

This leaflet is being distributed in the US by an informal committee recently formed in New York which includes members of the N.Y. W.S.A. The purpose of the committee is to form an information network which will help distribute news and information about workers struggles to independent, dissident and militant worker organizations and publications.

AN APPEAL TO NORTH AMERICAN STEVEDORES

Under the dictatorial leadership of Mrs Thatcher, the Conservative Government on April 6th '89 has declared open war on the UK dockers in announcing the abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme which gives dockers security of employment, guaranteed fall-back pay and a job for life.

No other advanced industrial country in the post-war world has dared to carry out such a draconian measure. But it could easily be taken up by other countries anxious to cut the cost of freight handling. So far they have been content to nibble away at the edges (like the Contenemar company in Spain with its private work force) but a major success would give Port Employers everywhere the confidence to go in for the kill. Already the Labour Government in Australia has proposed to abolish their Dock labour Scheme and replace a generally older work force with younger, more able-bodied men they can exploit more effectively. Indeed, one can discern on the horizon the possibility of an international dockers' strike.

A few months ago we wrote to the Spanish dockers warning them of what was likely to happen in the UK. The letter was published in "La Estiba" (Number 41, Nov '88 - c/f photocopy) the newspaper of the Spanish dockers. Little did we realize that we were nearly %100 right. In that letter also, we warned that the American stevedores were next in the firing line. Make no mistake buddy, if the Limeys go down today, it's the Yanks next.

For quite a number of years stevedores job security around all major North American ports has become increasingly eroded as new port installations have opened well away from main terminals (e.g. Chesapeake Bay on the eastern seaboard) threatening the hard fought for job guarantees of American stevedores. And don't kid yourself, the New York, San Francisco or New Orleans Port Authorities etc will be ardently hoping their equivalents in London/Liverpool etc win this crucial fight so they can attack American stevedores more easily.

Now that cut-price, three dollar bill jerk, Frank Lorenzo, chief of Eastern Airlines has taken something of a fall, don't let de-regulation overtake stevedores and give it a new lease of life.

Organizing a total boycott of all cargo/container shipping bound for the UK is in the interest of all American stevedores and such support is pivotal to dockers in British ports.

HOW ABOUT IT !

Dave n Stu'
(London)

(12. 4. '89.)

PLEASE REPRODUCE AND DISTRIBUTE TO DOCKWORKERS, MARITIME WORKERS AND OTHER SUPPORTIVE ORGANIZATIONS. THANKS!

NEW YORK W.S.A./I.W.A.