



# SHIP CANAL

## 3 OUT OF 4 REDUNDANT BY 1972 ?

The Ship Canal Co. plans to get rid of 3 out of every 4 men now working on the Manchester docks!

Who says so? The National Ports Council in its latest manpower estimates published in May. The Financial Times (May 16th) carried full details.

By December 1972 (2½ years from now) - if their plans come off - the number of dockers, checkers and crane drivers in Manchester will be only 560! At present it is around 1,900.

By December 1972 the total number of dockers in Britain will fall from the 1968 figure of 53,000 to between 35 and 40 thousand.

The number of Liverpool dockers will fall from 11,944 (Jan. '68) to 6,850.

The number of London dockers will fall from 22,791 to 18,750.

Manchester, which we are always told is a model port, is expected to be the hardest hit of all, losing 75% of its present work force. No doubt that will make it even more of a model port - for the bosses.

### REDUNDANCY

But weren't we given 'guarantees' that there will be no 'redundancies'? Oh Yes! The N.D.L.B. has indeed given solemn assurances about that.

The important question is: What are its promises worth? Can we trust them? Can we afford to trust them? Do you trust them?

How do the employers say the reductions in the number of men will take place?

First by an end to recruiting; second by "natural wastage"; and third by lowering the retiring age from 68 to 65 (with severance pay).

A fund is being raised of £7 million to provide severance pay. The most a docker will get in severance pay is £1,800. It is expected that the average severance pay will be £1,400.

This tells us a great deal.

If the average severance pay is £1,400 and there is only £7 million to go round, it means that only about 5,000 older dockers can get severance pay.

But between 15,000 and 20,000 dockers in all have to be ditched.

If only 5,000 get severance pay - what do the others get?

"Natural wastage", it seems, will take care of the rest. That can mean three things.

a)Deaths. Since many of the older dockers will be got rid of by the severance scheme less deaths than usual are likely - even allowing for the lousy safety precautions and regulations.

b)Men leaving. Not very many men will leave, given the probable improvements in wages which have been and will be won in big battles around the country.

c)AND IT MEANS THAT MEN WILL GET THE SACK. Between 10,000 and 15,000 dockers up and down the country will get the sack in the next 3 years. That's a certainty.

And that is the vital thing for every docker to grasp.

There won't be any 'redundancy' - but there will be massive sackings on every and any excuse. Things will be tightened up even more. Within the last month a man in Manchester got the sack (after, of course, a couple of 'warnings') for having missed 9 turns - in 21 weeks!!

This sort of thing will become very common as the bosses put the squeeze on in every port in Britain.

And especially in Manchester where 3 in 4 must go.

That is - if we let them.....

.....  
.....  
" SHIP CANAL" ..... Competition.

There is a rumour going around the docks that Sandy Shaw's well known hit record "PUPPET ON A STRING" was inspired by our own dearly beloved leader, Brother Denis Mahony of the TGWU.

GUESS WHO PULLS THE STRINGS?

The first postcard to reach us, with the correct answer written in neat chinese handwriting will receive a prize - a guided tour of the MSC offices.

.....  
.....  

# A FIGHTING PLAN AGAINST REDUNDANCIES

The figures printed above give the game away for the MSC. Now we know what they are up to!

They offer better wages: in return we let them cut our throats! Their 'proposals can only be understood in the light of the National Plans to cut the docks labour force.

ALL their demands on manning scales and overtime have one aim - to get much more work out of many less dockers. They offer more pay and know that not many dockers will be around to enjoy it for long.

Only one in four will really get a rise - the rest will get the push!

THUS: They want to cut gangs loading wagons ex-ship from 6 to 4. More money for the four men, big savings for the MSC. Two jobs less on every wagon ex-ship, every day

THUS: They want the foreman of delivery and receiving gangs to be able to break the gang into ones and twos as he likes, to do different jobs. Like at Vere St. That means more work for each docker - and less men needed.

THUS: Their policy on refrigerated cargoes has the same end in view; to end the one-hour-in, one-hour-out system. No relief for the gang before a certain tonnage is shifted. With foremen having the right to move gangs from hold to hold ( out of the fridge, into the next hatch), that means an end to the system of two gangs for a fridge cargo.

Never mind that dockers may catch pneumonia from long hours in the fridge. Perhaps they think it will make us work harder still - just to keep warm! All they care about is getting more work from less dockers.

Or maybe they sincerely think that we can't feel the cold. That dock workers, like docks bosses, have ice-water in their veins instead of blood!

ALSO they want the right to:

Transfer to a new/<sup>job</sup> at any time of the night or at any time on Sunday.

To Make us work more overtime, including Saturday work on containers. Of course soon nearly all docks work will involve containers.... It took six days to make the world, and on the seventh day God rested. But the docker is different. The MSC thinks he doesn't need to rest at all!

To bring in work study. This is a 'scientific' method of making sure that each docker not only works every minute of every day - but also that he is using a hook in each hand, ( Men on cocoa beans may even be issued with a specially designed gum-shield so that they can use their teeth as well as their hands!!)

By using these methods they hope that in two and a half years time a quarter of the men will be doing all the work that is done now - and more.

Even if they doubled the wages of the 560 who will be left their wage bill would still be cut in half. Their profits, of course, would rise.

NO MORE ONE-DAY STRIKES ?

They also want to stop unofficial strikes, especially those in which checkers and cranedrivers take it in turn with dockers to come out for a day.

This is the purpose of the clause in their proposals where they offer dockers £21 for 40 Hours. The catch is where they say that the full time rate will not be paid to men who are prevented from working by an unofficial strike.

If the new system gets through dockers could lose up to five pounds if there are guerrilla strikes by crane-drivers and checkers! Thus they hope to split us up.

They want to make sure we are less able to fight back by breaking the wonderful unity in action of cranedrivers, checkers and dockers. They want to first tie our hands and legs to make it easier for them to shanghai us out through the dock gates.

We must accept no agreements with the bosses which will divide the workers!

IF WE ALLOW THEM TO GET AWAY WITH ANY OF THEIR PROPOSALS THEN WE ARE CUTTING OUR OWN THROATS.

MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT!

FLIGHT BACK NOW.

We need a fighting programme to defend our jobs.

1) None of the above demands of the MSC must be conceded: Keep up the strikes.

2) Instead of an extra hour on nights we need at least one hour less on days. Share the work! We must demand a 35 hour week. Allready this is not unknown in America.

3) We must demand 4 weeks paid holiday - immediately. Again this is common in Europe.

4) Above all, we must challenge the right of the employers and NDLB to sack dockers.

Dockers must elect their own Local Appeals Committees, of dockers, checkers and crane-drivers, at mass meetings. These must have the power to overrule any decisions of the employers and the NDLB on discipline, and fight for control of hiring and firing on the docks.

That sounds "extreme" -- but so are the plans of the MSC.

If a man is out to "do" you - you have a right to defend yourself. Only fools and cowards refuse to defend themselves.

Neither the bosses nor the NDLB are impartial enough to deal with discipline - in a situation where the bosses desperately heed to get rid of many men.

That's why we must have our own appeals Committee. War demands drastic action. Dockers in Manchester are faced with a bitter for at least the next two and a half years. We must defend ourselves.

High wages are good -- but only if there is some security. We must fight for that security.

AFTER ALL - ITS YOUR LIVING !

.....

S U P P O R T "SHIP CANAL"

..... Its your paper

With this issue we expand our old news sheet into a small dockers' paper.

Dockers in Manchester need their own paper because we need to know the full facts about our situation.

Otherwise we can't defend ourselves.

Did anyone tell you about the plans of the MSC and the docks employers nationally? Did the "Mirror"? Or the "Express"?

Of course not!

We did. We will provide vital information, mined from the bosses own papers, in future.

We make no bones about admitting that the people who publish "SHIP CANAL" are fighting for socialism.

But we are willing to publish the views of any docker who feels he has something to say.

Write an article for us.  
Send us information the lads should know.  
Write us a letter.  
Make suggestions.  
Criticise us.

Send us some cash. It costs money to bring the little paper out. We have no more money to spare than any other dockers. If you agree that a dockers' paper is needed -- help us out.

.....

PUBLISHED FROM 11a Rowan Ave. M/cr 16.

## WHAT IS THE "INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM" GROUP?

This Newsheet is published by the dockers who support "International Socialism". What does I.S. stand for?

I.S. is an organisation of dockers, railwaymen, engineers and other workers and students. I.S. stands for the defense of all workers interests against both the bosses and the state.

We believe the workers need to take over control of their own lives out of the hands of the capitalist bosses in the West (Britain, USA, etc) And out of the hands of the Stalinist dictators in the East (Russia, China, etc.)

We believe that only the workers (helped by some of the "Middle-class" who take the workers side against the big bosses) can create a decent society to work for humanity. That world will be a true democratic socialism - without dictators, bosses, war, starvation, or injustice.

We believe that the Labour leaders have sold out the workers who elected them. This government, like any government is on the bosses side. There are of course some honourable exceptions like Allaun and Orme, although we do have disagreements with them.

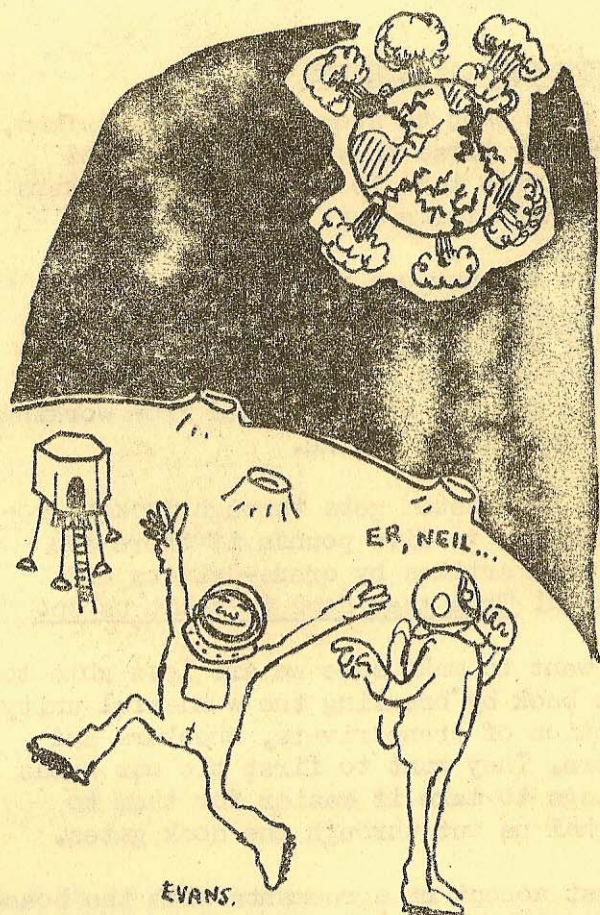
We believe in the brother-hood of all workers - of every country and every race. Only by united action between white and 'coloured' workers can we defend our interests from the bosses and the state. I.S. believes that those like Powell who blame coloured workers for bad housing and social services are the enemies of all workers. They want to split us using the immigrants as scapegoats - and only the bosses benefit from that.

Because of all this I.S. is a group of Revolutionary Socialists who fight for socialism - not the 'socialism' of Wilson, nor that of the Russian big-nobs, but a real democratic working class socialism.

Meanwhile we support wholeheartedly the day-to-day struggle for wages and conditions. For I.S. the struggle for wages is part of the struggle for socialism.

Inspectorate, there are only 1,261 with full-time safety officers.

But such conditions fit in with the governments policy - wage freeze, In Place of Strife, - all geared to boost the bosses' profits, at the expense of the needs and the safety of the workers. The Trade Unions, instead of rushing to help the government and the bosses by agreeing to police its own militants, should launch a massive campaign against the ever increasing number of deaths and accidents, by calling a strike in every sector of industry where safety measures are inadequate, for their immediate improvement.



## INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

### SHOCK FIGURES HUSHED UP

The terrible toll of industrial accidents and deaths jumped again last year. Accidents reached an all-time high of 312,430, a 3% increase on 1967. The biggest ever increase in one year.

Deaths shot up by more than 10% - from 564 in 1967 to 625 in 1968.

This year the government has tried to hush-up the facts. The figures usually published in the Press, are tucked away on the back pages of the 'Employment and Productivity Gazette'.

The worst hit industry is again the building and construction industry, with a total number of 238 deaths and 46,569 accidents.

Deaths in factories increased to a total number of 359 with 254,454 industrial accidents.

Deaths on the docks increased by 3 to a total number of 28 and accidents soared to 11,407, nearly 1 dockers in every 4!

The British Safety Council has attacked industry for its bad safety precautions and discovered that out of 20,688 factories covered by the