

Long hours, hard work — £10 a week

WOULD YOU send your daughter for a job like this?

Wanted: Girl school leaver to work in warehouse. Hours 9—5.30, five days a week. Compulsory overtime one day a week (5.30—8.30) and Sundays 9.30—1.30. Wages, before deductions... £10 a week.

This is the job Nancy Roberts and two other girls were doing for several months at Berman's warehouse, a wholesale supplier of toys and fancy goods in Long Lane, Aintree.

Nancy was sent for the job by her local Youth Employment Office.

The job failed to comply with the 1938 Young Persons Factory Act on two counts.

The Act, which covers young people up to the age of eighteen,

allows a maximum of only 50 hours' overtime a year. Another section says that young people working on a Sunday must receive a whole day off in lieu.

Bermans owe some of their employees several weeks' holiday on this reckoning, as they have not been giving them time off for Sundays.

When the Free Press asked Bermans about their apparent disregard for the law, their Liverpool manager said he received instructions on hours and wages from headquarters in Manchester and that he knew nothing of the Factories Act.

The head office in Manchester explained after some delay that their girls had to work on a Sunday as it was the only time some shopkeepers could call for supplies. They said they had the Act in front of

them and claimed it didn't say anything about a day off.

We then asked the Youth Employment Office if they checked up on jobs before offering them to school leavers. They said they handled so many jobs they couldn't possibly check every one. Surprisingly, they weren't familiar with the Act, but promised to look into Nancy's case in more detail.

This resulted in the Youth Employment contacting Berman's as we had done. This time Berman's answers were slightly different.

They said their manager in Liverpool was new and didn't know the regulations. They at headquarters would never allow young girls to work such long hours, they added.

A curious excuse, seeing the Liverpool manager said all his

instructions on hours and wages came from Manchester.

Berman's have now promised to abide by the Act, and the Youth Employment will be visiting them.

Nancy, now 17, left the job on doctor's orders due to a long-standing medical complaint.

Clearly school leavers would benefit if the Youth Employment vetted jobs beforehand. In this case, had the employers been asked to declare the hours and wages honestly, the Youth Employment could have ensured they kept within the law, and Berman's could not have pleaded ignorance.

Sadly, the Youth Employment seemed all too keen to explain the employers' problems and accept their doubtful excuses.



A BLIND MAN has been appointed chairman of the committee which censors films in Clarkstown, New York. Asked how he expected to judge material he couldn't see, he replied, "Pornography ins't a case of seeing, it's a case for feeling."



POLICE armed with scissors have been roaming the streets of Jakarta, Indonesia, searching for men with long hair. It's all part of a new government campaign against long hair.



FIRE BROKE OUT at the Manchester factory of a firm which makes sprinkler systems. Extensive damage was done when one of their own sprinklers installed in the building failed to operate.

Flag stolen

Vandals removed a Union Jack from a flagpole at Ainsdale Conservative Club and stole it.

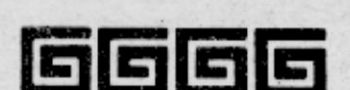
Liverpool Echo



THE AUSTRALIAN government was recently puzzled by an item for £25,000 in the defence budget for "Censorship of Posts and Telecommunications." On investigation they found 150 men on their payroll, who were left over from the last war. The men had continued work unnoticed, keeping in practice by censoring each other's messages.



IN LONDON, Mr Robert McLerie, who is unemployed, asked a passer-by for a cigarette. He was then arrested and charged with "begging alms" under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. Clerkenwell magistrates sent him to prison for a month.



IN SEATTLE the president of the "Support Your Local Police" committee has been charged with attempting to bribe two policemen.



A NEW design of weapon has just been patented by the Ministry of Defence. The patent number is 1333558 and the weapon... an archery bow.



A MAN from the Protestant Shankill Road area of Belfast, who was convicted of rape, has applied for political prisoner status on the grounds that the girls were Catholics.



NABBED by the police for driving with a forged tax disc that was also out of date, a Wiltshire motorist explained that he had forgotten to forge himself a new one.



Robert Meadows

City buys ex-Mayor's garage for £235,000

A FORMER Lord Mayor of Liverpool has received £235,000 from the city for his garage. And the garage— which is not yet fully built— will now be demolished.

The payment is the first part of a deal under which Mr Robert Meadows, who was a Tory alderman on the City Council until April 1, has been hoping to receive up to £¼ million.

The garage, which includes a car showroom and stores, was run by Lime Street Garages Limited, Mr Meadows' family firm. It stands on the corner of Redcross Street, off Derby Square.

The building is unusual because construction continued, off and on, for about ten years — and it is still unfinished. Two of the four floors are just a shell, with no glass in the windows.

In June 1972, when he was Lord Mayor, Alderman Meadows signed (on the corporation's behalf) a compulsory purchase order on his own building. Then the following March he threatened (on his firm's behalf) to object to the order at a public inquiry.

Earlier the corporation had almost reached agreement with the alderman's estate agent. The price was to be £200,000 for the building (which is on freehold land), but the alderman put a stop to that and asked for more.

The corporation were embarrassed by the prospect of their own Lord Mayor appearing as the only objector at the public inquiry, and at great expense hired a lawyer from London to put their case, rather than using one of the solicitors on their staff.

But they needn't have bothered. Alderman Meadows withdrew his objection at the last minute and the inquiry was over within an hour.

The alderman's militant posture has now secured him an extra £35,000 on top of the corporation's original offer. There is also a £5,745 bill for costs and fees which the city has generously agreed to pay.

The second part of the deal — compensation for "disturbance" — has not yet been announced. Just over a year ago the alderman was demanding a total payment between £600,000 and £750,000, which he claimed was the cost of setting up a similar business in the city.

Over on the Liberal front, Prella and Co., one of Cyril Carr's many property companies, have been paid £30,000 by the city for their offices in Victoria Street.

This building is to be demolished to make way for the Civic Centre. Although the government rejected the corporation's plans for the Civic Centre last July, purchases of property in the area have continued.

"THAT'S ALL YOU CAN EXPECT FROM NIGGERS," SAYS SERGEANT, THEN...

Police accuse man who dared to complain

JIMMY ROGERS, a Liverpool community relations officer, was walking past the police headquarters in Hope Street one night with a friend.

He glanced towards the police desk and suddenly through the open door they both heard a uniformed policeman say loudly: "That's all you can expect from niggers."

33-year-old Jimmy and his friend, Paul Ambrosius — who are both black — immediately went into the station to ask the sergeant on duty why he had made the remark.

The extraordinary events which followed show just how difficult — and often hazardous — it is to make a complaint against the police.

Firstly, a charge of "using obscene language" was made — not against the policeman — but against Paul.

Secondly, both Paul and Jimmy were treated with hostility by the sergeant until he found out Jimmy worked for the Community Relations Council, when he started calling him "Mr Rogers."

Thirdly, an attempt was made to incriminate Jimmy Rogers on another charge... perhaps in the hope that the pair would drop their complaint.

Jimmy has had previous experience of the way police treat black people. Four years ago, before he was employed by the Community Relations Council, he has walking along with

his wife when he was stopped by police, searched and accused of having cannabis.

He was acquitted, but when he accused the police of planting drugs, they investigated themselves and found no case to answer.

This new incident also took place at night. Jimmy and Paul left the YMCA in Mount Pleasant at 10.15 on October 23, where they had been playing basketball, and walked to the Kebab House in Hardman Street, where they had a meal.

They left at 11 p.m. and were walking past the police station when they heard the pointed remark.

Jimmy says in his statement:

"I immediately turned and entered the station and identified the officer as Police Sergeant A4 and made a mental note of the time, which was 11.07 p.m. and left the station accompanied by Paul Ambrosius, only to go back in again as we had realised there were also two civilians in the station."

"Paul asked one of the civilians if he had heard what the sergeant said."

"The civilian stiffened and said something to the effect 'I have only just come in.' The sergeant said to the civilian 'No...you didn't hear anything, did you?' The civilian did not reply."

"We waited until the civilians had finished their enquiry and then I asked the sergeant why he had used

such a derogatory term, and he claimed I had used foul language. I emphatically denied this and he then warned Paul Ambrosius and he would be issuing a summons to him for using foul language."

Paul was eventually charged... but not until ten weeks after the incident. He was remanded until April 1, but then the case was suddenly postponed, apparently because the prosecuting counsel had withdrawn.

In addition to this, two policemen made a bungling attempt to incriminate Jimmy Rogers. One said that just before the incident he saw a group of black teenagers messing about with cars near the Philharmonic. Another policeman said he positively identified Jimmy as being with the teenagers.

Despite this claim of 'positive identification' (it was dark at the time) no charge has been made.

Jimmy has witnesses to say when he and Paul left the YMCA and the Kebab House.

The whole incident clearly shows why black people are so resentful about police attitudes. Black people face continual harassment, but their complaints are not taken seriously.

It was only when the sergeant found out Jimmy Rogers was a community relations officer (his job involves giving lectures to the police) that he was treated with any respect.

Harry and Jim, the airport men



AN UNUSUAL scene took place at the recent annual meeting of the Liverpool Trades Council.

Two businessmen were invited to talk about their business interests, and instead of meeting with jeers or heckling, they were warmly applauded by about 100 trade unionists.

What's more, one of the businessmen spoke for over twenty minutes in favour of a motion proposed by the General and Municipal Workers' Union.

Not one trade unionist was allowed to speak for or against, as only questions were allowed.

Not surprisingly the motion, which was in support of Liverpool Airport, was passed with only three people voting against and a few abstaining.

Anyone could be forgiven for being baffled by this complete harmony between the interests of business and trade unionists.

Perhaps one explanation for this strange scene is that few Trades Council delegates realised they were being given a lecture by businessmen.

The two businessmen were merely introduced as "Jim Keen and Harry Ayre from the Save the Airport Action Committee." So naturally delegates assumed they were employees at the airport... especially with proletarian-sounding names like Harry and Jim.

Well, "Harry" is in fact Mr Harold Ayre, station manager for Cambrian

Airways, and the airline's top man in Liverpool. "Jim" is Mr James Russel Keen, who is a director of Liverpool Aero Engineering, Keen Air Services and Liverpool Aero Club.

The future of Mr Keen's companies clearly depends on Speke airport staying open, and he has even been tipped to become the new airport director in the next few months.

Also, it is no secret that closure of the airport would bring enormous disruption and loss of revenue to Cambrian.

Alternative jobs

The airline, which is part of the regional division of British Airways, received about £4m from its Liverpool services last year, and this is expected to top £4,500,000 next year.

So Jim and Harry can hardly be thought of as workers.

No-one pointed out at the meeting that the GMWU has only about 35 members among the 800 workers at the airport, and that NALGO have far more members there.

NALGO have taken a totally different line on the future of the airport. They are demanding, not that the airport stays open, but that alternative jobs are found for the employees.

But no-one could point this out, because no-one was allowed to make a speech.

SAFETY SECOND...

ASKED in the council how a girl was supposed to get from her home in Guelph Street, Kensington, to St. Winefride's school near the South Docks, John Hamilton, who was then education chairman, replied:

"The distance from Guelph Street to St. Winefride's school is under 2½ miles by a reasonable walking route as follows:

"Guelph Street, Hall Lane, Mount Vernon Street, Minshull Street, Paddington, Crown Street, Mulgrave Street, North Hill Street, Windsor Street, Upper Park Street, Park Street."

A reasonable route? Rubbish! This hazardous 40-minute walk involves crossing five trunk roads at peak hours — the A5047, A5048, A5097, A562 and A561, not to mention the Princes Road speedway.

The girl also has to pass through the Mulgrave Street area (in the dark during winter) — which is not an area where many parents of girls aged 11 to 16 would like their daughters to go alone.

Councillor Hamilton could have suggested taking a 26 or 27 bus... but he didn't. The education committee believes a twice-daily walk of up to 2½ miles is perfectly reasonable for schoolchildren.

Their own penny-pinching regulations forbid them even to consider free transport for distances less than this... no matter how dangerous that journey may be.