

COUNTERSPY

When the shoe shops lead you a dance...

HOW MANY people are wasting good shoe leather trying to get an old pair of shoes mended?

Most people don't realise that many of the well-known shops like Dolcis, Freeman Hardy & Willis, Saxone, True-Form and Curtess, are all owned by the British Shoe Corporation.

The Corporation have one repair factory in Blackpool for all their Merseyside shops, and a standard price list.

This means it is a waste of time

going from one BSC shop to another trying to get the best bargain. And it's not unknown for the same pair of shoes, beyond repair, to turn up at the BSC factory again and again as people try to get them done in different shops.

The Corporation could avoid this with a "BSC Repairs" sign in all the shops. But the British Shoe Corporation are extremely shy, probably because of the size of their empire.

HOW TO COMPLAIN

IF YOU buy a pair of shoes which turn out to be faulty you may have difficulty getting your money back. Shopkeepers often blame you for being so foolish as to walk about in them.

The way to deal with this is to threaten the shopkeeper with SATRA. SATRA is the Shoe and Allied Trades Research Association, who give independent assessments on shoes.

But there's a snag. SATRA only test shoes on behalf of manufacturers and shopkeepers, not for the general public.

This means you have to find out who owns the shoe shop and write to the head office. Send the shoes to the managing director, explain the complaint and demand that he has them tested by SATRA.

Send a copy of the letter to SATRA. They may persuade the firm to give you your money back. Or they may tell you you've treated the shoes the wrong way. But at the very least, you'll know better next time.

● SATRA's address is Rockingham Road, Kettering, Northants.

Yo-ho-aargh!

A CHEMICAL stolen from a car in Rock Ferry is dangerous and could cause burning or blistering if swallowed, police have warned.

The chemical, rum essence, was on its way to be used as flavouring by a Blackpool toffee factory.

Top corporation officials have told the council they don't want to be elected by their inferiors...

WHERE'S ALL THIS WORKERS' PARTICIPATION THEN?

'What ever appened to all that workers' participation them Liberals were on about?'

'Ar, we've ad dat.'

'Whaddya mean?'

'They couldn't even gerrit in the corpy. You know what dey did? They asked the officials - the bosses mind you - for a report. Ow stupid can you get.'

'What appened?'

'They said it wasn't on, of course. Here, I'll read you a bit. This is about de election of the bosses. It's typical, this is

"The participation of employees in the determination of appointments to positions senior to them is not an established practice followed in the local government service and is not one which could be recommended for introduction by this authority."

'Then they start on about Incentive Bonus Schemes. On and on and on.'

'What's that got to do with participation?'

'But the bit I liked the best was the way

we all made the decisions. This is it:

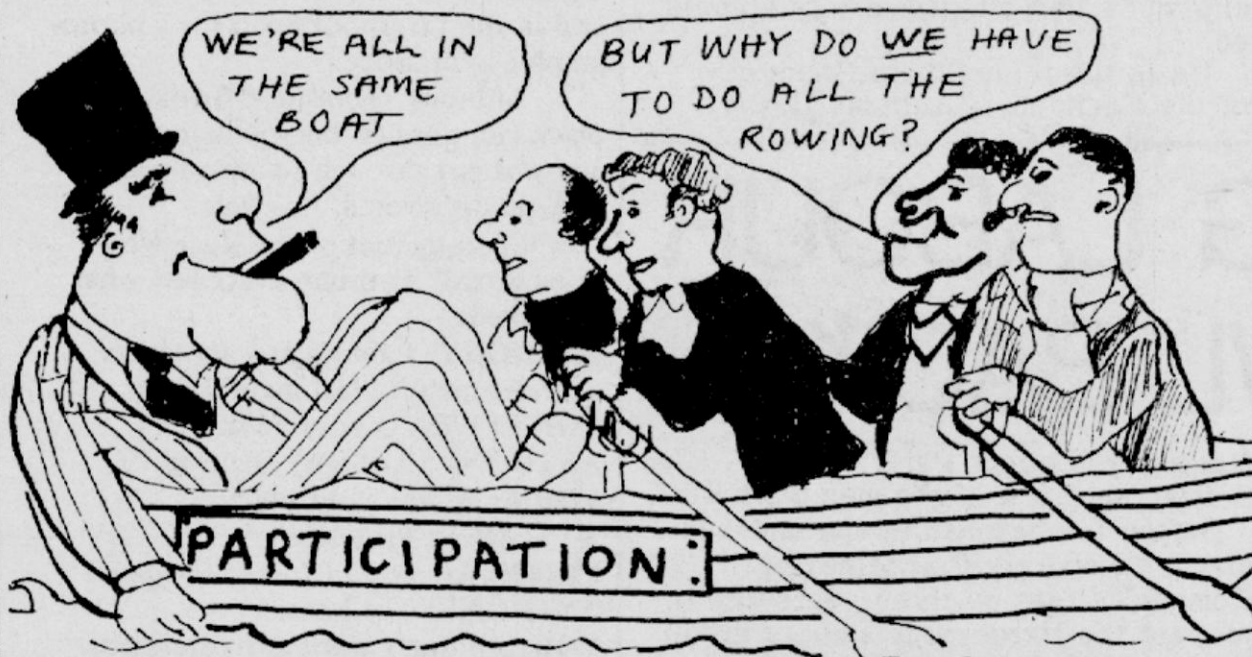
"A few years ago, the City Council introduced a Suggestion Scheme under which awards were made to employees presenting suggestions worthy of implementation or of merit and in this way, staff are encouraged to put forward their ideas for improved methods, etc."

'That's bloody rubbish that is. I bet the councillors gave it to them for that.'

'Don't be soft. The big Liberal, Trevor Jones, wasn't even there was he. E was trying to get himself elected into parliament down in Gillingham. They must have heard about his daft ideas down there, though, cos e didn't get in.'

'So that's it then?'

'Yeah. It wouldn't have made no difference anyway. The same people would have got in and then they'd ave turned round and said we'd asked them to be the bosses. I'd have no part of it, meself.'



NEWS FROM NOWHERE

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Anarchism, Marxism, socialism, the economy, science, environment, industry/labour/capital, social history, Fascism, Russia, China, America, imperialism/third world, N. Ireland, racism/black struggle, womens liberation, education & kids, law, sociology, community, anti-psychiatry, sexual politics, art & revolution, religion & politics, political fiction and more!

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

48 Manchester Street, Liverpool 1. (051-227 2514)

(End of Victoria St., near tunnel entrance)

Acquitted man accuses police

AFTER a three day trial at Liverpool Crown Court, 35-year-old Bob McDougall was found Not Guilty of criminal damage, theft and two assaults on the police.

He and his crippled mother are now free to press their own charges against the police.

It was, in the words of the prosecuting counsel, "a curious case." And of course it passed almost entirely unnoticed by the responsible Press.

It was indeed a curious case:

● McDougall was accused of stealing two rugs from his former landlord. Rugs which were never found and may never have existed.

● Police raided McDougall's flat armed with a search warrant listing "stolen" property which had not in fact been stolen.

● When McDougall tried to stop the police taking away his mother's only coats he was accused of assaulting the police. The police admitted that the two "assaults" didn't even hurt.

● In their efforts to "restrain" Mr McDougall the police caused him bruises which were still visible a month later.

● The charge of criminal damage was not added until some weeks later... after McDougall had himself taken out summonses against the police.

Bob McDougall has an idea why all this happened. In December 1973 he made a complaint against a policeman. The officer concerned, he informed the Chief Constable and the Home Secretary, had taken part in an illegal attempt to force him out of his home.

This police officer was from 'E' Division of the Liverpool force, based at Lower Lane. The police involved in the court case are also from Lower Lane.

THE McDUGALL CASE began with a dispute between him and his landlady. In August 1973 Bob and his 64-year-old mother moved into 27 Beaconsfield Road, Walton.

The owner, Mrs Marion Wilson and her husband had apparently left Liverpool to live abroad. Mrs Wilson's father advertised the house at £12.50 a week part-furnished.

The McDougalls moved in, were quickly dissatisfied, and approached the health authorities and the rents tribunal. In court the McDougalls' removal man described the house: "It was one of the worst houses I've ever been in; and I've been in some terrible houses. The walls were running with damp... the window frames were covered in mildew."

The Social Security refused to allow more than £3.20 a week for rent, so that was all the McDougalls paid. (Bob had given up his job as a security guard to look after his mother.) Then Mrs Wilson returned unexpectedly in September and wanted them out. Eventually she got an eviction order.

On February 5 this year, the day before the eviction was due, the McDougalls left. But it wasn't until a week later that Mrs Wilson's father called and found the house "in a very bad state" - for which he blamed the McDougalls.

He thought a stereo unit, mirror, two rugs and some clothing belonging to his daughter were missing. He reported this to the police.

One or two weeks later, however, he found all but the two rugs in a pile of rubbish in the back kitchen.

The clothing was damp and stained. This formed the basis of the 'criminal damage' charge against Mr McDougall.

Then on February 27 Detective Sergeant Edward David Childs obtained a warrant to search the McDougalls' new home at 10 Oxford Road, Waterloo. Apparently he did not know that almost all of the "stolen" property had already been recovered.

Sgt Childs and three detective constables found a mirror hanging on a wall and two coats in a suitcase. The police said that Mrs McDougall claimed the coats were hers (as they were) and tried to get them back.

At that stage, according to Sgt Childs, "the defendant rushed across and struck me in the chest with his fist." He then grabbed Constable Keen who was holding the coats, by the arm. These were the two "assaults".

McDougall was then arrested for



Cleared... Bob McDougall and his mother leaving the court.

Robert Patrick McDougall, aged 35, of Oxford Road, Waterloo, was acquitted at Liverpool Crown Court on charges of assaulting Police Constables Edward Childs and Malcolm Keen in the execution of their duty and criminal damage and theft of property at a house in Beaconsfield Road, Walton. He was discharged.

THIS REPORT of the McDougall case appeared in the Liverpool Echo on October 25, two days after the trial finished.

McDougall's name is spelt wrong; the address is no longer his; and Sgt Childs is said to be a constable.

None of this is surprising since at no time was a reporter from Liverpool's responsible newspaper in court.

assault and obstruction. Childs said he resisted and there was a struggle on the landing. Constable Gittins testified he had to stand on McDougall's legs to stop him lashing out.

But with the help of two uniformed men who appeared on the scene - making six police in all - he was bundled into a police van and taken to Lower Lane police station.

The McDougalls told a very different story. Bob said he went to the flat door and saw four men "of rough appearance" rushing up the stairs. Inside the flat they demanded the keys to the suitcases or they would smash them open.

Both mother and son testified that during the search they saw Constable Gittins rummaging through a case containing private papers and stuffing some into his pocket. The McDougalls told him to put them back.

The McDougalls claimed £50 in an envelope inside this suitcase was later found to be missing. The money was part of a government grant for the disabled, paid to Mrs McDougall.

Both mother and son told the court the violence started when the police said they were taking Mrs McDougall's only coats. Bob said he tried to get them back and the police grabbed him.

"Sgt Childs just pushed me and said 'I've found nothing but I'm arresting you for theft. You know where the stuff is.'"

Mrs McDougall said: "Childs thumped him and pushed him out and they gave it to him. I've never seen anybody used more like a punch bag in my life. Childs said: 'Throw him down the stairs'. Gittins had his arm round his throat and the other feller was punching into him and he was going purple. His tongue was out."

"I said: 'You're killing him.' Childs turned to me and knocked me with his arm. He said: 'If I'd come here on my own I'd have made mincemeat of the lot of you.'"

Mrs McDougall here made another serious allegation against the police. Sgt Childs, she said, pushed her back into the flat and asked her if she had any money. She told him she was a pensioner.

McDougall was charged with two assaults, obstruction and theft. It was not until March 21, after McDougall had taken out summonses against the police, that the criminal damage charge was added.

It took the jury only an hour to reach their Not Guilty verdicts. In fact

the judge had asked for Not Guilty verdicts on the theft charge and the 'trivial' assault on Constable Keen.

But the jury were lucky to hear the full story at all. Soon after the trial began Judge Bingham sent them out while there was legal argument. The judge told the prosecuting and defence counsel the case was "a chapter of mistakes and misunderstandings" and he appealed for a more "grown-up approach."

The prosecuting counsel spoke to Sgt Childs. Then the defence counsel went over to see his client. What the prosecution were offering was a deal: in exchange for a Guilty plea to the 'assault' on Sgt Childs the police would drop all the other charges. McDougall would have none of it.

Police summoned

FOUR PLAINCLOTHES police raided the McDougalls' home. But only three men from the 'E' Division of the Merseyside Police Force gave evidence in court.

These are the three officers the McDougalls have taken out summonses against. They are:

Detective-Sergeant Edward David Childs (No 1647; CID No 59) who lives at 14b North Drive, Liverpool 15. He is summoned for assaulting both Bob McDougall and his mother.

Detective-Constable Malcolm Stuart Keen (No 2394; CID No 308) who lives at 11 Brownmoor Park, Liverpool 23. He is summoned for assault, and criminal damage to a wheelchair.

Detective-Constable Dennis Gittins (No 2589). He is summoned for assault and theft of £50.

The fourth plainclothes man involved in the search was a Detective-Constable Hurst from the Lancashire Force. The two uniformed men who helped to arrest McDougall were a Sergeant Cropper and a Constable Geldart, also from Lancashire.



Sgt Childs and Con Keen.