

# Reg hits out on his retirement

IT COULD have been a bosses' nightmare . . . when faithful servant Reg Lake was presented with his retirement gift, he told 'em what they could do with it.

Reg just didn't appreciate the stainless steel engraved sherry tray from British Transport Docks Board — costing £1.90 with the standard message of thanks, and an extra 96p to engrave the name.

He felt that 49 years of service to Lynn docks at least merited a proper golden handshake, and some of his bosses seemed to agree with him.

Luckily Reg's unusual farewell speech didn't come as a surprise to them. They knew of his two-year struggle to get a full pension.

## LIFE'S WORK

Reg has spent the whole of his working life at Lynn docks, joining in 1923 when it was a private concern and known as Lynn Docks and Railway Company.

In 1947 the docks were nationalised and Reg can only claim superannuation money for the last 25 years.

Reg told his colleagues and employers at the presentation last Wednesday that his grouse was not directed towards the local management.

"The old dock company didn't have a pensions system but, on retirement, employees left with a financial gift.

"There are others in the same position as me — only able to collect superannuation money since 1947 — and the board has a moral obligation to us."

## MORAL RIGHT

He realises that he has no legal right to ex gratia but feels that he has a strong moral right to it.

A spokesman from the docks headquarters in London said that in 1952 a special commission had been set up to look into the pen-

sions systems in all recently nationalised industries.

"They decided that ex gratia had no legal strength," he said. "Ten years later the docks board set up their own inquiry which produced the same results.

"This matter has also been investigated by the union which was satisfied with the situation."

He added that, although he was sorry for Reg, there were several others in the same position and nothing could be done to help them.

## QUESTION OF MORAL OBLIGATION FOR DOCKS BOARD

### Your points of view

SIR — With reference to the report on my retirement speech on the front page of "Lynn News and Advertiser" (April 4) may I be permitted to make a few comments as I feel that on certain points readers may obtain a mistaken impression.

As regards the presentation tray, I accepted this and did not intend to cast any aspersions on its actual value. This is a standard token which is given to all B.T.D.B. staff upon retirement.

The point I made was that whilst the Docks Board were congratulating and thanking me for 49 years' service they are, in fact, only prepared to recognise half this number in calculating a pension.

In the report, the Docks Board spokesman gives the impression that a large number of employees could be in this predicament. In actual fact there are six including myself at Lynn and I think I am correct in saying that no other ports are affected.

My colleagues and I have

been pursuing this matter as a group and will continue to do so. The fact that I personally have now fired the first shot is simply because I happen to be the first member of the group to retire.

We did not expect and are not asking for a "golden handshake".

With the old King's Lynn Docks and Railway Company, when a member of the office staff retired, an ex gratia pension, not a financial gift was awarded.

There was no set pattern of assessment, the amount of the annuity being decided by the Board of Directors. I am the very first member of the old K.L.D. and Railway Co. staff to have retired since nationalisation without "ex gratia" recognition.

What we are asking is that the British Transport Docks Board, instead of seeking legal loopholes to decline a small additional pension to six people, should ask themselves if they have not a moral obligation to fulfill.

After all, the majority of these six persons will have

paid more into the scheme than anyone with a full 40 years and who would be awarded a full pension.

— The more you pay, the less you get!

REG F. LAKE

"Sherwood",  
Sandy Way,  
Ingoldisthorpe.