

February 20

## Spanish plea fails

THE appeal to the King of Spain by a Rhondda man has failed and Alan Jones must continue the seven years sentence he received after being found guilty of smuggling hashish.

Alan has heard, almost a year after the "indulto particular", appeal for forgiveness, was entered on his behalf, that it had not been granted. The indulto was backed with a letter from his brother Norman Jones, of Leslie Street, Porth, to the King.

They had hoped he would be home last Christmas, then that it would be in the spring.

The news that Alan would not be home this year has upset his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jim Jones, of Wyndham Street, Pentre. "I was really distressed," Mrs. Jones said. "I had really set my heart on it that he was coming home any time. We went out and bought a new bed last year and his room is ready for him."

In a recent letter home Alan says he has got over this disappointment and is hopeful of being home in eight months.

Since being transferred to a prison in Madrid, Alan has been working on the psychiatric wing of the prison hospital. Although he is on call 24 hours a day, he has a room of his own and his conditions are better than they have been for a long time.

Alan was arrested in July, 1978 in Cueuta, Spanish Morocco, and charged with smuggling 60lbs. of hashish over the border. It was a year before he was tried and found guilty although he has always protested his innocence saying the drugs were planted.

Alan's case was taken up by the National Council for the Welfare of Prisoners Abroad which was founded to provide a welfare service and to act as a "voice" for people in prison overseas.

The Council are campaigning for transfer treaties between British and other countries, but because there is no provision in British law for them they have to persuade government to change legislation before the business of making treaties can begin.

They were successful in getting an adjournment debate in the House recently when Mr. John Whaquer MP for

# Jobs scheme abused — say

**A BLEAK PICTURE** of the way the Youth Opp Programme is working in the Rhondda was painted in a BBC 2's Newsnight programme this week.

**An investigation showed how in some cases the scheme offers the employers the opportunities not young people. But the careers adviser for Rhondda feels the programme was unfair.**

A garage owner admitted he had 'employed' a stream of YOP youngsters over the past few years — while at the same time he had reduced his staff from 21 to seven.

Also in the programme, the proprietor of a hairdressing salon admitted to offering places to one youngster after another without there being any chance of them being offered a proper apprenticeship.

In both these cases, the scheme has provided employers with extra pairs of

hands — free of charge, because youngsters employed under the scheme are paid from Government money.

And at the same time, in the case of the garage, the scheme is actually poaching full time jobs and putting people out of work.

Such consequences defy the character which Manpower Services Commission laid down for the scheme.

At the moment there are more than 600 youngsters (between 16 and 19) in the Rhondda employed on a YOP scheme. There are 788 youngsters (between 16 and 19) out of work altogether.

And with more young people coming out of school onto an ever decreasing job market, the Government are talking about ploughing more money into this and similar schemes to 'find work' for young people.

The scheme was never

designed to fit employment, experience of work people so the better equipped job.

But for many who left school a YOP scheme them with the have had — wh cynical impress scheme is useft unemployer lower than they

Rhondda's ca Mr. Brian Mo thought the Nev was unfair i reporter was in ding schemes was abuse.

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## Hospital closures in health scheme

HEALTH services will "move further and further away from the Rhondda" — that was the fear local councillors had in mind when they threw out county proposals this week.

East Glamorgan Community Health Council were considering the consultative document from Mid Glamorgan Health Authority.

Secretary Clive Barnby pointed out it was their duty to consult with the public, who used the NHS facilities,

can't afford to lose hospital beds in the Rhondda."

The AHA's argument in favour of maternity services based at one hospital was that a complete 24-hour care would be difficult to provide at more than one base.

Mrs. Val Williams said: "They make it sound as though most women have difficult deliveries — it's not,

meeting that were employed would go where told."

"But they do now," she said.

Mrs. Williams: should be looking, make better use hospitals, instead new ones. T

By LYNNE WALSH