

# NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

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## Bonds of Race

THE strangest contribution to the war discussions so far reported by cable was the remark last week of Colonel Lindbergh that America's bond with Europe is a bond of race. If the Colonel had said that the bond was the tail-smoke of his own aeroplane his words would have had more meaning.

Race means about as much to-day as the colour of our hair or the creases in our trousers. It is almost true to say that there is no such thing. It has been pointed out over and over again—but by no one more effectively than by Julian Huxley in one of the recent *Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs*—that there are no pure races anywhere in the world, and that when statesmen talk about the "call of race" they are talking scientific nonsense. It was in fact one of the fundamental blunders of the Treaty of Versailles, which no one to-day defends, that it attempted to draw racial lines in so many corners of Europe.

If race means anything at all when applied to people it means bodies and blood; and if there is one fact so clearly established that to question it is impossible it is that there is no "unmixed" blood in any American or European body. There cannot therefore be a British race or even an Anglo-Saxon race, a German or an Aryan race, a French race, or a Latin race. Far less can there be an American race, now or at any time in the future. There is not even a Negro race or a race of Mongolians.

What Colonel Lindbergh perhaps meant was that the bond with Europe was cultural. But if he did mean that it is a pity that he did not say it. What is far more likely, however, is that he did not know what he meant or what those people meant who suggested to him what he should say. He no doubt meant to dissuade his countrymen from saying or doing anything likely to involve them in war—a quite legitimate stand for any American. But bonds of race are beams of moonshine.

## You Know His Voice

# (1) CLIVE DRUMMOND: Announcer Of Two Wars

D. A. V. C. DRUMMOND holds a record which he hopes will never be equalled. It is not a selfish hope, for the record concerns the story of David Archibald Victor Clive Drummond, born Motueka, August 4, 1894; of Clive Drummond, Morse operator, Tinakori Hill, August 4, 1914; and of Clive Drummond, senior announcer of the National Broadcasting Service, when war broke out in 1939.

This must surely be a record, or close to one, for few other radio personalities can have been so closely connected with the outbreak of two such wars. "But I hope," he says, "that no young man to-day will live to repeat my performance."

Clive Drummond has grown up with radio in New Zealand.

Signals were his first interest when he left Motueka District High School. The Post and Telegraph Department gave him his first opportunity to practise it. He became a P. and T. cadet, went from Motueka to a training school at Oamaru, returned to Motueka, and was in the Department in Wellington in 1911 when the Government opened a small Morse wireless station on Tinakori Hill. The staff was recruited from the P. and T. Department and young Drummond was one of six selected for the work. "Much to my delight," he says.

### Crude Equipment

Equipment was crude then. They worked on very high frequencies. Huge inductance coils were necessary to avoid the need for using an aerial "from here to Paekakariki." Morse messages came in with a compensating signal above them. It required a practised ear and intense concentration to pick out the message code beneath it. The work became more and more difficult with the outbreak of war. Tinakori Hill was an important link with the Fleet, and operators had to learn the Navy's codes and signalling methods.

Five minutes out of every fifteen they spent going round the different wave bands. They recorded and reported everything they heard and for this purpose had to be familiar with the Continental Morse as well as the ordinary code.

Through a message heard and reported by Operator Drummond, four hours before the main body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force left Wellington Harbour, the troops were returned to camp and their departure delayed three weeks.

### Signals from the Enemy

He intercepted a cipher message from the *Scharnhorst* to the *Gneisenau* at midnight on the Saturday. It was transmitted to Australia, decoded there, and persuaded the authorities that the convoy was not then strong enough to meet the threat of the German warships. Instead of leaving at dawn on the Sunday the troops were disembarked until the Japanese *Iboudi* and bigger ships from Australian waters joined the little *Philomel* and *Psyche*.

The creation in the second year of the war of a radio signal unit gave Clive Drummond another chance to enlarge his experience. He joined the unit as an operator and served for the "duration" in Mesopotamia. The work of the unit limited the scope of roving natives whose amusement it had been to cut and steal the overland wires of the Engineers.

He worked for a little while after the war in the Post and Telegraph Department's Money Order and Savings Bank branch, but was soon back on Tinakori Hill, and in 1919 scored yet another "first."

### Their Own Station

With half a dozen other young men he had been using his spare time for radio experimental work. One night he was plugging in coils at random when he heard music. He was amazed. In those days broadcasting was practically unheard of. There was no other source for the sound than his receiver. The music came from Dunedin from Professor Jack's experimental station.

Letters were exchanged. Soon the young men were building their own broadcasting transmitter and playing gramophone records on it two or three nights a week.

With the help of Gordon Harcourt they developed their small station into a five-watt transmitter with a studio in the *Dominion* building. All the work had been done by themselves, from assembling the radio equipment to cutting out a mast from a tree trunk and erecting it on the roof.

Life was all thrills for radio men in those days. In 1924 came another for Drummond. The All Blacks had gone unbeaten through their tour of the British Isles. The last match was to be

played at Twickenham. By arrangement with Auckland Pacific Cables, 2YK secured the score at 17 minutes before 3 o'clock on the Sunday morning and was broadcasting it two and one quarter minutes later.

### Took a Chance

The message was repeated at intervals and next week 63 letters were received from listeners who had heard the first broadcast. The letters came from as far north as Hamilton and as far south as Cromwell. "Not bad for five watts." All the news they had received from Auckland was the bare score: 17-11. They were not told who won. He gambled on the All Blacks. Next day the score was chalked on railway trains, on trucks, on walls, fences, pavements.

When the Dominion Radio Company arrived on the scene Clive Drummond was asked to be announcer. His voice had attracted attention from the very early days when the young amateurs were playing their gramophone records. Until the Company was formed and the work developed with Government assistance, he had been announcing from 2YK only in his time off from duty on Tinakori Hill. The request to work permanently as an announcer found him in two minds. But he put his money on radio, and his first big score of 63 has mounted now to a daily audience of anything up to 300,000.



CLIVE DRUMMOND