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DE VOLLE LADING

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‘Head of Lobbying’ for Deltalinqs

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International Day of Action

Discontent among colleagues

ECT

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International day of action by dock workers against war **a** great **success**

24-hour strikes in all major ports in Greece, France and Italy

2-hour strikes in northern Spain Gate actions and demonstrations

The second day of action by dockworkers against the war was a resounding success.

It began as an initiative by seven unions represented in 40 ports. Due to the anti-war sentiment amongst

dockworkers worldwide, the movement grew and grew. Eventually, many unions joined in. Together, these unions represented more than 100 ports in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and the Americas. Each union would contribute to the success of this day of action according to its own capabilities.

ITF and **IDC** show solidarity

ITF affiliates such as ver.di (Germany), MUA (Australia), ILWU (the US) and 3F (Denmark) also expressed their solidarity. The ITF affiliate in Turkey (Liman-İş) was among the initiators from the outset.

Ahead of the day of action on 30 October, the ITF declared itself: *"unwaveringly in solidarity with its affiliated organisations that are mobilising... against war and militarisation and for peace and justice."*

The IDC (International Dockworkers' Council, the other major international federation of dockers' unions) also declared its solidarity. Of course, the paper on which the ITF and IDC wrote these words is patient: these fine words must be backed up by action.

To turn these words into action, grassroots initiatives and persuasion amongst colleagues will be needed.

A fine example came from Germany

For example, following a ver.di conference on war and peace, the participants adopted a statement calling for participation in the day of action on 30 October. The executive committee considered this a step too far and banned the statement. Subsequently, on the initiative of Hamburg dockworkers, the statement was published anyway, under the responsibility of ver.di's Hamburg branch. At the same time, on 30 October, a protest was organised in the city and another at the gates of a major container terminal.

At the Euromax gate

In Rotterdam, De Volle Lading stood at the gate of the Euromax terminal with leaflets, a banner and stickers. Reports of the strikes in Greece, France and Italy were met with enthusiastic reactions: 'then we must join in too', 'how wonderful'. It also raised questions: 'and here?', 'what does FNV Havens say?'

It is indeed high time that the FNV and FNV Havens took a stand: against militarisation, against the increase in the defence budget, against participation in and support for imperialist aggression, and in favour of actions such as those on 30 October – here in the Netherlands too. Talk about it with your colleagues and union officials! ■

Talks on Omega resumed
Time to take matters into *our own* hands!

Talks on Omega have resumed. Omega is the project by ECT and MSC to build a new terminal on the site of Delta II and DDN. The pause in the Omega talks was intended solely to make our colleagues at Delta II and the unions tone down their demands. FNV Havens describes it as shameful that Delta II colleagues are constantly in a state of uncertainty and speaks of improper governance. Certainly. But we don't have to put up with it.

No 'uncertainty allowance', but guarantees

Our colleagues at Delta II fear they will soon end up in an empty limited company and be deployed from there to work at the new terminal. Such a limited company could easily go bankrupt; the bean-counters at ECT and MSC wouldn't bat an eyelid at that. The works council also warns that, in the event of a transfer their pension entitlements are being eroded by a move to another company.

There is only one way to put an end to this uncertainty: to secure guarantees. That requires action; it requires a fight, but the Delta II colleagues have shown that they are capable of standing up for their interests.
Taking matters into your own hands dispels the spectre of uncertainty.
That is better than the demand for an 'uncertainty allowance', which was raised again on 1 October during talks between the unions and Delta II's management.

We demand a guarantee that Delta II colleagues ~~will not~~ end up in a shell company!
We demand a guarantee that pension entitlements will remain the same!
If not: industrial action! ■

Councillor Versnel
– *chief lobbyist* –
for Deltalinqs

At the end of September, the *Nieuwsblad Transport* interviewed Tim Versnel, the new alderman for the port and the economy in Rotterdam. What Versnel puts forward corresponds exactly with the wish list of Deltalinqs (the organisation representing companies in the port area): they want cheaper energy, fewer regulations, and solutions to grid congestion and nitrogen oxide problems. To resolve these issues, Versnel is going to 'have a coffee' with MPs, ministers and MEPs: *"I'm going to knock on every door... they understand there too just how important the port is for the economy".*

Heir to Fortuyn and Bolkestein

He's going to champion the interests of businesses; he even calls himself the 'chief lobbyist'. Not a word about workers' interests: no lobbying for safe working conditions, for permanent jobs, for employment, for trade union rights.
No cups of coffee with dockworkers, not even with union officials or works council members. When he says he comes from a right-wing background If you've grown up there, you'll understand why he champions the interests of the big capitalists. He explains that at home he was brought up on the ideas of Fortuyn and Bolkestein – the forerunners of all the rubbish you see these days in the VVD and to the right of it.

Taking from ordinary people – to give to the rich

Versnel points out that the council is investing 200 million euros in the economy. To finance this, paid parking is being expanded, free public transport for the elderly is being scrapped and the waste collection levy is being increased.
Versnel believes there is no alternative: for prosperity, for good jobs. One thing is certain: for the time being, it is ordinary people who are footing the bill for these investments.

Another thing is also certain: it will be the companies that benefit from this, not the people looking for those good jobs. A warm welcome to the new executive committee – it looks a hell of a lot like the old one. ■

Deep *dissatisfaction* amongst ECT colleagues

Staff shortages, overdue maintenance, inadequate equipment – that is what ECT's colleagues think, according to a survey by FNV Havens.
The same complaints can be heard at the gate: 'it's simply becoming unsafe here', 'driving across the site is a back-breaker', 'no one is listening to us'. The survey shows that ECT workers are demanding better infrastructure, more training, a reduced workload and better communication with the shop floor.

Profit or decent working conditions

Hutchison wants to sell its terminals outside China and has little interest in investment; on the contrary, Hutchison is trying to extract as much profit as possible from those terminals in the short term. ECT workers have the right to work with safe, well-maintained and modern equipment. Safety also requires a deckhand for every crane, so staff must be recruited.

The interests of ECT workers clash with those of Hutchison. This cannot be rectified with a few informal discussions here and there. Hutchison will continue to push its agenda as long as there is no opposition from ECT staff.

That opposition must be organised

That opposition must be organised. You cannot defend collective interests as an individual. Collective interests can only be defended collectively, as a group. That is why workers join a trade union: alone you can do nothing; together you can make a stand. That stand does not come about by itself. It only comes about when active trade union members turn the union into a fighting organisation. That is the fundamental choice facing ECT workers: to muddle through or to take up the fight.

Safe, well-maintained and modern equipment!
A deckhand at every crane!
Turn the union into a fighting organisation!

■

Guiding Principles
De Volle Lading

1. We champion the interests of dockworkers and the young people who will be working in the port by putting forward proactive demands.

2. We help organise the struggle for those interests, amongst other things through the fortnightly publication of *De Volle Lading*.

3. We operate democratically. Everyone can have their say. Friends who support the dockworkers' struggle are welcome.

4. We campaign for trade unions that defend workers' interests in a militant and democratic manner.

5. We are independent, including financially. We only accept financial contributions if they are given without conditions.

6. We are open to ideas about a different society free from the exploitation and oppression of working people – this gives direction to our struggle.

7. We are working to strengthen international solidarity amongst dockworkers.

De Volle Lading is a publication by the De Volle Lading Group – by colleagues for colleagues in the port. At De Volle Lading, you can learn to fight against injustice and against the root cause of injustice: capitalism. And please feel free to put some money into the pot to support us. De Volle Lading operates without subsidies – because we want to remain independent.

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The Black Sea and the Strait of Hormuz: a graveyard for seafarers

This year, 570 commercial vessels have been hit by acts of war in the Black Sea, resulting in at least 40 deaths. The Black Sea is more dangerous than the Strait of Hormuz, due to attacks by both Russia and Ukraine. Imperialist warfare is always characterised by methods that show contempt for human life.

The GFS Pride – a container ship of just under 3,000 TEU – was struck in the Strait of Hormuz on 13 October by a projectile (according to the British version) or struck a sea mine (according to the Iranian version).

The ship has since sunk; the 21 crew members were unharmed and were evacuated in time. The GFS Giselle was also struck on 14 October, but was able to continue on to a safe place to anchor. Unscrupulous shipowners are still sending their vessels through the Strait of Hormuz without protection. According to the IMO, 93 ships have been attacked and 24 seafarers have lost their lives since the start of the war.

Cynical hazard bonus

In early October, the Financial Times reported that shipowners are paying the captain and crew members huge bonuses to sail through the Strait of Hormuz.

A captain who normally earns $15,000 a month could pocket $100,000 if he risks his life.
Crew members who normally earn $1,500 a month would receive between $6,000 and $9,000.

It is a cynical way of exploiting workers who are in financial distress, or who are unable to properly assess the danger, or who are willing to take the gamble. ■

CAO negotiations at RST



Last year, RST concluded a one-year collective labour agreement. Under this agreement, the allowance for the five-shift rota was set at 32 per cent, whilst the allowance for the other rotas was increased by 0.5 per cent. In addition, wages were increased by 2 per cent.

The demands for the 2027 collective labour agreement have now also been finalised at a trade union meeting. The demands are that the allowance for the five-shift rota be increased to 35 per cent, that the allowances for other shifts be increased by 1 per cent, and that wages be increased by 3 per cent. Furthermore, the age at which staff can leave the five-shift rota whilst retaining their allowance must be set at 59.

Boycott the management's talk

As is traditional, management will no doubt organise repeated meetings to put pressure on colleagues to drop their demands and agree to a poor compromise. This year, the loss of some of the Samskip routes will certainly be used as a means of pressure. For the time being, it is completely unclear whether Samskip will actually disappear, but the main point is that the risks of capitalist business practices must not be passed on to workers. Management always wants workers to share in the losses, but never in the profits. It is time to collectively boycott meetings of this kind.