



BILL SMYTH

Eating out, Wimpey style

COUNCILLOR Bill Smyth, Liverpool's housing boss, likes junkets. And he's not afraid to say so, even if it conflicts with his own party's policies.

His enlightening views on the value of entertainment paid for by ratepayers came during an excellent dinner for the housing committee, following a tour of building sites in the city.

In the luxury of a former merchant's mansion, Smyth strongly criticised his own party for waging a campaign against money spent on entertainment.

Refreshed by their meal, none of the other Liberal councillors present seemed disturbed by their leader's words. Still, this was just an extraordinary end to an extraordinary day. At the start of their tour some of the

committee members were surprised to find the new area boss for Wimpey (the giant construction firm) could afford time off from his arduous duties to accompany them.

Then they found Wimpey sites were extremely popular with the organisers of the tour. Altogether, they visited three sites including the magnificent Wimpey stores off London Road.

When they retired to the Grafton Rooms — exhausted by their long bus journey — for sandwiches and refreshments, they faced another surprise. Wimpey picked up the bill for the liberal supply of drinks.

Fortunately, committee members were able to recover from the day's shocks over their evening meal in Reynolds Park, Woolton... until Smyth

arose to make his after-dinner speech. Still, if the housing chairman likes junkets, he's also prepared to pay for them. It seems he agreed to pay for all wine drunk at the meal.

His hospitality is, in fact, quite a talking point among some councillors and officials. Many are still discussing his generosity earlier this year when he invited housing officials and some housing committee members to the Gas showrooms in Bold Street for food and drinks — and paid for the lot himself.

It was a fitting place for Smyth to hold his little get-together. His old firm, Prime Heating and Plumbing Co, has done thousands of pounds worth of work for the Gas Board.



RED FACES at Tory party headquarters over those election T-shirts with the slogan "Put Britain First." They were made in Portugal!



OFFICIAL VANDALISM: The former Leominster Borough Council, together with their town clerk and planning officer, have been fined £50 for demolishing the Town Hall.



THE MAYOR of Gloucester was bitten by an alsatian guard dog when he opened a security firm's new premises.

Strike over

Cammell Laird staggers who went on strike yesterday were still out this morning.

Liverpool Echo

A ONE-LEGGED man escaped from Sudbury open prison, Derbyshire.



IN AUSTRALIA a bus carrying 28 plump members of the Wagga Wagga weight-watchers club pulled up at a car park and sank 2ft into the tarmac.



BRITISH DEBT SERVICES, one of Britain's biggest debt collecting firms, has announced a loss of more than £500,000. Last year the firm failed to collect more than £400,000-worth of debts.



At the controls as the light went down for the first film, "Convent of Sin," was Insp. Herbert Beresford, who led inquiries after 29 films were seized from shops.

After this one, set in a classroom and featuring a "schoolmaster," "instructress" and four "schoolgirls," the Judge called for a five-minute break.

The first film after the interval, "Anal Rape," depicted a schoolgirl interrupted by a school caretaker while taking a wash and brush-up. When the lights came up at the end of the film, the Judge had removed his wig.

DAILY TELEGRAPH



SOME of our readers may have noticed that our illustrious P.M., Harold Wilson paid a visit to St. George's Hall to stir up local support the night before the election.

His Labour party comrades spent the day preparing for the divine visitation by hanging up posters and practising "The Red Flag" on the organ.

One of the judges sitting in court in the same building was not so enthusiastic about Harold's visit and said that if the Labour supporters didn't stop making a noise he'd have them all arrested for contempt of court. We wonder if he'd have objected to Tories singing "Land of Hope and Glory."

Tenants win but council threaten dirty tricks

KNOWSLEY COUNCIL are desperately trying to find ways of avoiding further court actions following a legal victory by Kirkby tenants.

But a suggestion by the council's housing officer, Mr J.R. Winstanley, deserves a bit of legal attention of its own.

In a report to the housing committee on October 21, Winstanley dismissed the tenants' legal action as a waste of time. Then he came up with this amazing and highly dubious idea: "It is suggested that the local magistrate be acquainted, through the Clerk to the Magistrates' Court, with the above-mentioned facts and opinions with a view to avoiding abortive and unnecessary court proceedings."

Other people who have a spot of bother with the law in Kirkby are NOT advised to do the same. THAT might be interfering with the course of justice, a very serious offence.

What put the wind up Winstanley was six summonses taken out by the Northwood Flat Dwellers' Action Group. They said the council had broken the public health laws by not repairing council houses in Kirkby and Cantril Farm.

A magistrate who was asked to visit almost 100 flats and houses said the council had left tenants surrounded by rubble, rubbish and squalor with the accompanying danger of vermin and disease.

Knowsley Council reacted by rushing through repairs mentioned in the summonses, so all six were done the week when the case came to court. This meant the tenants had to withdraw them.

But that wasn't the end of it. The action group's solicitor, John Linden, made legal history by asking for, and getting, costs. Knowsley Council were ordered to pay £100.

This means other tenants probably don't have to worry about legal costs, even when the council has done the work, as Knowsley did. The Northwood tenants have now taken out another 30 summonses so the council could be in big trouble... unless Mr Winstanley has any more ideas.

ELECTION VICTIM

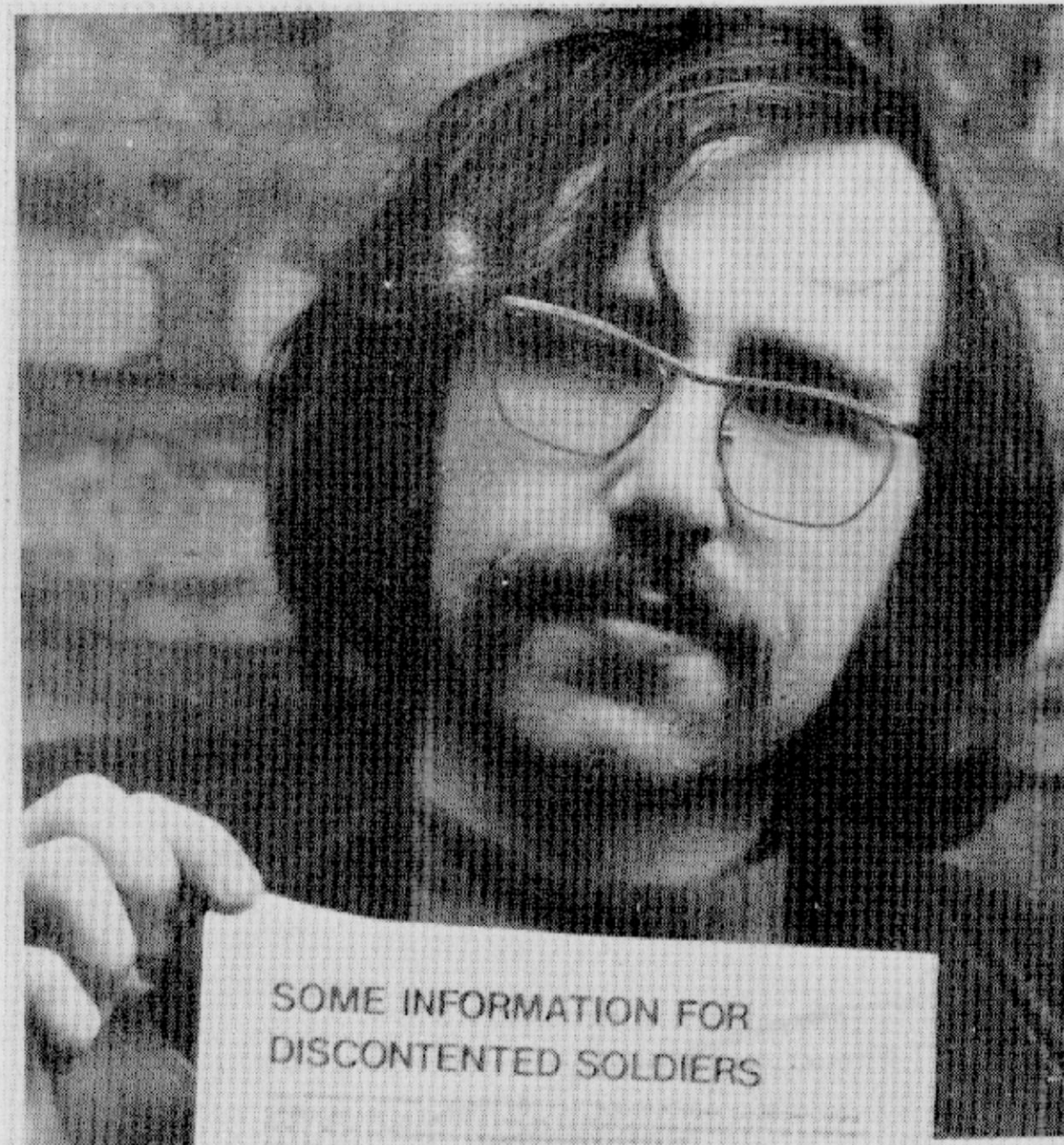
THE SICKEST election stunt of all came, not surprisingly, from a Liberal.

The foolish David Parry, who stood in the Ormskirk constituency, was observed being pushed around Kirkby town centre in a wheelchair.

Maybe he had a serious point to make. But only 8,387 voters gave him the benefit of the doubt.



Above: Rick Walker. Right: Frank Keeley.



Two Liverpool men face conspiracy charge

TWO LIVERPOOL men are among 14 pacifists charged with conspiring to incite soldiers to disaffect.

This round-up will result in one of the largest political trials ever held in this country.

The charges against them arise out of the 1934 Incitement to Disaffection Act, under which Pat Arrowsmith was recently sent to prison for 18 months. She was supposed to have "maliciously and advisedly endeavoured to seduce a member of H.M. forces from his allegiance to her majesty."

But the 14 face the possibility of even longer jail sentences because more serious "conspiracy" charges have now been added.

(Conspiracy is a common law offence meaning there is no limit to the sentence a judge can impose, whereas the maximum under the 1934 Act is two years imprisonment.)

The two Liverpool men are 21-year-old Rick Walker and Frank Keeley, an educational welfare officer who works for the corporation.

They handed out leaflets titled "Some Information for Discontented Soldiers" near the army barracks in Oswestry in August.

These leaflets are produced by the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign (BWNIC), whose supporters say there can be no military solution to the problems of Northern Ireland and demand the withdrawal of British troops and an end to the union.

When the police picked up Rick Walker they searched his flat without a warrant, kept him in a cell for over 24 hours without charging him, and refused him a solicitor.

He told the Free Press: "Two Liverpool police arrived about midday (Oct. 12). Firstly, one of them took me to one side and said the other one was now going to charge me, and vaguely cautioned me.

"After they gibbered on for a bit and established that I wasn't going to say anything I realised they hadn't actually charged me, this was all a bluff."

A CONSPIRACY is an agreement between two or more people to do something illegal, or something legal by illegal means.

The blanket charge of conspiracy has been used increasingly by governments in the last few years in political cases. It resulted in the vicious sentences of two and three years on the two Shrewsbury building pickets.

It's popular with governments because: The judge can impose an unlimited sentence, the rules of evidence are almost non-existent (hearsay evidence is allowed), guilt can be proved by implication, and the charge is vague.

The "conspirators" can be convicted for just coming to an "agreement"; the act they contemplate need not be criminal — just something likely to "injure" the public; evidence against one of the accused is evidence against all those being tried with them.

"They hadn't got a warrant of any sort. They didn't even have a warrant for my arrest, and they said the warrant was in London... that's where it was issued. And that as soon as we got to the station they would ring up and someone from London would come up straight away and charge me then, and I would be out by tea-time.

"What happened then was that they took me down and put me in a cell, and didn't allow me to phone a solicitor. By tea-time nothing had happened at all. They let me see my mother for a couple of minutes, which they regarded as a great favour.

"Then they left me in overnight, and eventually, about one o'clock the following afternoon, two Special Branch chaps called Haslett and Judge turned up from London and drove me away."

After being driven to London Rick Walker was remanded at Bow Street magistrates court.

Frank Keeley went down to London and gave himself up, knowing a warrant was out for his arrest.

But the Special Branch searched his parents' home in Kirkby without showing a warrant. What's more, they told his mother Frank was "mixed up with Communists, and being used

by Communists, and obviously they would soon start using me to carry parcel bombs... which if anyone knows my involvement in things, is a complete and utter farce."

The vague 'conspiracy' charge was included later, probably because the leaflet concerned is carefully worded and directed to soldiers who have already made up their mind to disaffect. For instance it says, "If you intend to refuse to go to Northern Ireland..." and "If you have decided to go absent without leave..."

Under conspiracy laws it doesn't matter that many of the fourteen hadn't met each other until they appeared in court, that some were out of the country for periods during the supposed 'conspiracy', or that few of them signed the original BWNIC statement.

The charges show how worried the establishment are about anyone they think is trying to reason with their armed forces.

Last July BWNIC learned that orders had been sent to married quarters in Aldershot that anyone who was offered a BWNIC leaflet must not talk to the people offering it, but should phone the military police, who would deal with things. Soldiers' wives immediately protested and the order had to be dropped.

● A BWNIC Defence Group is being set up. Contributions to BWNIC Defence Fund, Box 69, 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.

Who's seducing who? Frank Keeley writes (Page 6).

Do your thing -for £375,000

MRS GLADYS WILLIAMSON, new vice-chairman of Sefton District Council's libraries and arts committee, has quickly learned the responsibilities of power.

What on earth, she was asked at the last council meeting, was the new £375,000 Crosby Civic Hall going to be used for?

Mrs Williamson had the facts at her fingertips. "For the people of Crosby to use for various, you know, things that they want to do," she replied.

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