

British Labor Backers Accuse Socialists of Unfair Practice

By Lyle C. Wilson
United Press Correspondent

London, Mar. 29—(U.P.)—Great Britain's socialist government is under fire today from its organized labor supporters on charges of enforcing an unfair wage freeze during a period of rising prices.

Nearly five million organized British workers are backing for wage hikes. Socialists and Tories alike agree that a general break through the wage freeze would disrupt and perhaps wreck the socialist planned economy program.

Some trades union leaders are threatening to break with the government on the wage freeze issue. Others warn that their members may refuse to do further overtime work unless pay is adjusted.

Manpower Tight

The manpower situation here is so tight that overtime is necessary to maintain scheduled operations of such vital industries as shipping and railway transportation.

Rank and file rebels among dock workers are capitalizing labor unrest by proposing a ban on overtime. Without overtime work, the turn-around time for merchant ships in British ports would be doubled, or worse.

Leaders of the Dockers union oppose this slowdown, but the National Union of Railwaymen spokesmen openly threaten to stop overtime work unless wages are adjusted.

Representatives of the British Trades Union congress met last night with Sir Stafford Cripps to protest the wage freeze and the rising cost of living. The TUC is the overall outfit of British organized labor. Cripps in the British government is chancellor of the exchequer, corresponding to our secretary of the treasury.

But a British chancellor of the exchequer has as much authority in determining the British budget as a president of the United States in Washington.

Few Get Look

Only Prime Minister Clement Attlee and two or three senior cabinet ministers will have any information about the 1950 budget before Cripps presents it in the house of commons on April 18.

His budget program will reveal whether burdensome sales taxes can be eased and the wage freeze lifted somewhat.

Widespread objection to the wage freeze puts Cripps in a bad spot. Organized labor voters are the backbone of socialist power here. Without them the present government would not be in office.

Even with labor's support the socialists barely squeezed in last month. Since the February general election death has created several house of commons vacancies among labor seats.

The government margin in commons today is a scant three votes. Many socialist members of commons side with the unions in the wage freeze dispute. It goes back to last September's devaluation of the British pound sterling from \$4.03 to \$2.80.

The effect of devaluation is just now beginning to be felt by housewives and other purchasers of taxed goods in British shops.

Prices May Go Higher

There is general agreement that prices are likely to go higher here as the effect of devaluation becomes general. The "New Statesman and Nation" a magazine friendly to the government, reports "there are many indications that purchasing power, especially of lower paid workers, has been driven down to a dangerously low level."

British imports of raw materials in February, paid for with the devalued pound sterling, cost 38 per cent more than imports in the corresponding month of 1937. The impact of that upward spiral of cost shortly will be hitting British home markets. Economists argue that piling wage increases on top of rising raw material costs would so inflate the

price of British goods that the export market would collapse. **Would Be Fatal**

That would be fatal to a nation which has been warned by its government that it must export or die. Cripps' difficult decision will be whether to risk pricing British goods out of foreign markets by agreeing to higher wages or to hold the wage freeze line against the angry protests of socialist government's organized labor supporters.

Incident eDtails Given by Witness To Near-Drowning

Further details of the incident in which a 13-year-old Rogue River boy was saved from drowning last week in the Medford YMCA pool were given today by an eyewitness to the event, and Boy Scout and "Y" officials, who said that great credit for prompt life-saving action goes to Boy Scout Norman Bean, who administered artificial respiration to the boy.

The youngster was Bobby Hoover, according to Herb Sampert, scoutmaster of Troop 4 in Medford who was in the pool at the time, young Hoover was not under the water more than a minute or a minute and a half. He was dragged out by Bean, who immediately began to administer artificial respiration, coached and assisted by Sampert.

Many Boys There

There were about 30 or 35 boys in the pool at the time, Sampert said. Three other adults were present, but Sampert was the only one in the pool. He emphasized that the youngster, who reportedly suffered a cramp, was spotted and pulled from the water soon after he had gone down, and was brought around in about a minute.

As a result of the incident, a set of swimming safety rules for scouts, even stricter than those in force at that time, have been placed in effect, according to Cliff Hanson, scout executive here. He also pointed out that the swimming that evening was part of the Scout program, and was not a "Y" swim, which is usually for older boys and girls.

Tony Manno, YMCA president, pointed out that all safety precautions possible are in effect when the pool is used by YMCA members.

Labor Leaders Speak On Radio Programs

A series of radio talks by Jackson county labor leaders is being broadcast each Friday at 12:40 p. m. over radio station KYJC in cooperation with the United States savings bond program in Oregon, according to Thomas P. Guerin, Portland, state deputy director for the program.

Speakers to be heard during the next four broadcasts are Edwin R. Olson and Paul W. Elgin, International Association of Machinists; R. R. Morrow, Congress of Industrial Organizations, and Robert Rucker, American Federation of Labor, all of Medford.

Judge L. Peers Wilmeth, Ashland, railroad brotherhoods, spoke last week.

Red Bluff, Cal., Mar. 29—(U.P.)—Funeral services were pending here today for seven-months-old Garry Duand Borjak who died of burns when hot coffee from an electric percolator spilled on his head.

Salem, Ore., Mar. 29—(U.P.)—The Oregon Statesman, second oldest newspaper published on the Pacific coast, observed its 99th birthday today. It was founded Mar. 28, 1851, by Asahel Bush.

"Commercial" potato producers are those who produce more than three acres of the crop.

sign markets by agreeing to higher wages or to hold the wage freeze line against the angry protests of socialist government's organized labor supporters.

The latter course of action could not fail to cause serious friction between the labor government's cabinet of socialist planners and the rank and file of the labor movement itself.

The government's house of commons margin is too slender to sustain a bolt of even a handful of back benchers. The government's hold on public support as recorded in last month's general election, is not great enough to survive significant opposition among organized workers.

SOC Library Bids Due in Portland Before April 25

Portland, Mar. 29—Bids for the construction of a new library and classroom building at Southern Oregon college, Ashland, will be received until 9 a. m., April 25, when they will be opened at Room 203, Benson hotel, Portland, according to C. Howard Kable, architect for the project.

Contracts will be awarded separately for general, mechanical and electrical work. The appropriation for the building is \$308,000.

Large Structure

The first building to be erected at Southern Oregon college in a number of years, the structure will be 68 by 203 feet with two stories and a partial basement. Exterior walls and floors are to be of concrete.

Plans and specifications and other information may be obtained from Kable at 1204 Yeon building, Portland 4. Pre-qualification is required.

Offers for general repair and mechanical work on Churchill hall at the college also will be opened April 25, Kable said. Mechanical work includes additions to the heating plant. Bidding on the Churchill project is optional for those bidding on the library and classroom building.

Salem, Ore., Mar. 29—(U.P.)—Dr. Raymond A. Withey, dean of students at Willamette University, has been appointed dean of Brothers college, Drew university, effective July 1.

Berkeley, Cal., Mar. 29—The University of California seismograph yesterday registered a moderate earthquake, believed centered near the Aleutian island chain.

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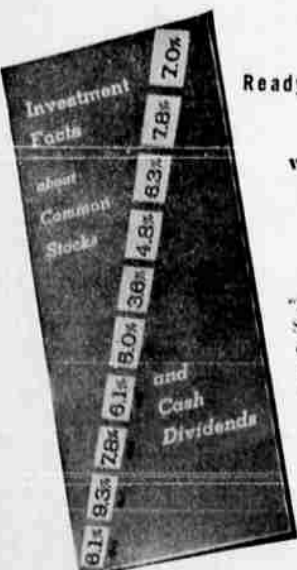
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