

One provision of the Bill that is expected to be revealed when it is published is that the nationalisation of local passenger transport will not stop at buses and commuter train services. Taxis as well may be slated for a spot of "rationalisation."

Most passengers do not care who provides the buses, or the taxis, so long as they come along when they are wanted and go from where the people are waiting to where they want to go. Experience of the first conurbation transport authority, the London Transport Board, is that this is all too often exactly what they do not do.

EFFICIENT FIRM REJECTS GOVERNMENT AID

A NUMBER OF Britain's producers of coloured postcards, alarmed at the competition from abroad, are seeking government action to restrict imports, and have formed an organisation for the purpose.

Of course, as might be expected from those who fear honest competition, the competition from abroad is "unfair," and postcards from abroad depicting British scenes are criticised as not giving a "fair representation."

However, a more efficient producer in Britain, Photoprecision of St. Albans, who claim to supply 40 per cent of the British market, are not interested in the organisation. A spokesman for the firm, reports *The Daily Telegraph*, August 28, said: "We couldn't care less about imports. Our quality, price and distribution are equal to any foreign competition, and we don't want any government help at all."

To be logical, the seekers of government assistance ought also to ask for protection from the competition of Photoprecision.

IT NEVER ENDS

DETAILS of still another new grant scheme for farmers were announced last month. This time it is for field beans. The scheme will come into operation on July 1, 1968, and the rate of grant will be £5 per acre for field beans harvested as grain, or available for harvesting as grain, on such date as the Minister of Agriculture may determine.

How the agricultural land owners must be rubbing their hands as they chalk up another bonus on the board.



Says the Ministry: "The grant is intended to encourage the development of field beans because of their importance as a break crop for cereals, particularly wheat, and also because they are a source of protein which saves importing feedingstuffs."

Chasing Balloons

PAUL KNIGHT

THE LABOUR-CONSERVATIVE policy of full employment, modified as the economy becomes "overheated," when it gets a "touch of the brakes" before the next "go" follows the "stop," is the policy of deficit financing advocated by Keynes, which in bald terms means putting the printing presses to work to make more money (literally).

The consequent inevitable increase in prices gives rise to higher wage demands as the monetary inflation takes its grip. The apparent answer to "stop-go" is to treat effects as though they were causes. Thus the "wage freeze" to keep prices down!

The other artificial means of dealing with the effects of inflation are fiddling with the bank rate and monkeying about with hire purchase terms to restrict credit. After all, if you are printing too much money, you have to stop it circulating too freely.

The policy of inflating a balloon while trying to restrict it from growing in size is, of course, doomed to failure. The balloon must be allowed to expand or burst.

For those "in the know" it is obvious that a government would be foolish to admit to the people at large that inflation is government-generated. So the conspiracy of silence is maintained by the clever use of the word "reflation," which if it means anything at all, means *re-inflation* or "start inflating the currency again."

To sustain the air of mystery that surrounds the perplexing problem of wages and prices, and to show how determined the Government is to master it, we have the (surely by now discredited) Prices and Incomes Board. Now comes another body to pit its wits against this intractable problem. The Social Science Research Council is making a grant of £18,000 to the Centre for Business Research at Manchester Business School to investigate the problem of "wages drift," reports *The Times*, August 10.

The seven man investigating team will be led by Professor Tom Lupton. His brief is "to examine the influences which cause earnings to drift upwards away from negotiated levels without a corresponding increase in productivity." Also on August 10, *The Financial Times* reported on an article by Mr. Robert Appleby, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee for the clothing industry in the Committee's Newsletter. In it he said that whatever the Government may do through wage restraint and the activities of the Prices and Incomes Board, wages over a period must move in relation to supply and demand.

Professor Lupton and Mr. Appleby ought to get together for a chat—they might be able to save some of that £18,000.