

Tesco fight lift-for-disabled case

TESCO, the giant supermarket chain, are to appeal for a second time against a ruling forcing them to provide facilities costing about £5,000 for disabled people.

The company have already lost their planning appeal in Liverpool magistrates' court, and are now taking the case to the Crown Court.

Tesco (profits last year £13.9m) are trying to avoid installing lifts and toilets specially for chronically sick and disabled people in a small cinema they are building above their new store in Allerton Road.

Under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, any new building which members of the public will enter must have facilities for the disabled if this is "both practical and reasonable."

Liverpool Corporation say they won't pass the plans for the first floor cinema, which will eventually be run by Classic Cinemas, until the lifts and toilets are included.

Liverpool is the first local planning authority in the country to exercise its right under the 1970 Act to ensure access and facilities for disabled

people in a new building.

Tesco said at the appeal it was unreasonable to expect them to spend about £4,500 on a lift, when demand was so small. (In 11 cinemas in Liverpool, the average number of disabled customers per week is 0.62, the court was told).

Tesco said they were not really concerned about the expense, but about practical problems — such as a possible failure of the electricity supply, or the danger of wheel chairs and disabled people slowing down the speed at which the cinema

could be evacuated in an emergency.

But Mr Leslie Pugh, the stipendiary magistrate, said in his verdict: "The Corporation have acted correctly inasmuch as it is reasonable and practicable to provide a lift."

And he added: "It must be common knowledge there are thousands of persons quite capable of walking about, even without the use of sticks, but who do not need to be in wheel chairs and who would find a lift rather more than a convenience, but a necessity."



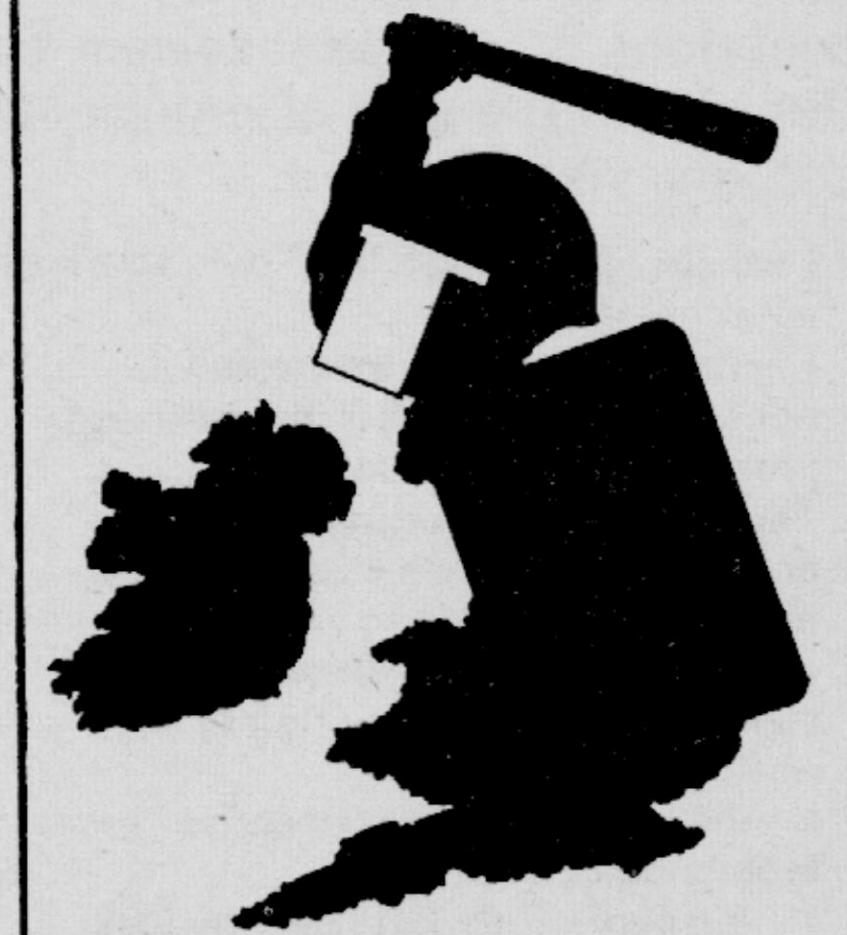
THE BRITISH Institute of Management made a loss last year of £109,000.



BRITAIN'S first choirboy strike took place at St Barnabas Church, Knowle, near Bristol. The choirmaster tried to withhold the boys' quarterly pay packets (top rate £1.80) because he was afraid they would spend it on fireworks. The boys refused to sing and put pickets on the church doors. Negotiations started after several adults members of the choir had been attacked with hassocks... and the bcys got their money.



A GROUP of women's liberationists plan to hold an international conference later this year in the Isle of... MAN!



THE SCOTTISH firm of Laird-Porth has received an order from the Vatican for £3,500-worth of tartan mini-kilts.



ADVERT in a Huddersfield paper: "Terrace property with adjoining grassland... Owners retiring due to lack of interest. Phone..." The phone number turned out to be that of Huddersfield Town Football Club, who haven't been doing too well this season. Comment from the club: "It's obviously a practical joke."



A MIDDLE-AGED man was escorted out of the public gallery of Liverpool council chamber by a policeman after making signs to councillors... in semaphore. Councillors, of course, can make as much noise as they like (and usually do) but the public can't even make a point in total silence.



FIFTY German businessmen and their girl friends recently over-ran the Hotel Splendid on the Adriatic island of Korcula. Having rented the entire building for two weeks, they spent much of their time ordering the staff about and being abusive. Eventually the waiters could take no more. They drugged the guests' champagne, undressed them, piled them in a heap...and tastefully garnished them with cherry jam.



A 22-CARAT gold chamber pot has been sold at Sotheby's for £1,300.

JUSTICES PLAY TRUANT

SOME of Liverpool's magistrates carried on their celebrations a bit too long after Christmas. Only six out of the fourteen on duty turned up at the city's juvenile court the day after Boxing Day. Two more came when sent for.

If the young defendants had failed to appear their parents could (and probably would) have forfeited their bail and a warrant could (and probably would) have been put out for the defendants' arrest.

There are no such facilities for dealing with defaulting magistrates. The defendants whose cases were not heard that day were simply remanded, resulting in the possible loss of earnings for parents (who have to be present in juvenile cases) and the wasted time of solicitors and probation officers present.

Three juveniles due to appear as co-defendants on two charges of robbery had their case adjourned for the third time.

They were to be heard in a special court because it was thought the case might take a long time. When the magistrate failed to turn up they appeared in the regular juvenile court at 10.50 a.m., where they were remanded on bail until February 23.

No consideration was given to the possibility of hearing their case later that day, even though the list of regular cases was exhausted by 11.20 a.m. — perhaps by then it was time for lunch.

Dockers' permanent ban on firm

CRADDOCKS, the Midlands haulage firm who took two Liverpool dock stewards and a union official to the Crown Court on charges of blackmail, have been permanently blacked on the Merseyside waterfront.

The blacking of all Craddock's vehicles was made permanent by a meeting of the port shop stewards' committee.

Craddocks have been blacked since March last year when the Liverpool dockers began the national campaign against transport firms using non-registered workers to stuff and strip containers. Containers were being stuffed and stripped at Craddock's Coven depot in the Midlands.

Craddocks have been discussing an 'early retirement' with their Bootle transport manager, Rycroft (a key figure in the 'blackmail' case).

The case of Craddocks should be a lesson to firms thinking of using the industrial relations court against Liverpool dockers. Since the firm went to court, none of their fleet of 40 vehicles has been allowed on the Liverpool docks. The Bootle depot has now come almost to a standstill, having lost 95% of its business, and the loss of turnover because of the blacking is £2,000 per week.

Lump agencies get government help

UNEMPLOYED building workers in Liverpool are being told to work on the 'lump' by the Department of Employment and Productivity.

A number of workers have received telegrams from the department telling them to report to lump employment agencies, which have recently been set up in the city centre.

On lump sites workers are self-employed, and so employers don't have to worry about unions, safety regulations, or about tax, insurance, or holiday stamps.

There is a danger that some workers are accepting the jobs offered by the agencies, because they fear their dole will be stopped if they refuse.

So the department is not only helping unscrupulous employers wishing to introduce lump labour in Liverpool, but it is also handing out a fat profit to these private agencies.

Lump agencies in Liverpool, such as Industrial Express and S.O.S. Bureau, both in Bold Street, pay their registered workers between 75p and £1.20 an hour. But they charge the companies £2 an hour. This means the DEP is giving them about 80p an hour for each worker they send them.

If this generosity continues, these private agencies will soon be able to stop advertising.

Lump agencies are being used on a nationwide basis by employers to break union organisation after the 12-week building strike. Now they have between 350,000 and 400,000 building workers on their books. And the very fact that they have dared to start up offices in Liverpool — which is still one of the best organised areas in the country — shows their determination.



The Liverpool Echo cashes in on the boom in lump building jobs. Almost every night there are adverts for lump firms and agencies like these.

Tony Lowe, a building worker from Netherley, received one of the telegrams from the DEP. He was told to go to Industrial Express, which was set up in Manchester as recently as August 1972 (by businessman Peter James of 13 Firtree Avenue, Knutsford) but which already has a Liverpool branch.

RENT-A-MAN

He refused the job but others have accepted. Those who do are given a card saying they are now employed as a 'Rent-a-man' and dispatched to various lump sites on Merseyside and in North Wales.

When contacted, Industrial Express admitted they found it 'neater all round if people have tax exemption certificates.'

The certificates were introduced

'Do-gooders' warned

MERSEYSIDE'S hospital workers are getting ready... ready to watch the strike-breaking tactics of do-gooders. And ready to face a barrage of criticism from the press.

For after putting up with appalling low wages for many years, ancillary hospital staff have started a work to rule with selective strikes to back up their claim for an extra £4 a week.

"There is a large pool of voluntary labour ready to move into hospitals when ancillary staff — who are non-medical workers — go on strike," said Mr Colin Barnett, area officer of the National Union of Public Employees.

"These do-gooders see themselves as lady bountifuls, or latter day Florence Nightingales, and are keen to mop the brows of patients or hand them a cup of tea.

"They don't realise that the work done by our members is often very arduous, especially by those working in places like the hot, steamy hospital laundries.

"We do not want to see voluntary

people brought in. That is why we are first of all bringing out workers whose jobs these do-gooders are incapable of, or unwilling to do... such as transport drivers and laundry workers.

"We are quite prepared for the capitalist press saying our strike will wipe out half the country... or that it is against the sick. It is not. It is against the government and the freeze."

The union have already promised to keep emergency services going and to provide key personnel in hospitals where there are total strikes.

On Merseyside the major strike takes place at Clatterbridge hospital, while in Liverpool transport, stores and laundry workers are the first to be brought out, gradually. More militant stewards believe, however, that the only way to ensure success is an all-out stoppage.

For many years ancillary workers — who are among the lowest paid in the country — have put up with long hours and poverty wages quietly. But

many are now angry and bitter, as hospital management committees have turned down their claim for a £4 a week increase and a 35-hour week.

The management, who are tied by the freeze, have offered a laughable £1.84 a week. At the moment the basic wage of a hospital porter, regardless of age, is just £17.50 a week, and for women in the laundry £14.50.

Many ancillary workers are subject to a poverty trap. At present many are eligible for benefits such as the family income supplement, rent rebates, free school meals etc. And the National Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers have shown that a £4 increase will lose them these benefits, and so they could be worse off.

These stewards are demanding £8 with no bonus schemes, and immediate introduction of equal pay and job opportunity for women.

Support and donations for hospital workers to: Mr C Barnett, NUPE Divisional Officer, 199 Old Street, Ashton-under-Lyne.