

SEA PICKET

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NO.8

July 23rd

July 18th

Executive Council vote by 10 votes to 3 to withdraw mass picketing at Dove

WHO ARE THEY KIDDING ?

"Nod nod, wink wink, we'll pretend that we're going to abandon the strike at Dover so that we can get our funds back!" First of all our friend with the funny wig isn't going to believe a word of it and will most probably also slap another fine on for good measure. In the likelihood that this happens the next step will be for the Executive to officially call off the strike. No ballot of the strikers, just a few crocodile tears and attempts to put the blame at somebody else's door.

Now is the time to spend some of that money that is slushing about in some of the Support Group accounts. Coaches must be got together and pickets must be sent to picket out the other ports. You will then have the Executive telling these members not to come out. If you want to win industrial action must be spread. Once the dispute is unofficial it will only be a matter of time before the well runs dry financially unless more seafarers are brought into the fight. Don't wait for it to happen, get working now. A good starting point would be to elect a strike committee to run the dispute how you want it to be run. This should be made up of strikers elected at the regular mass meetings. There have been criticisms of SEA PICKET but many of those who dislike what is said in this publication are the same people who are going to let you down so badly.

ANNIVERSARY RALLY

The 6 month anniversary rally will take place on Saturday August 6th. Supporters are being asked to assemble at the Eastern Dock, picket line at 11 a.m.

Two weeks is a very short time to mobilise for a major rally but if the material is forthcoming then the Support Groups will do their best to get people there. In the meantime strikers should be contacting those people they have met during the dispute and giving literature out at every meeting they attend.

If there is a good turn out for this event then more pressure will be put the union, P&O and the Government.

SEA LINKED WITH P&O

Well I'm sure everyone is now very surprised! The man McCluskie described as a 'real gentlemen', James Sherwood, Chairman of Sealink UK has now decided to join hands with P&O in promoting the port of Dover. This appears to be part of his long term aim for one ferry company in Dover. As he admitted on May 9th 1988 such a deal with P&O "is still definitely on the cards." Now that he feels that the strike is at its weakest he intends to 'put the boot' in. He will move very quickly to impose similar conditions on Sealink workers the moment this strike ends. (not if there is a victory though) All Sealink workers need warning of the dangers and picketing out.

SOLIDARITY ?

A further example of Norman Willis's 'goodwill' came when he was approached by Jack Williamson, a 62 year old retired seafarer. Jack met 'our Norman' at the TUC headquarters in London. He thanked him for all the support he has given (only joking, of course) and as Norman 'purred with delight' Jack asked if he could take a collection amongst those in the Centre. Shuffling Norman said "I don't think that would be appropriate, perhaps you can hand out leaflets outside." Jack would like to thank Norman for finding him some leaflets!

CREATING ILLUSIONS

'Left' groups create illusions. It appears that some 'left' groups are content to continue spreading illusions in the 'leadership.' Constant talk about leaders 'selling people out' ignores the real issue. It is not leadership which is the problem. The way to win a strike must be for strikers to take control of the strike on day one. Groups appealing to people like McCluskie and the TUC confuse people into believing that these people really do have the best interests of workers at heart. Absolute rubbish. They are on 25 to 50 thousand pounds each.

WHERE IS THE MONEY ?

Can you remember all those months ago about the announcement of the TUC hardship fund? Norman Willis talked about the 'goodwill' of fellow Trade Unionists. And there did appear to be plenty. Money flowed in. Even the lowest estimate was that £1 million was raised. Where is this money? Just over £200,000 has been given out to striking seafarers. Perhaps instead of a 'pay-off' from P&O, seafarers will be paid from the TUC hardship fund to stop picketing! Nothing would surprise the writers of Seapicket.

SOLIDARITY

The cartoon shown below came from a publication in Germany produced by the RED AID group. It shows Thatcher holding the Union funds and the words ; Solidarity with the strikers at Dover. International Solidarity, The Tip of the iceberg.

