

BASIC PETROL PROTEST, HYDE PK

Nearly seven hundred motorists rallied at Hyde Park in a gallant attempt to make their weight felt and induce the Government to give them back something, at least, of the basic petrol allowance. ~~The~~ ^{Private} motorists ~~charge~~ that a comparatively small economy by the armed forces would enable them to keep their cars on the road.

On the main platform Sir Miles Thomas said that in this crisis what was really needed -

After the speeches a deputation of six motorists and one motorcyclist drove to the House of Commons to see the new Minister of Fuel and Power Hugh Gaitskell. Theirs was the fate of most optimists who ~~form~~ ^{form} deputations to interview Ministers of the Crown, and for the time being at any rate the basic ration is out, ~~the~~ ^{and many} roads are already deserted by all but cyclists. Wayside garages are closed, which will free for other work an army of mechanics of genius - or are they! For speed-cops life is unrelieved monotony.

The private motorist, till heaven only knows when, once more lays up his car. The Government sticks to the Purchase Tax, and the garage door closes till the dawn of a brighter age. ~~So much for the private motorist.~~