximos diez años', IDEP-CTA, Vol. 48, Buenos Aires.
- Lo Vuolo, R. (2005) 'Social protection in Latin America: Different Approaches to Managing Social Exclusion and their Outcomes' *ESRC Seminar Social Policy and Social Exclusion in Latin America*, ISAS, London 2-3 June.
- Lo Vuolo, R. et al (2004) *Contra la exclusión. La propuesta del ingreso ciudadano* Mino y Davila, Ciepp, Buenos Aires
- Lo Vuolo, R. et al (1999) *La pobreza ... de la política contra la pobreza*, Miño y Dávila Editores, CIEPP, Buenos Aires – Madrid.
- Martin, G. (2001) 'Social Movements, welfare and social policy: a critical analysis' *Critical Social Policy* Vol. 21(3): 361-383
- MDS (2005) *Plan Nacional de desarrollo Local y Economía Social Manos a la Obra*-Document No. 2, Buenos Aires
- MDS (2004) *Lineamientos de Políticas Sociales 2004*, Document No 1, August, Buenos Aires, ISBN 987-21360-1-7
- MDS (n/d-1) *Presentación del Programa FAMILIAS por la Inclusión social*, Buenos Aires.
- MDS (n/d-2) *Consejos Consultivos de Políticas Sociales. La participación ciudadana*
- MDS (n/d-3) *Plan Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria. El hambre más urgente*, Buenos Aires.
- Molyneux, M. (2005) 'The New Social Policy in Latin America: is "neo Liberal" a useful descriptor?' *ESRC Seminar on Social Policy and Social Exclusion in Latin America*, ISAS, London, 2-3 June.
- MTD (2002) 'El MTD y la construcción del poder popular' *Herramienta* 21, Buenos Aires: 137-144.

- MTD Solano and Colectivo Situaciones (2002) *Hipótesis 891*, Ediciones Mano en Mano, Buenos Aires.
- MTEySS (2004) *2da Evaluación del Programa Jefas y Jefes de Hogar*, Report, Buenos Aires.
- MTEySS (2003) *Plan Jefas y Jefes de Hogar desocupados. Un año de gestión (Mayo 2002-Mayo 2003)*, Buenos Aires.
- MTEySS (1995) (ed.) *Libro Blanco sobre el empleo en la Argentina*, Buenos Aires.
- MTEySS (1994) *El Ministerio de Trabajo Informa*, Bulletin Year I, Nos. 11 and 12, Buenos Aires.
- Palomino, H. and Schvarzer, J. (1996) 'El mercado de trabajo en Argentina: Del pleno empleo al colapso', *Encrucijadas* No 4, Buenos Aires: 8-17.
- Pérez, P. (2001) 'Argentina en la década de los '90': judicialización y desjudicialización para la exclusión social' *Realidad Económica* no 178, IADE: 122-141.
- Rameri, A. and Raffo T. (2005) 'Los nuevos pobres e indigentes que arroja la inflación' IDEP – CTA, accessed 5.5.05, http://www.cta.org.ar/base/article.php3?id_article=1067
- Roca E. et al (2005) 'Resultados de la Segunda Evaluación del Programa Jefes de Hogar e inserción laboral de los beneficiarios en empleos registrados' *7th Nacional Conference of Labour Studies*, ASET, August, Buenos Aires.
- Rosanvallon, P. (1995) *La nueva cuestión social*. Buenos Aires: Manantial
- SIEMPRO (2004) 'Los Beneficiarios del programa Jefas y Jefes de Hogar Desocupados: Antecedentes Laborales y Empleabilidad', January, Buenos Aires, unpublished Report
- Steinert, H. and Pilgram, A. (eds.) (2003) *Welfare Policy from Below*, Ashgate, US.
- Topalov, C. 'De la "cuestión social" a los "problemas urbanos": los reformadores y la población de las metrópolis a principios del siglo XX' in Danani, C. (ed.) (2004) *Política Social y Economía Social. Debates Fundamentales*, Altamira, Buenos Aires: 41-71
- Verbitzky, H. 2003. 'Al ataque. Preparativos de represión del conflicto social', *Página/12*, 26.1.03.

Notes

¹ The emergence of unemployment and the casualisation of work made poverty tripled 29.4 percent in 1995 to 53,3 percent in 2002 (Dinatale, 2004).

² This new unemployment benefit (*Sistema Integral de Prestaciones por Desempleo*) is a contributory system which entitled all unemployed workers that worked under the LCT to 50 percent of the best wage of the last six months for one month to one year maximum, depending on the contribution they had made during their work-time. Only for state, construction, rural and domestic workers.

³ For evaluations of the plan *Trabajar I* (1996-1997) and *Trabajar II* (1997-1998) see World Bank (Report 26134-Ar) and Galasso and Ravallion 2004.

⁴ Steinert, H. and Pilgram, A. (eds.) 2003

⁵ The closure of the plants after the privatisation of the state-owned petrol company *Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales* (YPF) -which was the main resource of economic development in the southern province of Neuquén, left thousands unemployed and dismantled the quasi welfare state developed around the company. Between 20 and 26 June 1996 5,000 people gathered and literally 'besieged the city' of Cutral-Có and Plaza Huincul demanding job creation and new investments.

⁶ On many occasions, repression led to the death of some of the participants. Fatal victims of state repression at roadblocks have been Victor Choque in Tierra del Fuego in 1995; Teresa Rodriguez in Neuquén in 1997, Anibal Verón in Tartagal in November 2000. For an 'typical' roadblock see Dinerstein 2001.

⁷ There are three forms of workfare, consisting of a minimum of four hours and maximum of six hours (i) working in a company for a six months period. The company will only pay for the difference between the established wage and 150 pesos for the benefit; (ii) undertaking community work; (iii) finishing mandatory education; and iv) undertaking professional training.

⁸ The criteria to establish the level of poverty and indigence by INDEC is based on the value of the family basket, estimated at 193.77 pesos per adult for the city of Buenos Aires and its outskirts in April 2002.

⁹ During 2002, the price of the food basket increased by 55 percent and the prices for basic foods increased by 79 percent. Inflation affected the poorer sectors of the population who spend most of their income on food.

¹⁰ 'In May 2003 43.2 percent of households and 55.3 percent of the population were under the poverty line...these percentages dropped only to 42.6 percent of the households and 54.7 percent of the population' (Lo Vuolo, 2005: 8).

¹¹ It is deemed that between 100,000 and 315,000 people became beneficiaries without satisfying the pre-requisites for it (López Zadicoff and Paz 2003).

¹² By 2004 only 500 CCL remain functioning (Dinatale, 2004). More on this see Bertolotto and Clemente, 2004.

¹³ If the beneficiaries of JyJHD were included, the rate would go up to 16,6 percent

¹⁴ Like the recently created Employment and Training Benefit (*Seguro de Capacitación y Empleo* SCE), April 2006.

¹⁵ 4.3 percent between September 2002 and September 2003, 6.7 percent between September 2003 and September 2004, and 10 percent between 2004 and 2005. In addition. See <http://www.trabajo.gov.ar/>

¹⁶ See list of NGOs, including UWOs at <http://www.foncap.com.ar/fidsp.asp>

¹⁷ The amount assigned to the Plan Let's Work! And Food Emergency will be increased by 80 million dollars in 2006.

¹⁸ On NGOs and clientelism in social policy see Di Natale, 2004.

¹⁹ Another factor has contributed to the speed up the de-legitimisation of this sector of the Movement: the increasingly hostile attitude or disregard by the middle class and the press, due to their disruptive methods of struggle. The unity between middle and working classes, achieved in 2001 and 2002 (following the June massacre), appears to be a thing of the past.

²⁰ The notion of 'social disaffiliation' combines the position of individuals within (i) network of social relations and (ii) the labour market. In this case, social isolation and unemployment.