

# It's not about leisure — it's about poverty



A New Car and Two Weeks in Malaga — 35 mins colour video by the Derwentside Unemployed group (with assistance from the Workers' Educational Association, Northern Arts and Chris Wainwright and John Adams of Newcastle Polytechnic. Price £11.50 (post free) from Derwentside Unemployed Group, Old Miners' Hall, Percy Terrace, Delves Lane, Consett Co. Durham, telephone 0207 507310.

The video takes its title from the redundancy euphoria immediately following the steel works' closure when there was a boom for travel agents and garages selling cars.

The picture changed rapidly and

the video represents a sharp lesson for everyone living in a community facing closures.

The group have used their resources well, mixing stills and slow motion scenes of Consett life to portray a stark picture of how the community has suffered.

They point out that in 1979 — before the closures — an EEC report described the area as one of extreme social and educational deprivation, worse than inner city areas.

The unemployed group and its projects — including music and photography projects — work in the community, for the community.

The video proclaims that these projects are not about leisure and

the voice-over comments: "Unemployment is not about leisure — it's about poverty."

The second section of the video contrasts with the pace, energy, and articulate inventiveness of the first part. For the second section involves a discussion with educationists about the barriers the unemployed face when they seek education to meet their needs.

It's the educationists, the professionals, who come over as flat, woolly, dull and evasive.

The unemployed of Consett don't have all the answers, but they are fighting to discover solutions, and a new definition of what work is.

KEN HYDER

LABOUR WEEKLY 8/2/85

12 EVENING CHRONICLE, Saturday, January 12, 1985

## Job-loss video for U.S.

A VIDEO, filmed by former steelworkers who had no previous experience of film-making, is being exported to America.

More than 30 copies have already been snapped up by British educational institutions, the Craft Council and the Labour Party.

The video highlights the

activities of the Consett-based Derwentside Unemployed Group, which has launched several self-help projects in the last three years.

### Attacks

One project is the Consett Photol Archives. Many are former steelworkers who were heavily involved in making the 30-minute film.

The video, made over a two-month period, highlights Consett's unemployment problems and attacks educational institutions for failing to meet the needs of the unemployed.

It tells how half the area's manufacturing jobs were lost during 1980-81 and how the area began suffering industrial depression before

the closure of the Consett Steel Plant.

The Unemployed Group's founder, John Kearney, said copies of the video were selling rapidly and that John Adams, a department head at Newcastle Polytechnic, had struck a distribution deal guaranteeing outlets in America.