

JUSTICE FOR SIMON JONES!

The Simon Jones Memorial Campaign is here today to demand that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) prosecute the employment agency Personnel Selection for its role in Simon's death. The DTI should be making sure that people like Simon get protected from dodgy companies who put their profits before the safety of their workers - it isn't. As the recently-departed head of the DTI Peter Mandelson put it in October "New Labour is intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich" - and if that profiteering means more casualisation and a few dead bodies along the way then so be it.

When Simon Jones was killed on April 24th last year on his first day at work in a south coast dock, it was no tragic accident. His death was the result of a systematic failure on the part of companies, agencies and government departments to put the health and safety of casual workers like Simon before the profits of dodgy, money-grabbing companies. Simon was killed by casualisation.

Personnel Selection sent Simon to work unloading cargo from inside a ship despite knowing that he had no experience of this dangerous, skilled work. Employment agencies have a legal duty to ensure that the work they send people to is safe for them to do and to provide their employees with written terms and conditions detailing the sort of work they will be expected to do. There is no evidence that Personnel Selection did either - but the DTI refuses to prosecute them. Perhaps that's not so surprising. According to the DTI itself **NO EMPLOYMENT AGENCY HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH SUCH AN OFFENCE IN THE LAST TWO YEARS.** The DTI is letting employment agencies like Personnel Selection break the law and put their workers' lives at risk with impunity. After all, they have to get "filthy rich" somehow.

This government is encouraging the growth of a massive casual labour economy, where millions of people are forced into crap jobs with no job security, holiday pay, sick pay or training and poorer safety at work. People like Simon are killed doing casual jobs they have no training for all the time. Employment agencies feed off casualisation - they take half your wages and don't even make sure that the jobs they send you to are safe. These agencies and the dodgy companies that use them - like Euromin, the owners of the dock where Simon was killed - are more interested in making fat profits than safeguarding the safety of the people they employ. They put profits before people. We think it should be the other way around.

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