

THE

JET



OFFICIAL JOURNAL
of THE NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



THE JET

Official  Journal

THE NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE
OFFICERS ASSOCIATION.

Vol. 2 No. 1

SEPTEMBER, 1944

"Crete Hill,"
Westbury-on-Trym,
Bristol.

1st September, 1944

Dear Reader,

I had occasion to address a letter to all members of the Association in July last in connection with the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and the activities of the Association generally. I hinted then that the question of our own Journal was under consideration and as members will be aware it is just over a year ago since we started to publish "Fire Ground" as part of a well established technical Journal published at monthly intervals.

Difficulties and limitations were encountered due to the fact that it was not possible to include in a public journal information of interest to members if such a disclosure would prejudice negotiations, and the material received from members has often fallen short of requirements.

"The Jet" is the result but this extension of the scope of the Journal can only be successful if it receives the full support and co-operation of members. Furthermore, the information contained in this and subsequent issues of "The Jet" must be treated as confidential to members of the Association. Every effort will be made to keep members posted up to date but they must bear in mind that although an announcement is made of a decision to seek certain changes negotiations often extend over a considerable period and there are always two sides to any question.

This issue will give you some idea of the object of the Journal and of its contents. As a temporary arrangement I am acting as Editor with the help and assistance of the Regional Correspondents. It is hoped to establish an editorial board from amongst the members of the Association to comment on current events and to deal with technical articles, legal notes, book reviews and the Women's Page.

A special appeal is made for contributions—articles, photographs, interesting news, etc.—and Letters to the Editor. Here is an opportunity of expressing your opinion or exchanging views on Service matters. If you have any views on any matter within the scope of our Association, or if you see, hear or learn of anything likely to interest other members, please write to me.

It will be the aim of "The Jet" to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in the Journal—whether in the editorial columns or in signed articles—should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A. E. Kay

Chairman of the Council.

DEMOBILISATION AND AFTER

DEVELOPMENTS in the conduct of the War inevitably direct our thoughts to the Post War period and whilst the ex-Regular meditates or speculates on the chances of remaining nationalised or returning to a locally controlled Service, the majority ask themselves whether the Conditions of Service after the War will be more attractive than those attainable in civilian life, or whether they will return to pre-war occupations.

The Government White Paper on Employment Policy forecasts that there will be no problem of general unemployment in the years after the end of the war in Europe, but there will be problems no less difficult than those the country has faced in the past. A three-fold danger is foreshadowed—(a) patches of unemployment in certain industries; (b) demand outrunning supply and creating inflationary rises in prices; and (c) failure to produce the right kind of goods in the right order.

Time-worn remedies are to be tried again—training schemes, grants for public works likely to stimulate demand and bring prosperity to the coal, steel, engineering and shipbuilding industries, etc.—and an attempt to ration consumption expenditure as opposed to capital expenditure.

Members of the Association however, appear to be more interested in personal problems, if one can judge from the correspondence received at Headquarters. "What is the Association doing about jobs after the War?" is only one of several queries, and we take this opportunity of chronicling the proceedings of the Council, and its predecessor, the National Executive Council, on this important subject.

In August, 1943, it was decided to ask the Department whether it would be possible to establish a Post War Employment Bureau, similar to the arrangements made by the War Office for Army Officers. At the next meeting a reply was received stating that the works of the Officer's Employment Bureau referred to had been transferred to the Ministry of Labour who were acting in this capacity in relation to all Services of the Crown. Furthermore that responsibility for resettlement questions generally rested with that Ministry whose Appointments Department was prepared to receive applications from Officers in the Service who thought that they might require assistance in securing suitable work after the War.

Announcements to this effect—*stressing that applications should be submitted now and not delayed until the time comes*—were printed in "Fire Ground" in November, 1943, and May, 1944.

In the meantime another request had been made to the Department that Officers in the Service should be brought within the scope of the Scheme under which temporary Officers in the fighting services are "in benefit" for Unemployment Insurance purposes for a period of six months after demobilisation. The negotiations were ultimately taken up direct with the Ministry of Labour and National Service who advised that Statutory Regulations made under the Unemployment Insurance Acts provided that temporary Officers in the Armed Forces should be entitled on demobilisation to a credit of contributions under section 96 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1913, but that these Regulations did not apply to Officers in the National Fire Service. The Minister did not see his way clear to treat such Officers in a different way to civilians engaged in National Service so the matter is being pressed further.

When the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Bill was published its provisions were considered by the Council, together with a suggestion that the Department should be approached to secure an amendment to Clause 6(c), which protected N.F.S. personnel called up under the National Service Act, but not the volunteers. The following report submitted to the National Executive Committee of the Association summarises the position and the action taken:—

"The principle behind it dates back to May, 1939, when the Military Training Act was passed and young men were to be called up for military

Demobilisation and After

training, and eventually reinstated in their original civil employment. When war broke out the same principle was followed in connection with the National Service Acts and in relation to civilian employment taken up as a result of a direction of the Minister of Labour. The chief defects in this legislation were:—

- (i) there was no minimum period for which the individual had to be employed after reinstatement;
- (ii) it did not cover volunteers for the Armed Forces.

So far as members of the Association were concerned, the relevant provisions were contained in clause 6 (c) and a suggestion was considered whilst the Bill was before the House of Commons that we should approach the Department to secure the extension of the Bill to cover all Officers of the National Fire Service (as for the Armed Forces) instead of the limited number called up under the National Service Acts.

On the 17th February the House of Commons considered the Bill in Committee, and Mr. Harry Thorneycroft (member for the Clayton Division of Manchester) moved an amendment which would have achieved this object. He stressed the services rendered to the country by Civil Defence and Fire Service personnel, and pointed out one anomaly which the Bill had created in Manchester—out of 1,300 people employed in the Civil Defence Services in the town, only 25 of them had been called up under the National Service Acts, and the majority of those 25 were Conscientious Objectors.

Several other members supported the claim, but speaking on behalf of the Government, Mr. Ernest Bevin reminded the House that the Bill did not broaden the existing reinstatement rights—neither did it deal with demobilisation. The Civil Defence Services would have one advantage over the Forces in that immediately there was an invasion of the Continent and the enemy's Air Force had been destroyed, a very high priority of release and return to the labour market would be available for the Civil Defence Services, long before any troops were released. The object of the Bill was to protect the rights of those who must go on fighting, and see that their employment was not prejudiced, when the final shot was fired.

Later in the debate Mr. Bevin offered to delete all reference to Civil Defence personnel from the Bill, which would have the effect of withdrawing from the limited number of conscripts to the Service the benefits that they had already acquired under earlier legislation.

He concluded by giving a pledge that the Government in dealing with the demobilisation of all Services, both Military and Civil, on a comprehensive scale would bear in mind the problem of the members of the Civil Defence and National Fire Services who were not covered by the reinstatement provisions."

With these assurances Mr. Thorneycroft withdrew his amendment.

In the case of officers who were called up for service under the National Service Acts, 1939-42, then their former employers are under an obligation to employ them for 26 weeks after the conclusion of their war service on terms and conditions not less favourable than those which would have been applicable had they not been called up for war service. An application for reinstatement has to be made by the employee not later than the fifth Monday after the end of his war service, and the employee must also state the date on which he will be available for employment. The employer must reinstate him at the first opportunity which it is reasonable and practicable for him so to do.

There are provisions in the Act of a miscellaneous nature, and for enforcing its provisions.

As these arguments do not apply to Officers in the Overseas Contingent their case is being taken up again.

Demobilisation and After

Officers who joined the Service as a result of a calling-up notice under the National Service Acts are entitled to the benefits of the Act. If they anticipate any difficulty in securing reinstatement in their civil employment they should write to Headquarters for further advice on procedure, etc.

Members will also be interested to learn that Advice Bureaux for demobbed men and women are to be opened in all large towns in the country so that ex-Service personnel can secure advice and assistance on problems arising from their demobilisation and rehabilitation in civilian life. The Association is asking for these facilities to be available to National Fire Service Officers.

QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THE NEW SECRETARY.

The first Quarterly Meeting of the Council was held at No. 5 Regional Headquarters on the 12th July, by kind permission of the Chief Regional Fire Officer who also kindly arranged for the members to hear the London Fire Forces' Band play the N.F.S. March. Just before this interesting diversion from the business of the day the Chairman of the Council (Mr. A. E. Kay) was introduced to the Regional Commissioner (Sir Ernest Gowers) and he then introduced the members individually to the Commissioner.

The agenda for the meeting included the reports of the two Committees which dealt with numerous matters but the most important business transacted arose rather unexpectedly in connection with negotiations with the Institution of Fire Engineers in connection with the use of Offices and a recommendation from the General Purposes Committee that Mr. D. MacDougald (Honorary Secretary) should be appointed "General Secretary" of the Association—the title used in the recently adopted Rules. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council reported upon meetings with representatives of the Institution at which it had been made clear that that body had decided that it required the full time services of a Secretary and they proposed to offer this appointment to Mr. MacDougald. The Council discussed the matter at some length and eventually decided to release Mr. MacDougald from the position of Honorary Secretary of this Association as from 31st August next in consequence of the intimation that the Institution of Fire Engineers proposed to offer him the full time appointment of Secretary to that body. The Council also unanimously decided to appoint Mr. R. Reader Harris as Honorary Secretary of the Association as from 1st, September 1944.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman reminded the members that owing to circumstances beyond their control this would be the last meeting which Mr. MacDougald would attend as Honorary Secretary and he paid tribute to the work which Mr. MacDougald had carried out on behalf of the Association from soon after its inception up to the present time. The representatives of all Regions present (including a number of members of the original Executive Committee) endorsed these remarks and thanked Mr. MacDougald for the kind co-operation and assistance which he had given them and their Regional Committees. It was then unanimously resolved (with acclamation) "That the Council place on record its appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. MacDougald as Honorary Secretary of the Association, and regrets that through circumstances beyond its control this arrangement has to be terminated."

The new Honorary Secretary, who takes over on 1st September, is Column Officer R. Reader Harris, at present Hon. Secretary of the No. 5 Regional Branch, Vice-Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Conditions of Service Committee. The Headquarters address—No. 2 Millbank House, Great Peter Street, London, S.W.1, is being retained,

Quarterly Meeting of the Council

UNIFORMS.

The report of the General Purposes Committee announced that replies had been received to certain of the representations made to the Department in connection with Officers' Uniforms and that authority had been received for:—

"(1) The provision of a raincoat as an addition to the uniform scale for all women officers (Assistant Group Officers and above). As part of the arrangements Assistant Group Officers will wear the standard pattern overcoat with the appropriate badges of rank.

"(2) An all-round increase in the maximum reimbursement rates allowed in respect of privately purchased uniform.

"The new rates will be:—

Men.		£	s.	d.
Jacket and Trousers	10	10	0
Overcoat	8	18	6
Cap (silver oak leaves)	3	0	0
Cap (black oak leaves)	2	12	6
Women.		£	s.	d.
Jacket and skirt	9	9	0
Overcoat	7	7	0
Cap	1	15	0

"Proportionate purchase tax will be allowed in addition to the above prices.

"The increased rates will apply in the case of senior officers (Divisional Officers and above, and Group Officers and above) and also to newly-appointed (or promoted) officers below these ranks purchasing their initial uniform (jacket and trousers, or skirt only) under the terms of the relevant instructions.

"(3) The requirement that officers who are supplied with three uniforms shall surrender an additional nine coupons has been withdrawn retrospectively."

These are the first results of negotiations which have extended over two years but there are still a number of matters outstanding. The granting of facilities to all Officers to purchase their uniforms appears to be in sight and is being followed up with the question of coupon-equivalent certificates for shirts, collars and ties, and a second uniform for Assistant Group Officers.

TRAVELLING FACILITIES FOR OFFICERS.

The Conditions of Service Committee reported that representations had been made to the Department for first class travelling facilities for all Officers and whilst this had not been granted the Department had agreed that where a junior Officer had to travel with a senior Officer on business he would be allowed first class fares.

The representations submitted by the Association also asked for the extension of the reimbursement of home-to-duty fares and free fares home for personnel posted away from home to cover Officers as well as other ranks. No reply had been received on these points at the time of the Council meeting and after several members had stressed the urgent necessity for obtaining an early decision, particularly in view of the reinstatement of Annual Leave, the Council decided to press the matter strongly.

MEMBERSHIP.

The Honorary Secretary reported that the membership now exceeded 2,000 and in reply to a question from the delegate of No. 5 Region as to what had happened to their resolution in connection with the admission of Officers of Industrial Brigades, the Chairman replied that that would be submitted to the appropriate Committee for consideration and report.

POST WAR FIRE SERVICE COMMITTEE.

The Chairman of this Committee reported that they had held meetings and prepared a list of headings upon which views of Regional Branches were being obtained. When those reports were received the Committee would get to work to prepare a comprehensive report for consideration by the Council.

TOPICAL NEWS

By "AEDILE."

THREE YEARS OLD.

Our third anniversary passed almost unnoticed by the general public who were preoccupied with the landings in Southern France and the trapped armies of the Reich in the Falaise pocket. It was gratifying to read in the editorial columns of one national newspaper that the skill and bravery always displayed by the country's fire fighting services had not been forgotten and that the N.F.S. had lived up to the high tradition established by its predecessors. In the same paper readers used the correspondence columns to express their views as to whether the whole-time establishment of the Service should be reduced and Fire Guards retained for enemy action or whether the part-timers—like the Home Guard—should be partially released from their obligations.

THE SERVICE AND THE PRESS.

Generally speaking the Service now receives a "good" press but members will do well to remember that this often depends upon close contact and liaison with local newspaper men. I was very interested recently in a chart indicating public opinion of the Service—as reflected by the press—from the time the Service was nationalised, through the Baedeker raids and blitzes, the formation of the Overseas Contingents in readiness for the Invasion and finally in dealing with the flying bomb. Numerous references to "special" Services were recorded at intermittent stages and it was also interesting to note the effect of the campaign against the use of non-standard phraseology.

THE DISCIPLINE CODE.

Talking of Press relations brings to mind a suggestion made in one part of the country that, save in serious cases, the results of Discipline Cases should not be published—a suggestion made almost synonymously with a comment in a local newspaper circulating in that part of the world that under no circumstances could defendants in legal cases succeed if they called at the Paper's offices to request that reports of proceedings be suppressed. The editor quite rightly added that anyone contemplating the commission of an offence should remember that publicity was part of the punishment. In special circumstances discretion was used but in exercising it the editor was un-influenced by representatives of interested parties.

Readers may have some views on this subject and also on the question of a Discipline Code in the Post War Fire Service—a possibility which has yet to be discussed. Before the War penal codes only operated in Police Brigades and as these were doomed to disappear under the 1938 Act the whole question would appear to be due for consideration at an early date.

THE POST WAR FIRE SERVICE.

The re-organisation or reconstruction of many public services appears to be inevitable when this struggle is over. Some of them—Education, Social Security, Local Government, Town Planning, Milk Inspection, etc. have already received Parliamentary attention in one form or another. In our own sphere close secrecy and silence has been maintained in official quarters, due, no doubt, to the pledge given when the emergency legislation authorising nationalisation was introduced into the legislature. Various organisations have published their views on the subject and members will be aware that it has been discussed by the Association. In April, 1943 the proposals of the Department were sought and a reply received that the Association would be able to submit observations on any proposals which became matters of general knowledge and there was nothing to prevent them from submitting representations to the Secretary of State on the subject generally at any time.

Since that date the Government has had experience of the value of consultation with interested bodies in connection with Post War Reconstruction measures, first on the Education Bill when many sectional organisations put forward constructive suggestions which necessitated prolonged debates in both Houses of Parliament and innumerable "consequential amendments." The other instance was the Town Planning Bill which had to be withdrawn entirely

Topical News

for discussion with representatives of Local Authorities who would have had to administer the new Act.

This may change the procedure in connection with future legislation but whilst we shall be content to leave the issue of central v. local control to be decided by the politicians we can hope that we shall be invited to put forward the views of members—either on alternative proposals submitted to them or in the form of schemes submitted for consideration without any knowledge of the official view. In any event members look forward with interest to details of the proposals for determining post-war conditions of service. Experience in other fields of public service before the War expressed by Government Committees and similar bodies of experts supports the view that whatever functional organisation is established the Conditions of Service of the Officers and men should be determined on a national basis, and that this is possible even with a number of units controlled by different bodies in different parts of the country.

Whilst discussing the Post War Service, I should like to mention a few points which appear to have escaped mention in the proposals published to date, but which are no doubt well to the fore in the minds of the Authorities. Many women are asking whether a new career will be opened up for them, whilst others enquire whether Fire Prevention and Fire Precautions at places of Public Entertainment, Factories, Railways, Airports and Docks—as well as the personnel and appliances maintained by the Fighting Services—ought not to come under one organisation, instead of a number of separate units operating in the same locality.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM.

Another field of public service mentioned as ripe for reorganisation is the Local Government machinery of the country. Until quite recently the Government refused to discuss the question with representatives of the Associations of Local Authorities (each of whom, as well as Nalco, had published proposals for revising the system) but towards the end of the Summer Session in Parliament the Minister of Health made an interesting statement on the subject.

Replying to a question he said that from the proposals put forward it was clear that there was no general desire to disrupt the existing structure of local government, or to abandon in favour of some form of regional government the main features of the county and county borough system, and the Government did not consider that any case had been made out for so drastic a change. They were satisfied that there was scope for improvement, particularly in the machinery for the review of districts, and discussions would be opened with the local government associations on these questions.

The Government's proposals, so I learn, include an adjustment of the powers of the smaller authorities, except for services which can be most efficiently carried on on a purely local basis. At the same time an attempt will be made to secure greater equality of powers, wealth and status among the counties and county boroughs, and this will end the completely independent life of several smaller county authorities. The trend in favour of large authorities, it is pointed out, has been established and it is not simply a Whitehall-versus-the-Provinces affair. The real question is whether the local authorities as now constituted, and how many of them, command the resources and the qualified servants to carry out the duties which Parliament and people expect them to perform.

FUSION?

The announcement that the four large Mining Unions are to consider amalgamation and merger into one large organisation after the War prompts me to suggest that the Fire Service would do well to follow suit. I am well aware that it has been tried before and that many members—if not the majority—would be against alliance with any political organisation. Such a view is respected particularly in a public service, but as is pointed out elsewhere in this issue it does not necessarily follow that an organisation which is legally a trade union need be associated in any way with politics. To the newcomer to the Service particularly, it is difficult to understand how so many organisations can exist side by side with almost identical aims and objects.

Topical News

TRAINING TEACHERS.

The view has been expressed in some quarters that after the fighting is over the country will be faced with even greater problems of political and economic complexity. Post war employment—and education—are occupying the attention of many members to-day and elsewhere in this issue the Editor has included references to Demobilisation, Resettlement Advice Bureaux, etc. At the outbreak of the War the teaching profession produced a number of volunteers for the Auxiliary Fire Service and owing to their training and background many of these men have rendered yeoman service, using their teaching ability to pass on to others the practical knowledge and experience gained during blitzes and heavy raiding. The Service was recently given an opportunity to reciprocate and it is hoped that many members will seriously consider G.F.F.I. 15/44 and take advantage of the Government Scheme for training the additional teachers necessary to carry the recent Education Act into operation.

• • •

LEGAL AID

WHEN the details of the Legal Aid Scheme were being discussed it was difficult to estimate the demand likely to arise. Within a very short space of time after its publication, however, the value of the Scheme was fully demonstrated. Three cases came to our notice within the space of a week—the first relating to a Pension for the Widow of an Officer who died from an organic disease; the second was a request for advice from an Officer who secured his pension before the War but continued in the Service and sustained serious injuries, and the other case involved the defence of an Officer who was prosecuted for rationing offences disclosed by returns signed by the Officer in an official capacity although the purchases had been made by another individual.

UNIFORMS

SOME of the results of the representations made by the Association and of the discussions which have taken place during the past two years were announced in a postscript to the Chairman's letter to all members in July last.

It is now announced that Treasury sanction has been received for the extension of the private purchase scheme to cover the purchase of undress uniform for all officers (men and women) in the National Fire Service.

A LINK WITH THE PAST

Many Officers who served in the London Area will recall Mr. J. H. While who has just died at the age of 81 years. For over 50 years he reported London fires for the newspapers and shortly before the War he published a book on "Fifty Years of Fire Fighting."

WOMENS' Page

NEW WOMEN "COUNCILLORS."

The election of the first four Women Officers to serve on the National Council has just been completed, the following Officers being elected, viz:—

Mrs. M. G. Bartlett	(No. 3 Region)
Miss A. A. Macdonald	(No. 1 ")
Miss M. E. Oddy	(No. 5 ")
Mrs. M. D. Swan	(No. 12 ")

Miss Macdonald and Miss Oddy will serve on the Conditions of Service Committee and Mrs. Bartlett and Mrs. Swan on the General Purposes Committee.

They will be welcomed by the Council and can be assured of an interesting and active term of office.

RAINCOATS FOR WOMEN OFFICERS.

Members who have not yet done so are advised to take advantage of a recent Home Office decision before the Autumn and Winter seasons arrive. Raincoats, as well as overcoats, may now be issued to all Women Officers.

A NEW ERA.

Many national organisations are now discussing the position of Women in the Post-War World, and it is natural that the subject should arise in N.F.S. Messes. At one Headquarters (so we are told) a Women Officer was elected Chairman of the Mess and the following morning this "epitaph" was exhibited on the Notice Board:—

The patriarchal rule has ended
And now we humbly genuflect
In awe and admiration blended
Before a matriarch elect.
Our male prerogative has vanished
Expunged by democratic vote:
Masculine privilege is banished—
We're governed by the petticoat.
An era has dawned, they tell us,
Of feminist governance.
To abject slavery they'll compel us
And women now will wear the pants.
Henceforth we'll fill the humbler Stations—
Cleaners, telephonists and cooks—
And the Gestapo's machinations
Will be replaced by soulful looks.
Unless this doctrine we refute
The goose will dominate the gander
And they'll compel us to salute
A feminine Fire Force Commander.
But though our influence may die
And their foul plot reach full fruition—
God grant, at least, they will not try
To put out fires by intuition.

WHITLEYISM

At the Annual General Meeting of the Association a motion was tabled by No. 7 Regional Branch in the following terms:—

"That this meeting is in favour of the introduction of Whitleyism (i.e. collective bargaining) in the National Fire Service, and instructs the Council to take steps to secure the formation of a National Joint Council for Fire Service Officers."

Owing to the limited number of members present the motion was referred to the Council for more detailed consideration.

During the interval between the General Meeting and the first Quarterly meeting of the Council the subject was debated by Regional Branches and the following resolutions have been extracted from the Reports received to date:—

No. 1 REGIONAL BRANCH

"That this Region considers the present aspect of Trade Unionism being a factor in the conduct of the Fire Service is having an adverse effect on the Service as a profession and that some steps should be taken to set up an organisation for representation within the Service. Whitleyism and the Police Federation should be carefully examined for this purpose."

No. 12 REGIONAL BRANCH

"No. 12 Regional Committee consider that the motion as drawn is not applicable to the N.F.S. and if in the opinion of the meeting such a course is considered suitable that the words "National Joint Council for Fire Service Officers" be deleted and the words "Committee to negotiate with the Department" be inserted in their place."

At the July meeting of the Council the following report and recommendation of the General Purposes Committee was adopted, viz.:—

We have considered the following Motion submitted at the Annual Meeting by Region 7 and referred to the Council for consideration, viz.:—

"That this meeting is in favour of the introduction of Whitleyism (i.e. collective bargaining) in the National Fire Service and instructs the Council to take steps to secure the formation of a National Joint Council for Fire Service Officers."

"Whitleyism" is the name given to the system of collective bargaining recommended by a Government Committee appointed after the 1914-1918 War, under the Chairmanship of the Rt. Hon. J. H. Whitley, M.P. (a former speaker of the House of Commons) to consider ways and means of promoting peace and avoiding strife in industry. That Committee recommended the setting up in each industry of Industrial Councils, representative of both employers and employed, for the purpose of dealing in an amicable way with the problems of the industry, including wages and working conditions.

It is well known that these Committees or "Boards" have been set up for numerous industries, for the Local Government Service and the Civil Service. In the latter case our attention was drawn to a recent Parliamentary Answer stating that approximately 75 per cent. of the established and temporary Civil Servants were attached to the Organisations represented on the Staff Side of the National Whitley Council.

If a Council was established for Fire Service Officers we understand that there would be an equal number of representatives of the Home Office and Treasury on the one hand, and of the Officers on the other, and that regular meetings could be held at which matters which were the subject of negotiation between the parties could be discussed and delays resulting from protracted correspondence would be avoided.

We feel, however, from the information supplied to us that this machinery is best suited to trades or professions where there are a large number of employers affected and it is desired to achieve standardisation. Until such time as the organisation of the Post-War Fire Service is determined it is difficult to say whether Whitleyism would represent any advantage over the present system.

Whitleyism

There is another aspect of the question which must not be overlooked. It is hardly likely that the number of Officers in the Post-War Fire Service will justify a separate Whitley Council dealing with Officers only. If it deals with the whole service and representation on the Staff Side of the Whitley Council is pro-rata the number of individuals concerned, then the representation of the Officers will be very small.

We recommend that no action be taken in this matter for the time being.

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

As a member of a Regional Committee of the Association I am often asked "What good is the N.F.S.O.A. to me?" and sometimes it is suggested that only ex-Regulars are likely to benefit. Such an outlook, in my opinion portrays a misunderstanding of the reasons for the existence of such an Association and of the indirect results of its activities. The Association was formed before the nationalisation of the Service for the mutual benefit of all its members and the enhancement of the Service as a whole, and not for the personal benefit of this or that individual group. Each member, therefore, should ask himself, not "What good is the N.F.S.O.A. to me?" but "What good can I be to the N.F.S.O.A., i.e. what can I do to help my colleagues and the Service to which we all belong?"

Personal benefits do come in, of course, for what is of advantage to us all will be an advantage to each of us individually. But the idea of individual benefit should take second place. The member who puts himself first will never make a good Officer, a good colleague, or a good citizen.

Secondly, I try and point out that the existence of the Association is a real safeguard and although it does not claim this or that victory every time an improvement in Conditions of Service is announced—even though it coincides with representations made by the Association—it is obvious that the considerable amount of time and labour devoted to the activities of the Association by members of the Council, Regional Committees, Area Branch Committees and their Officers must produce good results. These individuals represent a typical cross section of the Officers of the Service and they are in close contact with all members. The views they express, therefore, represent the views of the members and it can be claimed that through its democratic organisation the Association gives the fullest consideration to all proposals and suggestions put forward by individual members. Quick results are not always achieved—often the negotiations are protracted owing to the fact that several Government Departments are affected and the repercussions of granting concessions to N.F.S. Officers are always fully examined before a final decision is reached. But the activities of the Council of the Association—and its Committees—are by no means confined to the consideration of matters raised by individual members, or even Regional Branches. Draft Instructions are frequently received from the Department for comments, proceedings in Parliament affecting members (including legislation) are examined and action taken where necessary, references to the Service in the Press are scrutinised, and domestic matters such as the Legal Aid Scheme, free Banking facilities, etc. are discussed.

Finally I point out to those members that active membership of the Association is good experience, for not only does it open up a wider range of interests which they will be able to retain after they have left the Service, but it is also good training in Citizenship—in sharing the responsibilities of the average man and woman in the Government and Local administration of our country. They get quite a close insight of the machinery of government, see how it works, what it does and the services it brings to the community. They are also indirectly encouraged to develop personal qualities of Service to others, friendly rivalry, the art of debate and reasoning, and taking one's place in the community. By contact with fellow-members from other Areas or Regions their picture of the Service is broadened and they learn to appreciate how to consider their problems on a national basis.



DEDICATED TO THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE

Who is the chap who takes the rap
When things go wrong?
Who is the man who holds the can
The whole day long?
Who is to blame? You know his name,
For by and large,
They give "What Ho" to the poor C.O.
The Officer in Charge.

If there's an urge to have a purge
And then one day,
A Mr. Blank of Inspector rank
Decides to play;
If in Control they find the whole
Staff tongue tied,
If shoes aren't clean as they should have
(It's wet outside); (been

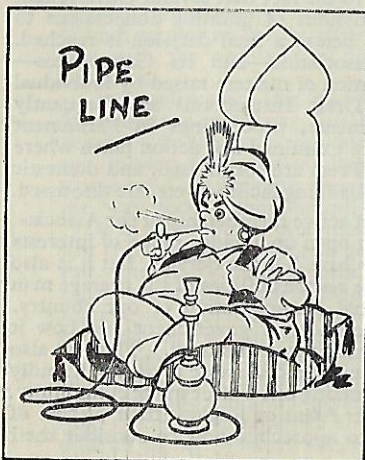
If at a drill the men are still
A trifle slow,
If there's a static somewhat erratic,
With water low,
If someone tried mistakes to hide
By camouflage,
They give "What Ho" to the poor C.O.
The Officer in Charge.

If there's a storm about a form
That's not quite right,
If there's a ramp about a lamp
That will not light;
If they can see an A.T.V.
With specks of dust
If someone feels beneath the wheels
And finds some rust;
If there's a tyre that should be higher,
Five pounds too low,
If couplings part, or pumps won't start,
Or turnout's slow;
An unwashed floor, a creaking door,
I'll not enlarge;
They give "What Ho" to the poor C.O.
The Officer in Charge.

Who is the chap who takes the rap
When things go wrong?
Who is the man who holds the can
The whole day long?
Who is to blame? You know his name
For by and large,
They give "What Ho" to the poor C.O.
The Officer in Charge.

N.F.S. TERMS

No. 1



Ikey. "Farder, what is a vacuum?"
Abe. "A void, my son."
Ikey. "I know, but what does the
void mean?"

A Town Councillor lost his notes for a speech and eventually the slip of paper was discovered at a chemist's, where it had been left by mistake. In the meantime, the chemist had made it up as an eyewash.—*The Humorist*.

"Daddy, why do they wind up a business when they want it to stop?"

And Jet I Don't Know

LONDON CAMEOS

THE London N.F.S. officer to-day is more than a fireman; he is mother and nurse, he is a supervisor of light and heavy rescue, he is a father to the homeless, and last but not least he is a furniture remover.

A flying bomb falls near a fire station. It is severely blasted—windows blown in, ceilings down, walls leaning precariously; towing vehicle doors have been shattered. A quick roll-call, a check of appliances. "How do you feel?" asks the Divisional Officer "want to be put off the run?" Unanimously the answer is "No" and twenty minutes later the section is at another incident. When the all-clear goes those crews start a little repair work on their own station. The Divisional Officer had high praise for his officers and men—their morale has never flagged.

In the glare of the appliance headlights a Column Officer directs work at an incident. For three-quarters of an hour his men dig and rescue, carry down and help the injured. They are carried away on scaling ladders and blown-off doors, on seats from cars or any improvised stretcher that is handy.

A Divisional Officer answers the telephone. "Can we have a section of pumps?" asks the caller. "At once" he replies. "With brooms please." That call is from a hospital with about 1,000 windows to sweep up.

Communications have broken down. In a short time telephone communication between the incident officer and the nearest convenient exchange telephone are set up. Valuable work this, achieved with remarkable efficiency by the Field Telephone Units.

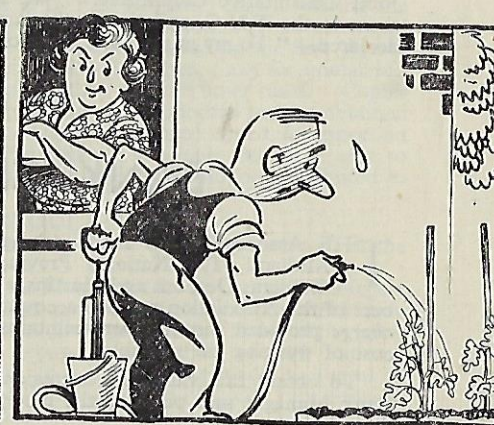
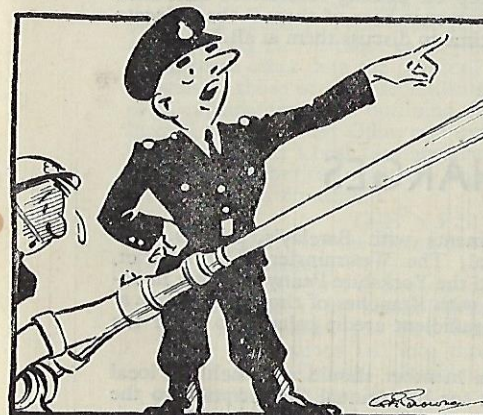
There is praise for the firewomen's courage and coolness. Best example to date, the firewoman in the control room who recorded the bomb as it fell!

The public has been amazed at the speed with which the N.F.S. appliances arrive at an incident. Two minutes from the moment the bomb is spotted is an average time. As one Officer expressed it "The Fire Service is getting plenty of bouquets these days," and another "We have seen sights unequalled on the battlefield. But the National Fire Service has done the job. I am proud of my officers and men who have risen to a task that calls for high courage, coolness and a strong stomach."

W. T. S.

(With acknowledgments to Coy. O. J. Anderson, Reg. H.Q.)

ON AND OFF



TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE UNIONISM

DUE no doubt, in some measure, to their public relations activities, Trade Unions and Trade Unionism are always front page news. To take three instances during the last two or three years—first, they threatened to defy the ban on the affiliation of Civil Service Unions to the T.U.C.; then Mr. Bevin got into hot water through consulting the T.U.C. on the anti-strike Defence Regulation; and quite recently the Times has stimulated correspondence on the subject of Trade Associations and Trade Protections Societies by publishing two leading articles.

The subject has not escaped notice in our own sphere for a statement published in a Regional Bulletin that "there are two kinds of trade unions—those that are, and those that are not concerned with politics. The N.F.S.O.A. is in the latter class . . ." prompted a letter to the Editor of Fire Ground enquiring whether this represented the view of the majority of members. The correspondent continued by stating that when he joined he had no desire or intention of becoming a member of a trade union any more than a solicitor has when he voluntarily becomes a member of the Law Society and he would be sorry to think that the N.F.S.O.A. *regards itself (the italics are mine, Ed.)* as being organised on the same basis as a Trade Union.

Let us refer the learned correspondent of "Fire Ground" to the Trade Union Act of 1913, and the Trade Disputes Act, 1906. A "trade union" within the meaning of these two statutes is "any combination whose principal objects are (i) the regulation of the relations between employees and employers, or between employees, or between employers, or the imposition of restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business, and (iii) the provision of benefits to its members. These objects are known as the "statutory objects" of trade unions and the fact that a union has other objects in addition does not affect its legal status.

The answer to our correspondent must be that the Association—and the Law Society and the B.M.A. and the hundreds of Trade Protection Associations—are "statutory trade unions" most of them coming within the class that are not associated with politics.

We gather that the idea of being a trade unionist rather frightens some members to which we will reply with a quotation from the report of a meeting of a provincial Trades Council held recently. When the Minutes of the previous meeting were presented a delegate enquired "What becomes of our resolutions?" and the Secretary replied that sometimes he received an acknowledgment from the T.U.C. saying that the matter would be placed before the Joint Consultative Committee. "We keep on passing resolutions and send them to the T.U.C. and that is the last we ever hear of them" the delegate declared. "To my mind it is a waste of time to discuss them at all."

BANK CHARGES

THE Association has made arrangements with Barclay's, Lloyds, The Midland, The National Provincial, The Westminster, The District, Williams Deacons and Martins, and the Yorkshire Penny Bank for members of the Association to keep accounts with Branches of those Banks free of charge provided the member maintains sufficient credit balance to cover the cost of working the account.

To obtain this valuable concession a member should approach his local Bank Manager and produce the receipt for his Annual Subscription to the Association.



THE KING'S BADGE.

Reference was made in the June issue of "Fire Ground" to an appeal made in the House of Commons for the issue of the King's Badge to wounded and discharged firemen of the National Fire Service and members of the Civil Defence Service invalidated out on pension on the same terms as members of the so-called Fighting Services. That appeal was made on a motion for the adjournment of the House and a promise was given that the subject would be debated as soon as possible.

On the 18th July the Prime Minister was again asked whether he had reached any decision in the matter to which he replied that it was still under consideration.

DISCHARGED SERVICE PERSONNEL—RESETTLEMENT

The Minister of Labour has announced in the House of Commons the Government's intention to introduce a special service for advising men and women released from war service at the conclusion of hostilities about matters relating to their resettlement in civil life. Resettlement Advice Offices are being established as an extension of the existing service given by the Department in all parts of the country. The function of these offices will be to give advice and information to all men and women released from the Forces or from other forms of war service and to render every possible assistance to them in dealing with their resettlement problems. By providing these centres, at which individuals may seek assistance whatever their requirements may be, the Government intend not only to help them to solve their difficulties but also to save them avoidable journeys and enquiries. The work of these offices will be dovetailed in with that of the outside Welfare Officers of the Ministry of Labour and National Service and will be co-ordinated with that of the voluntary organisations.

In a subsequent debate on War Pensions a request was made to the Government to consider a suggestion that at each Employment Exchange there should be an officer specialising in helping ex-Service men to settle down, or that alternatively the Minister of Pensions would consider appointing a representative of his Ministry in all large towns.

THE PENSIONS (INCREASE) ACT, 1944.

This Act authorises limited increases in Fire Brigade Pensions during the period 1st January, 1944—31st December, 1945 on account of the increased cost of living etc. in those cases where the income (excluding the first £52 of any income other than the pension) amounts to less than £225 for unmarried persons or those without dependents or less than £300 in other cases. Copies of an explanatory leaflet outlining the procedure to be adopted may be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office and similar leaflets have been issued in connection with Police and Local Government Pensions. They have also been sent to the Local Authorities with the suggestion that they should be distributed to the pensioners concerned.

THE N.F.S. REGULATIONS.

On the 26th July the Home Secretary made the following statement in the House of Commons, viz.:—

"I much regret to have to tell the House that by an oversight there has been a failure to lay before Parliament a number of Regulations which have been made under the Fire Services (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1941. These Regulations fall into three groups. First, there are the National Fire Service (General) Regulations, 1941, which were made in August of that year, and provide for the establishment of the National Fire Service, and a number of Regulations which have been made from time to time

since that date amending the original Regulations. The total number in this group is 19, including the original Regulations. The second group consists of three sets of Regulations made in November and December, 1942, and in August, 1943, amending earlier Regulations relating to the preservation of pensions of whole-time members of the National Fire Service who had previously been in the service of a local authority. The original Regulations in this series which had been made in August, 1941, had been duly laid before Parliament. Thirdly, there are the National Fire Service (Employment Overseas) Regulations, which were made in June of this year and authorise the employment of members of the Service, as volunteers, in support of the operations of the Allied Forces in Europe.

All these Regulations ought to have been laid in accordance with the Act, which provides that Regulations made thereunder are to be laid before Parliament 'as soon as may be,' and that within the next twenty-eight sitting days they may be annulled by resolution of either House. The House will, I hope, acquit me and my Department of any deliberate disregard of this requirement. The Regulations have, of course, all been printed as Statutory Rules and Orders and have been placed on sale. Moreover, as I have already mentioned, a set of six Regulations dealing with the preservation of pensions, which were made in August, 1941, were duly laid before Parliament. I think, therefore, that I may fairly ask the House to accept my assurance that the omission to present the other Regulations to which I have referred was unintentional, and hon. Members will appreciate that at the time when this series of mishaps began we were particularly hardly pressed in the reorganisation of fire-fighting against enemy attacks. I can now only express my great regret for the oversight. Needless to say, arrangements have been made to ensure that a mistake of this kind does not occur again.

Such steps as are possible have also been taken to repair the omission by laying the Regulations before Parliament at once; and they are being presented. They will have to lie for twenty-eight sitting days; and as we are to adjourn shortly this period will not elapse until well after Parliament reassembles in the autumn. They will of course be examined by the Select Committee on Statutory Rules and Orders. This will give hon. Members ample time to consider them, but I think that it will help the House if I add that I had it in mind in any event to consolidate, with certain further amendments, the General Regulations. This may take a little time, but I will issue the revised Regulations, with a full explanatory memorandum, as soon as possible after the Recess. There have been fewer amendments in the Preservation of Pensions Regulations, and as at present advised I do not think it necessary to consolidate them. In conclusion, I can only say again that I much regret this omission, which I felt it my duty to bring to the notice of the House as soon as possible after it came to light."

This was followed by a number of questions concerning the validity or legality of action taken under the Regulations (e.g. disciplinary action, dismissals, etc.) and whether individuals who had had their civil rights damaged would be entitled to damages. The controversial issue of delegated legislation was also introduced.

Two days later the House gave a first reading to the Indemnity Bill—its full title was "The National Fire Service Regulations (Indemnity) Bill"—and the remaining stages were completed on the 1st August. It took but two more days to pass through all its stages in the House of Lords and receive the Royal Assent. Thus the whole question was settled before Parliament rose for the Summer Recess. The Act indemnifies the Secretary of State against the consequences of his failure to lay the Regulations before Parliament and declares that the requirements of the Fire Services (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1941 shall be deemed to have been observed. The Schedule recites 23 Orders affected by the Act.

From an examination of the original Statute and the speeches in both Houses of Parliament it appears that the omission was due to each individual concerned leaving it to someone else, and also to what is described as "legislation by reference" which although shorter and quicker in some cases invariably causes more trouble and inconvenience in the long run.

OVERSEAS CONTINGENT

Members serving with Overseas Contingents will be interested in the following letter received from the Department on the question of Estate Duty—the only outstanding point in connection with their Conditions of Service, viz.:—

Home Office, Horseferry Road,
Thorney Street,
London, S.W.1.
27th July, 1944.

Ref.K.300/55.

Dear Mr. Macdougald,

We have now heard from the Estate Duty Office about the suggestion in your letter of the 11th April that the remission of Estate Duty applicable to Army Officers should be applied to Officers of the National Fire Service who may serve abroad as members of the Overseas Contingent.

The relief from death duties which is available under section 38 of the Finance Act 1924 is, under sub-section (2) of the section limited to members of His Majesty's Forces and cannot, therefore, be extended to officers of the National Fire Service.

The relief provided for in section 14 of the Finance Act of 1900 would, however, be available to members of the Overseas Contingent. Under this section remission can be made, up to an amount not exceeding £150 in any one case, of the whole or any part of the death duties leviable in respect of property passing upon the death of the deceased to his widow or lineal descendants if the total value (for Estate Duty purposes) of the property so passing does not exceed £5,000.

The requirements of this section are:—

- (1) that the deceased shall have died from wounds inflicted, accident occurring, or disease contracted, within twelve months before death, while on active service against an enemy, whether on sea or land.
- (2) that the deceased was, at the time when the wounds were inflicted, the accident occurred, or the disease was contracted, subject to military law under Part V of the Army Act.
- (3) that a recommendation for remission has been issued by the Secretary of State.

An application for such a recommendation must be made to the War Office (Effects Branch), Blue Coat School, Church Road, Wavertree, Liverpool, 15.

In any case where a remission of Duty under section 14 of the Finance Act, 1900 is not permissible, there is the possibility that relief may be available under section 46 of the Finance Act, 1941.

In point of extent, any relief which can be granted under this section will be the same as that available on the death of an Army Officer under the provisions of section 38 of the Finance Act, 1924. It applies to property passing not merely to the widow or lineal descendant of the deceased, but also to his lineal ascendants, and to his brothers and sisters and their descendants; and not only is the first £5,000 of such property wholly exempted, but as regards the balance of the property passing to persons of the relationships just mentioned, a proportion only of the full duty is chargeable, based on the expectation of life of the deceased at the time of his death, calculated in accordance with the Government Tables of Mortality as therein mentioned.

The conditions under which this relief can be granted under section 46 of the Act of 1941 are, however, more stringent than under section 38 of the Act of 1924, in that it has to be proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue that the death occurred from injuries received within twelve months of death, caused by the operations of war.

When an application is made for relief under section 46 of the Act of 1941, the facts are, in practice, submitted to the Estate Duty Office, and no recommendation from the Secretary of State is required.

We understand that these reliefs are well known to the legal profession, and that they are generally brought to the notice of personal applicants by the local Registrars of Probate Registries.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) A. H. HAMMOND.

REGION *by Region.*

No. 1 REGION.

The Regional Committee met at Durham on the 23rd June under the Chairmanship of Mr. W. H. Mardon. Replies were formulated to the Questionnaire on the P.W.F.S. and it was decided to protest against the Regional collection of subscriptions which, it was considered, should be the responsibility of the paid officials of the Association.

The Committee also passed a unanimous resolution expressing the opinion that the present aspect of Trade Unionism being a factor in the conduct of the Fire Service was having an adverse effect on the Service as a profession and that some steps should be taken to set up an organisation for representation within the Service. Whitleyism and the Police Federation should be carefully examined for this purpose.

No. 3 REGION.

Mr. C. H. Wilkinson, M.B.E., presided at a Regional Committee Meeting and at a Regional Conference held at Lincoln on the 17th June when the Chairman and Mr. A. A. I. Galloway reported on the meetings held in London on the 23rd May, 1944.

The Regional Committee decided that resolutions passed by the Nos. 9 and 10 Area Branches related to subjects which were either outside the purview of the Association or were in hand at National level and it was therefore not necessary for the Committee to take any action. The question of the P.W.F.S. was discussed at the General Meeting but as all the Area Branches had not yet held meetings to discuss the subject it was decided to fix a time limit for the submission of Area reports and to hold a Special Meeting of the Regional Committee to consider them.

On the subject of attendances at meetings the opinion was expressed that owing to travel difficulties (particularly in connection with Regional Meetings) wider representation and increased attendances at Area level were essential. An appeal was made for complete unity and 100% support to the Chairman and that only matters of major issue should reach national level.

No. 9 AREA BRANCH

A meeting was held at Leicester on the 30th June also under the Chairmanship of Mr. C. H. Wilkinson, M.B.E., when the Minutes of the National Council (23rd May) and the Regional Committee (17th June) were considered.

In connection with Uniforms the following resolution was passed, viz:—

"That this meeting has now been fully convinced that the issue of 'made to measure' uniforms is an utter failure. It fails to understand why there should be discrimination between officer ranks in the N.F.S. when in all other Services no such discrimination is made. This meeting presses the National Council to urge the Home Secretary to ensure that all Officers should be treated with equality, and that the method for the supply shall be uniform to all ranks. In pressing this resolution the Officers concerned are quite confident that they have the unstinted support of all senior ranks, and that the more senior officers concerned will back them whole-heartedly."

The questionnaire issued to Regional Committees and Area Branches on the subject of Conditions of Service in the Post War Fire Service was discussed and the Branch recorded its pleasure that the National Council had given such generous thought to the matter.

Region by Region

No. 5 REGION.

A full meeting of the London Branch was held on the 7th June when the proceedings at the Annual General Meeting and the National Council Meeting a fortnight earlier were reported and discussed. Mr. Richardson was elected Vice-Chairman of the Branch and Mr. Fielder, Hon. Treasurer.

The following resolution was passed in connection with the new Rules, viz:—

"That this Branch considers that Officers of industrial brigades who are also part-time members of the N.F.S. should be entitled to become members of the Association in the same way as all other part-time Officers and urges the National Council to take steps to have the Rules of the Association amended accordingly."

The previous decision that there was no need for the Association to submit proposals to the Department concerning the post-war Fire Service was reviewed and it was left to the Regional Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee to consider the matter.

The Branch Committee met on the 27th July when Mr. A. Netherwood again took the Chair and a Sub-Committee was appointed comprising three ex-Regular and two ex-A.F.S. Officers and a Woman Officer. Members are to be asked to publicise the activities of the Association amongst non-members and to point out, for example, the concession obtained in connection with Clothing Coupons promulgated in N.F.S.I.58/44. It was also decided to draw the attention of the National Council to the exceptional restrictions contained in G.F.F.I.16/1944 which might have the effect of restricting initiative and discouraging members from contributing to, and enhancing, the prestige of the Service.

Redundancy of Administrative Officers.

There was a lively discussion on the need for the N.F.S.O.A. taking a stronger line in its approach to the Home Office over the question of Administrative Officers made redundant by re-organisations. The following points were raised, endorsed by the Committee and the Hon. Secretary directed to forward them to the National Executive Committee:

1. That it is unjust to liquidate confirmed officers merely because there has been an internal re-organisation. Was there not a hint of "duress" or "undue influence" in informing officers that they could either consent to demotion or be discharged?
2. That we expect the State to be a model employer, and that we had officers who were originally confirmed because they were competent, now threatened with downgrading because their employer had made changes in the organisation.
3. That to degrade a Column or Company Officer to the rank of Section Leader was unjust. To degrade a Captain to the rank of Sergeant-Major was a course the Army would not take, except on court-martial. The effect on the individual forced to continue working in the lower rank amongst personnel he had formerly commanded could be imagined.
4. That dissatisfaction was being caused by Senior Officers continuing in their ranks without commands, while administrative officers were threatened with down-grading.
5. That all Officer ranks should be immediately reviewed by the Home Office from the top downwards, and officers already drawing pensions or by now entitled to full pensions sent into retirement. Such equitable treatment would satisfy officers at every level of command.
6. That there should be a precise interpretation of Home Office instructions throughout the country, which would prevent an occurrence of recent incidents when redundant officers were not even granted three month's grace.
7. That should demobilisation and the drafting of Fire Service personnel to the Army occur, Officers should be permitted to find other employment, and the N.F.S. Officers should not be called into the lowest ranks of the Army at this stage of the war.

Region by Region

N.F.S. Selection Board.

The Committee also decided to ask the Council to protest against the establishment of this Board for the purposes which have been officially announced, it being felt that in the absence of any official pronouncement on the question of the P.W.F.S. the proposal was likely to give rise to the greatest mistrust and worry amongst certain Officers.

No. 7 REGION.

There was a very full agenda for the Quarterly Meeting of the Regional Committee held at Taunton on the 5th July, when the Regional Chairman, Mr. J. Y. Kirkup, M.B.E., presided. Lively discussions took place on two controversial subjects as will be observed from the following resolutions which were eventually carried, viz.:—

The Annual General Meeting—23rd May, 1944.

"That this Region raises the question of the legality of the Annual General Meeting held on the 23rd May, 1944 and would refer the National Executive to Rule 18b which was operative at that time and enquires under what Rule the Committee would have acted if the necessary quorum of 30 members had been present; also to ask the National Council to confirm that their action was purely dictated by urgency and that the decisions of the Meeting are subject to ratification by a majority of the Members of the Association, who it is understood have been circulated to this effect."

Publication of results of Discipline Cases.

"It is considered that publication of the conviction of an Officer under the Discipline Code in Force Orders is detrimental to discipline and this practice ought not to be continued except in serious cases, e.g. reduction in rank or dismissal from the Service."

In connection with the Post War Fire Service the Regional views were recorded at a meeting held before the issue of the National Memorandum and the additional information required to complete the Questionnaire was discussed and unanimity reached.

No. 8 REGION.

Prior to the 27th July, 1943, Regional Branch meetings were held monthly, but on the formation of Area Branches, on that date, it was decided that future meetings of the Regional Branch should be held at bi-monthly intervals. Area Branches in Nos. 21 and 22 Fire Forces are held monthly but those in Area 20 are held bi-monthly to alternate with Regional Branch meetings.

Chief Regional Fire Officer T. A. Varley attended his last meeting of the No. 8 Regional Branch on the 23rd March, 1944, before leaving to take up his new appointment in No. 1 Region and the regret of all members of the Branch was expressed at the loss of so active a member. Chief Regional Fire Officer G. V. Blackstone, G.M., has succeeded Mr. Varley and has already taken a keen and active interest in the Branch.

Many interesting and educative meetings of the Branch have been held, and visits made to Messrs. Lewis & Tylor, Hose Manufacturers' Cardiff, where members were conducted around the works and entertained to tea by the Management, and also to the National Oil Refineries at Llandarcy where again a conducted tour of the premises was made.

At the last meeting of the Branch held at Llandarcy, the Chief Regional Fire Officer who took the chair in the absence of Fire Force Commander J. W. H. Strange, announced that Divisional Officer W. E. Whitehouse had been promoted to the rank of Assistant Fire Force Commander (part-time). This news was greeted with great enthusiasm by the members of the Branch who are all well acquainted with the great amount of time and energy which Mr. Whitehouse has devoted to the Association generally and Region 8 in particular.

No. 9 REGION.

The monthly meeting of the Regional Committee was held at Birmingham on the 7th July. Mr. H. R. Lucas was in the Chair supported by representatives of Areas 24, 25, and 40 and Women Officers, as well as the Regional Secretary and the Regional Legal Adviser.

Region by Region

The active steps taken in this Region to recruit new members resulted in a very encouraging number of applications being submitted for approval, and there was an interesting discussion on the liability of certain members who joined in the second half of 1943. These members had not joined quite late enough to obtain the benefit of the Rule which then operated and provided that anyone joining after 1st October would only pay one subscription to cover the remainder of that year and the whole of the following year.

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 23rd May and the agenda for the 12th July were considered and the Committee also discussed the question of the precedence of the N.F.S. in ceremonial parades. It was decided to ask the Council to obtain a firm ruling in the matter.

The report on Parliamentary proceedings prepared by the Chairman of the Council was submitted and in reply to a question on the subject of Income Tax on Rent Allowances the Chairman of the Committee reported that he had supplied certain information on this matter to the National Council.

No. 24 AREA BRANCH.

Mr. H. R. Lucas also presided at a meeting of this Branch held at Birmingham on the 25th May, and after giving a full report on the meetings held in London two days earlier an expression of appreciation of his detailed and lucid report was recorded.

It was noted with satisfaction that the majority of the new members recently elected in the Region were attached to this Area.

A resolution was passed asking the Regional Committee to explore the possibilities of the Association providing an insurance scheme to cover members in respect of injury or death.

No. 40 AREA.

At a meeting held at the Area Headquarters at Wolverhampton on the 25th July it was unanimously decided to form an Area Branch and the following Officers were elected, viz.: Chairman—Mr. G. T. Hill; Vice-Chairman—Mr. P. A. Bloom; Honorary Secretary—Mr. W. E. Hudson. A Branch Committee was formed comprising two members from Area Headquarters and two members from each of the four Divisions.

No. 10 REGION.

A meeting of the Regional Committee was held at Manchester on the 30th June when the Chairman (Mr. J. Mackenzie) welcomed Mr. J. F. Tyson the newly appointed Regional Treasurer. Reports were received from Nos. 26, 27 and 29 Areas and a considerable number of applications for membership were received as a result of Area Meetings.

Suggestions were made that a membership card should be issued and that Y.M.C.A. facilities should be made available to the whole country. Arising out of the discussion on the Post War Fire Service it was decided to ask the National Council to ascertain whether it can be reasonably anticipated that women personnel will continue to be employed in the Post War Fire Service.

Part-time Company Officer Edge (No. 29 Area) was co-opted to serve on the Regional Committee.

No. 11 REGION.

Mr. A. S. Pratten, G.M., took the Chair at a Regional Meeting held at Dundee on the 27th June when representatives of the Western (Nos. 1 and 2), the Eastern and South Eastern Areas were present. The election of new members since the previous meeting included a preponderance of Women Officers.

The proceedings at the meetings of the two Committees of the National Council held on the 17th May and 20th June were discussed and in view of the appeals for reduced travelling (which were current at that time) the Committee decided to suspend Regional Meetings and to circulate the Minutes of this meeting to all members.

The Minutes of Meetings of the Eastern and Western (No. 2) Area Branches and of Nos. 5, 7 and 8 Regions were submitted and the Committee noted the formation of an Area Branch in the Western (No. 1) Area and the appointment of Branch Officers and a Committee.

Region by Region

The P.W.F.S. Questionnaire was discussed and replies formulated and the meeting concluded after a 7-hour session.

No. 4 (EASTERN) AREA BRANCH.

Meetings of this Branch were held at Dundee on the 28th June and at St. Andrews on the 26th July, the Chair at the first meeting being taken by Mr. W. Moore, and at the second meeting by Mr. J. G. Taylor. The proceedings at the last meetings of the National Council and the Regional Committee (held at Stirling) were reviewed and an encouraging number of applications for membership were approved.

An outdoor programme arranged to follow the second meeting had to be abandoned owing to inclement weather and a debate took place on the question "Should Women be allowed equal rights and equal pay with men in the post-war Scheme." The affirmative resolution was carried.

No. 12 REGION.

A meeting of the Regional Committee was held at Tunbridge Wells on the 30th June under the Chairmanship of Mr. C. Birch, O.B.E. The business included reports of meetings of Area Branches and the National Council (23rd May), the appointment of Honorary Legal Advisers, and the Questionnaire on Conditions of Service in the Post War Fire Service. The collection of subscriptions and Applications for Membership were considered and it was also decided to ask the National Council to consider the question of the responsibility of Catering Officers and their Assistants with a view to their protection against personal liability in respect of legal proceedings in a similar manner to that afforded to Transport Officers.

AN INVITATION

Through the Colonial Office and the Hong Kong Planning Unit the Association has been asked to invite members to apply for various posts in the Colony's Fire Brigade Organisation which will be resuscitated when the Colony is reoccupied.

The vacancies are as follows :—

Chief Officer	..	£900—£1050
Divisional Officer	..	£600—£700
Four Station Officers		£260—£535
Mechanical Engineer		£310—£535

It is obviously not practical at the moment to fix a date when the services of the Officers will be required but it is unlikely to be before December next. Applications containing the usual details should be submitted to the Hong Kong Planning Unit, 2 Park Street, London, W.1.



Dear Mr. Editor,

K.429 LULL PERIOD

ATTENDANCE CARDS.

These are deemed to be of great importance by the "higher-ups" in the N.F.S. and certainly have caused and still cause a lot of work at Sub. Divisional Level. In my opinion they are totally unnecessary and a sheer waste of time and paper. If a set is examined and analysed at any Sub. Divisional Control it will be found that practically the same attendance is determined for all risks within the Area covered by the Control. If therefore, the cards which were practically identical were removed the number of cards left would not be more than 10% of the original total. It is generally found that a standard turnout applies to most fires and to quote a typical example from a Sub. Division. I have in mind—LULL PERIOD—DAYLIGHT, PE and 2 Major Pumps, LULL PERIOD—DARK PE and 3 Major Pumps and I know that the cards that fit that turnout comprise 90% of the total.

Surely then, would it not be better to have a pre-determined attendance for all fires occurring in a Sub. Division with a few common sense exceptions, i.e. Aircraft Crash or Aerodrome Fire MDU and FT. Stack Fires MDU to replace PE.

If this were introduced the Mobilising would be very simple and the Officer in charge of the first appliance at a fire would always know what attendance to expect and would therefore immediately order any other appliances he deemed necessary. On the K.429 the attendance required is stated and it also states where the pumps are to be ordered from. Actually this very rarely works as the appliances mentioned on the K.429 are not available at the particular station and the

Mobilising Officer has to make up the attendance from other stations. He could do this without a K.429 to refer to and would obviously order the appliances from the nearest stations that were showing as available the appliances he required.

Standing instructions in accordance with N.F.S.I. 81/42 are already posted in Station Controls so why not go a step further and introduce the same system in Sub. Divisions and scrap the K. 429's.

The ridiculous side of the K.429 was brought home in a certain incident a few weeks ago.

A fire was reported at a large firm which certainly was a high risk in that particular Sub. Division. Seven appliances were turned out including TL, PE and PST to what turned out to be three smouldering sacks in an open yard fifty yards away from the nearest building. If this had been a really serious fire the turnout I mentioned previously (PE and 2 Major Pumps) would have taken longer to get to work to advantage than it would have taken additional appliances that were required to get there. As most firemen will agree if seven appliances are required at a fire and they all arrive within a minute or two of each other it is some considerable time before the job has been weighed up and all the appliances have been got to work to the best advantage. It is said that the quicker water can be got to a fire the better but this cannot be done to advantage if the Officer in charge is trying to organise seven or more appliances at one time.

In conclusion I consider that there should be one K.429 for each Sub. Division with a few common sense exceptions and I feel sure that the service would benefit and in addition the public which it serves.

—ONLOOKER.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

IS THIS MY REWARD?

I am a war-time Fire Service Officer but I am at a loss to understand why I am treated differently to my predecessor in the all-important question of pay. It was the practice, so I am told, for peacetime Fire Brigade appointments to be advertised with a salary according to a scale, that is to say the successful Candidate started at the minimum salary and, subject to satisfactory service, received periodical increments in recognition of increased efficiency and usefulness, until he reached the maximum of the Scale. Even then some of them did not stop.

When the National Fire Service came along fixed salaries were determined and although we have now completed three years service we are still paid the same, the chances of promotion are slight in view of redundancies created by changing circumstances and we have to sit back whilst the lower ranks receive increases presumably to meet increases in the cost of living not reflected in the Ministry of Labour Index figure. This is not all, of course, since Civil Servants and Police Officers receiving salaries up to almost the highest payable in the National Fire Service have been awarded substantial Cost of Living Bonuses for more than six months.

At the commencement of the War Mr. Neville Chamberlain warned the country against the vicious spiral of "rising wages and rising prices" and viewed from this angle we must regret the fact that applications by workers for increases in their portion of the wealth they produce have been granted not out of the profits of industry but out of the pockets of the consumer. In our case it means an extra burden on the taxpayer, but surely the amount involved in giving all male Officers a reasonable increase in recognition of their services and greater utility to the community is negligible when compared with the cost of granting similar concessions to others whose income is derived from the public purse?—RIGHTEOUS.

Dear Sir,

OVERSEAS CONTINGENT

May I take this opportunity to thank No. 5 Regional Branch, and particularly its Secretary, for the great help afforded to Officers from this Region attached to the Overseas Contingent.

In the original set-up of the Overseas Contingent there were many things that left an N.F.S. Officer at a disadvantage comparing him with his equivalent military rank, particularly Conditions of Service, issue of equipment, allowances, etc. These matters have been taken up by the Association with the appropriate Department, and the measure of success achieved has been far beyond my expectation and has proved to the Officers in this Column, the usefulness and necessity of our Association. As I am a Founder Member, it has given me great pleasure to find that your efforts have been crowned with such success, and it certainly means that the Association is something worth belonging to.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) A. E. BOWLES,
London, Divisional Officer.
13th July, 1944.

Sir,

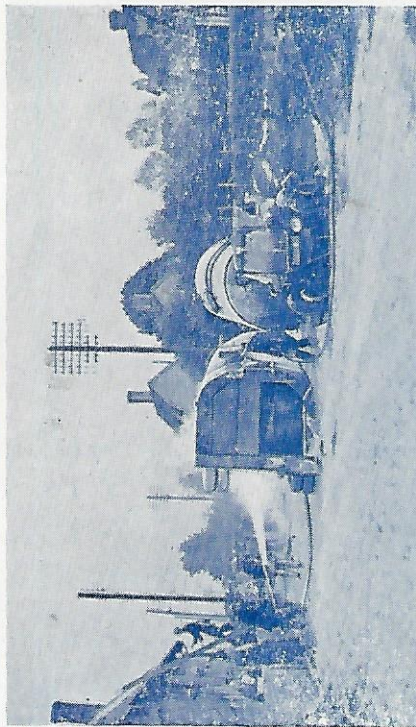
Part-time and Retained Firemen are wondering what the future has in store for them when the emergency is over. What are the Department's plans for the part-time Service? In rural areas great service is being rendered and the entire responsibility of lull period response carried by part-time Stations. Some of them are paid, others voluntarily give their services. Most have call-bells in their homes.

Will the Department recommend a remunerated part-time Service in districts where this is not an adjunct to the whole Service, or does it place its hope in the voluntary response? Part-timers want to know!

Yours etc.

"PLANNER."

ACTION FULLY JUSTIFIED



A National Fire Service appliance had just returned to station from an Aircraft Crash Fire. The Officer in Charge noticed a U.S. Army Petrol Tanker travelling at speed past the station, apparently out of control. Without awaiting a call he set off with his appliance in the wake of the tanker, as he anticipated a crash at a dangerous bend which he knew lay ahead. His action was fully justified as a collision occurred with an oncoming milk tender, resulting in the fire shown in the attached photos