

How the S.S. tried to break Dunlop strike

HUNDREDS of Dunlop maintenance workers didn't receive a penny in Social Security for their families during their recent three-week strike.

The Social Security office in Garston was so slow and so awkward in dealing with claims that many families didn't receive any money until the strike had ended.

Eventually about twenty of the engineering workers staged a demonstration outside to offices in a bid to force the officials to speed up payments.

But the demonstration took place on a Friday and the men started going back to work on the following Monday.

The Dunlop workers - from the Speke, Skelmersdale and Walton factories - didn't expect to get any benefits for the first two weeks. This was because for the first week their families were supposed to live off the wages the men earned the week before the strike started.

And during the second week the men were able to claim back the week-in-hand wage which Dunlop keep.

But this doesn't excuse the Social Security's delaying tactics - for many of the workers had put in their claims as soon as they came out on strike.

One worker, Mr J Morris, from Speke, should have received £4.65 for his wife, £6 for his two children over the age of eleven and £5.30 for his two children under eleven, which makes a total of £17.40. He didn't receive anything during the strike.

Once again Social Security has been used as a strike-breaking weapon, but this time it didn't succeed...

PAY RISE UNFROZEN

Dunlop engineering workers have won a great victory against the company and the Government's pay board.

After the three-week strike Dunlops agreed to settle on the strikers' terms - although the men did not have the national support of their unions.

The strike began when Dunlops refused to keep to an agreement they had signed with the unions. This gave the workers a £1.95 a week increase from April 1 this year.

But then the pay board said the increases could only be paid on the anniversaries of local agreements. This would have meant some workers at certain plants losing £100 this year.

The strike was led by the Dunlop engineering shop stewards combine committee... much to the displeasure of the union.

After holding out for three weeks, Dunlops were forced to settle. They agreed to pay the rises, dated from April 1, as soon as they could.

MERSEYSIDE ARTS ASSOCIATION presents

JAZZ at the PLAYHOUSE

Monday, October 22 at 7.30

Michael Garrick Band

including new composition "THE HOBBIT SUITE"

Monday, November 12 at 7.30

Ian Carr's Nucleus

performing "LABYRINTH"

Tickets from Playhouse Box Office



The Liverpool Echo sign surrounded by "offending trees".

CHOP A TREE IN '73

PLANT a tree in '73 - that's the official slogan. But the Liverpool Echo company have different ideas. They are asking for a group of trees in Liverpool city centre to be cut down or removed.

For the Echo are worried about the environment... the environment of their illuminated advert on St John's Precinct which will soon be hidden by trees.

The trees newly-planted elms on the Lime Street side of the precinct - hardly cover the sign

at the moment but will eventually be more than 40 feet tall.

The Echo first complained to Arthur Maiden Ltd, the firm responsible for signs in the precinct, threatening to withdraw the advert unless they did something about the trees immediately.

Shortly afterwards, Ravensett Properties, owners of the precinct and James Roberts, the architect who designed it both sent off strongly worded letters to the corporation.

The architect asked for the

"offending trees" to be pruned or replaced with shrubs.

This is very strange, because it was the architect who two years ago asked for large trees to be planted there - and the corporation obliged.

Liverpool Parks Department are furious at the complaints and have politely told the Echo to get lost. One official said the trees were growing beautifully and were "much more attractive and beneficial to the environment than an electrified advert."

Trial that will make industrial history

IN THE old market town of Shrewsbury on of the most important trials in the history of trade unionism is taking place.

Today, 24 building workers stand in the dock faced with charges that could mean sentences of many years' imprisonment.

Tomorrow it could be any other trade unionist caught up in a strike.

For there's little doubt that the outcome of the trial - whatever the verdict - will shape new laws on picketing.

The basic facts are fairly simple.

During the next six months the Shrewsbury 24 will face criminal charges ranging from conspiracy to commit violence on people and property, to charges of intimidation, assault, unlawful assembly, causing an affray and many, many more.

All charges arise out of the highly successful flying picket which encouraged even lump and non-union labour to stop work in North Wales during the 12-week building strike nearly 18 months ago.

The building workers weren't alone when the trial started. About 1,000 trade unionists marched through the streets of Shrewsbury chanting "Free the 24."

Throughout the country workers on building sites stopped work for the day and Merseyside dockers, remembering the support the five jailed dockers received,

brought the Port of Liverpool to a standstill.

The case of the 24 building workers has been split into two trials which will each last about three months. There are 95 charges altogether, over 250 prosecution witnesses and the trial will cost about £500,000.

The first trial will be the most important as the six men involved in this face conspiracy charges. The other 18 don't.

Conspiracy is being used for

SHREWSBURY 24

two reasons. Firstly, because the rules of evidence are so lax. Hearsay evidence can be accepted, and evidence against one of the accused is evidence against them all.

More and more of the important political trials are being based on conspiracy laws because it's easier to get a conviction. You only have to prove someone talked about committing an offence - not that they actually committed it.

Secondly, and more important, the prosecution can demand longer jail sentences for conspiring to commit an act than for committing the act itself.

For the prosecution have charged the pickets with 'criminal conspiracy' under Common Law, not with conspiracy under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act (which deals with

trades disputes).

Some of the other charges have been made under this Act, but not the conspiracy charges.

The Crown are saying this is not a trade union matter. They say they are concerned about people supposedly conspiring to commit violence - not with plotting to further a trade dispute. They are treating the men as common criminals. So they are demanding fitting sentences.

This of course is an attempt to divert the anger and support of trade unions - and it is already succeeding. The leaders of the building union (UCATT) have justified the lack of activity by saying their union rules do not allow them to support trade unionists on criminal charges.

Because the conspiracy charges are being brought under common Law (to cover offences like 'riot and unlawful assembly') there is no limit on jail sentences. Under the 1875 Act the maximum penalty is a £50 fine and/or three months' imprisonment.

Whatever the result of the trial, the real struggle has to take place outside the courts. It was only the wide-scale militant action which gained the release of the five dockers.

The dockers were jailed merely for disobeying a civil order to appear at the Industrial Relations Court. The Shrewsbury 24 face far more serious charges than that.

Union leaders change their tune

THE SEVENTEEN electricians who have been on strike for nearly three years at the IRO (Inland Revenue Office) site in Bootle are now faced with yet another about-turn by their union, the right wing Electricians' and Plumbers' Union.

The union executive has now decided to withdraw from a national wages agreement with the electrical contracting employers.

This is the very agreement the Bootle men are striking against. The agreement, operated by the Joint Industry Board, composed of the union executive and employers, has allowed electricians' wages to fall behind those of other trades in the industry.

And the union has backed the employers in trying to break the strike. But now the executive, faced with major elections in a year's time, want to pull out of the wages part of the JIB agree-

ment to try and by-pass the freeze.

Rank and file electricians have been opposing the JIB for five years since it was foisted on them without any consultation by union leaders Cannon and Chapple. The opposition resulted in fifteen men being expelled from the union in the first year of the JIB's operation.

The JIB is determined and obstinate over the IRO strike. It has refused to settle the dispute by granting the men's claim because it will not negotiate while a strike is on. This is despite several returns to work by the men.

But the Bootle sparks have one of the largest and costliest hostages ever held by strikers - the £8 million office block which is more than half finished and now deteriorating through lack of heating and ventilation.

The men are confident they'll win. John Byrne, chairman of the

strike committee says: "I've said it before and I'll say it again. I don't care how many more Christmases we have to spend on strike, we'll go back to that job on our terms."

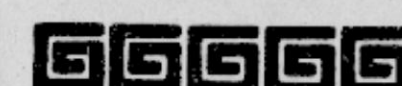
● Support to: J Byrne, 44 Sidney Road, Bootle, Lancs.



THE NEW Tesco supermarket in Catford is to sell single fish fingers and beefburgers to help pensioners and the hard-up. Following the opening ceremony Tesco entertained Lewisham councillors to a champagne buffet.



A BROWN PAPER parcel wrapped by Christo in 1959 has been sold at Sotheby's for £1,000. The new owner says he will never open it, as this would "destroy its artistic significance."



ARE YOU fit to be a policeman? To join the force you have to pass an entrance exam. Here is a sample of two actual questions: 1. Re-arrange two words in this sentence so that it makes sense 'General people who have to go to hospital are admitted to most wards.' 2. Fill in the missing letters: V - - - T. (Clue: The word means 'empty'). P.S. Statistics show that the best response to police recruiting adverts comes from readers of Tit-Bits.



Correction

Because of a telephone mishearing the Prime Minister was incorrectly quoted in later editions of *The Times* yesterday on museum charges. His remark should have read: "You expect to pay for going to the Louvre."

Guess what The Times thought he said (see * below).



A MAN on a flight from Ireland to America was arrested after threatening to hi-jack the plane with a knife and fork.



PILOTS of American B52s, the world's largest bomber, have been on strike because they couldn't get their ice-cream soda in the cockpits..



BUTLER George Kelly and his wife often complained that after serving pheasant or venison to their master, Viscount Mountsarett, they had to eat fish fingers things came to a head when Mr Kelly served a new Stilton cheese at dinner. The viscount demanded to know where the crust was. Mr Kelly retrieved it from the dustbin and served it on a silver platter. Half an hour later Mr Kelly and his wife were sacked.



AN OLD corkscrew has been sold for a record £125 at Christie's.

* "You expect to pay for going to the loos."



Wednesday 8.30 pm RAFA Club Bold St. A social club with a variety of activities for a wide range of people.

THIS MONTH

- Oct 17 Crazy whist drive - an amusing variation anyone can play
- Oct 24 Mountaineering. Illustrated talk by Jim Lyon.
- Oct 31 Halloween - traditional and not so traditional festivities.