

APRIL 13, 1945

Desperation Plus

HOW much longer Germany will fight nobody knows or can guess, since it is no longer a military question. Militarily Germany is already beaten so hopelessly that fighting on is military madness; but it was that kind of madness precisely to which Mr. Churchill called us in his greatest speech. Instead of jeering at the Germans for fighting on, calling them lunatics or blood-drunk desperadoes, we should be generous enough to appreciate what they are doing, however deeply we deplore the cost to civilisation. They are dying as they have latterly lived: madly, but with unshaken courage and boldness. For it is not simply fear that keeps them going—fear either of their leaders or of their enemies. Nor is it desperation. They are afraid, and they are desperate; they are also cunning; if our terms were less drastic and their police less savage peace would certainly come sooner. But neither fear nor cunning nor desperation alone keeps resistance going. The struggle goes on not merely because the leaders order it to go on, and not merely because they retain enough power to enforce their orders. It goes on for those reasons, but it goes on also for another reason, which is fundamental—because a large number of Germans still have faith. They believe in themselves and in their destiny, in the Fuehrer who has revealed these things to them, and in the cause to which he has called them, and therefore they die fighting. In other words, we are waging a moral as well as a military campaign, and although we are now better equipped in one field than the enemy we must not under-rate him in the other. Nor must we be too blind to learn from him. He is now beaten; but he has been beaten by overwhelming material force—walls of fire and steel closing on him from all sides—and not by a failure in his morale. Well, morale is discipline and belief. If he developed it for a bad cause and we don't develop it for a good one we may end in a few years where we were after Munich.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

SUNDAY REQUEST SESSION.

Sir,—I wish to enter a protest regarding the conduct of the 22B Sunday Request session.

I have waited for weeks to hear my requested recording on this Sunday Request session and after being disappointed every week have had to listen to recordings which vary very little from week to week in the "Hit Parade" session.

Surely the majority of the 22B listening audience would prefer to hear their own personal and intimate recordings over the Request session proper, rather than listen to a very small group of listeners' requests which are not only repeated from week to week, but are also much of a muchness.

I believe that the Hit Parade is repeated through the week, so why should the time given to the majority of listeners' requests have been reduced at all?

I would be very interested to hear what other listeners think about this subject.

KELSO ANDREWS (Trentham).

DR. BRADSHAW'S RECITALS.

Sir,—May I add my plea to that of Francis Clark and others that Dr. Bradshaw's playing be recorded, and that the records be made available to the public. There are no records of good organ music to be purchased in Auckland. I would suggest further that recordings of the choir of Christchurch Cathedral would be greatly appreciated if arrangements could be made.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation of the 1YX programme at 9 o'clock every Wednesday.

R. S. JARDIN (Takapuna).

Sir,—I was very pleased to read the letter by C.M.L. on recording Dr. Bradshaw. It is recognised that Dr. Bradshaw is one of the very few great organists of the world and it is only fitting and proper that we should have his genius with us for all time. The educational and artistic value of these records would be invaluable to all aspiring organists as well as to all genuine music lovers. Just imagine having at one's hand the Six Organ Sonatas of Mendelssohn or the Widor Symphonies (complete), not to mention all the other great works as played by the Doctor.

C.A.W. (Christchurch).

Sir,—I agree that Dr. Bradshaw should be recorded, but suggest that the commencement of the recitals be brought forward, as on two occasions this month the recitals have been interrupted. Recently one item in the Passion music was omitted altogether for the recorded chiming of Big Ben. Surely the chiming of Big Ben is unnecessary for a call to silent prayer. Prayer is not to be regarded as an automatic ritual by those who stay at home while others, otherwise engaged, forget the hour of 9 p.m. The ever-conscious realisation of the great sacrifices that the Youth of our country and our Allies have made should be the greatest prayer that mankind can offer. A. E. STOCK (Eastbourne).

BROADCASTING STANDARDS

Sir,—There are many people in New Zealand who have hitherto kept silence concerning Commercial Broadcasting (being content in tolerance of the taste

of others to accept the programmes, or selected parts of them from the National Stations). However, the steady deterioration both of the quality of the material broadcast and of its manner of presentation seems to call for protest.

While one is all too thoroughly aware that the cheapened attitude has popular approval, the radio to be of fullest service to any community should be used primarily as a means of education. This implies having the majority of the programmes at a slightly higher level than folk would choose for purely recreative purposes; just as a child's reading matter must be kept a little difficult while education is in progress.

But the stream of flashy announcements from all stations lately makes it difficult to tell to which branch of the service one is listening. The repeated cajoling and politely coercive announcements of governmental policy sent out in the style of sales talks are no more than a form of mental bludgeoning; but when a whole nation is repeatedly called to listen in to a cheaply exaggerated spy story as though its telling were a matter of world importance, it is time for protest.

One wonders whether the general public appreciates the fact that under favourable conditions the National Stations are heard right round the Pacific circle in Australia, China, Japan and North America, besides throughout Oceania; and that New Zealand's national character is often assessed by other peoples on the basis of her broadcasts. The comments of educated visitors from overseas on some of our programmes are enough to make one hang one's head in shame. Even in Europe our taste is known and we are judged accordingly.

Would we not as a nation do well to give consideration to the splendid achievement (in companion with the efforts of other countries) of the BBC in the field of broadcasting.—PHILIP A. de G. HOWELL (Paraparaumu).

SUNDAY LEISURE.

Sir,—May I enter a reasonable plea on behalf of many returning soldiers, and—as I think the police will endorse—in the interest of Law and Order generally. It concerns a means of fruitfully occupying the minds and time of people in general, but youths in particular on Sundays. According to an English church dignitary not more 6 per cent. of the population there any longer attends church or chapel. That is to say, 94 per cent. no longer are church-goers. The figures in New Zealand are probably about the same. I think it is an axiom that in a professedly Democratic country the people shall be able to spend their weekly well-earned holiday as they choose—so long as in so doing they do not harm anyone else.

I am sure the Churches—especially considering that church-goers represent such a small minority—would not be so dog-in-the-mangerish as to refuse the 94 per cent. the right to have, for example, the theatres opened and decent-class films shown at such times (afternoons and 8.20 p.m. onward) as would not clash with the 6 per cent.'s meetings. (I am sure the 94 per cent. would be ready to show this courtesy in response

to equal courtesy on the part of the 6 per cent.).

Thus the returning soldiers and that overwhelming majority of people, who, exercising their Democratic rights, do not choose to be chapel-attenders, can have somewhere to go to occupy their time profitably and innocently. Good films can scarcely become sinful simply for being shown on Sunday.—RETURNED SOLDIER (Keri Keri).

ROBIN ADAIR.

Sir,—Is it not time that the myth that the song "Robin Adair" is a "traditional Scottish" song was exploded? At a St. Andrew's Day concert in Dunedin it was included in this programme and so described by the broadcaster. Later in an Auckland broadcast the same phrase was used and more recently we had it in Dorothy Bell's studio recital described by the announcer as "a traditional Scottish Song." The facts are that both words and music are Irish.

Robin Adair was a young doctor who came to London from Dublin. Being handsome and charming he soon became a favourite in society and formed an attachment with the daughter of a wealthy man, but the young lady's parents disapproved of the match and took her travelling on the continent. She so pined for her lover, however, that her health was in danger and they were forced to return and consent to the marriage. She it was who wrote the words (which are really a parody of a very old Irish song "Aileen A. Roon").

This song, "Aileen A. Roon," and tune, of which Handel said that he would rather have been the author than of all his own music, were composed by an Irish chieftain, Carol O'Daly in the 16th Century. Carol was in love with Aileen A. Roon, daughter of "The Kavanagh," but her father in Carol's absence forced her into an engagement with Talbot of Malahide. On the eve of her marriage Carol returned disguised as a harpist and sang his song at the door of the banquet hall as a signal. Aileen recognised him, and as he had horses in waiting, they eloped that night. — ESSE QUAM VIDERI (Maungaturoto).

NEW ZEALAND CALLING.

Sir,—I am sending you an extract of a letter I received to-day from my son. I wish you could find room in your paper to publish this, as I know the boys up there would like the organisers of this programme, "New Zealand Calling," to know how much it means to them.

JESSIE HARRISON (Avondale).

EXTRACT.

"For the first time on Friday night our A.E.S. radio station transmitted our own half-hour programme, 'New Zealand Calling.' It was, for a New Zealand production, super—all manner of items of interest crowded into a half-hour. The main attraction, as far as I was concerned, was the placing of the microphone in the Ferry Buildings in Auckland, to pick up the sound effects. I never thought the Ferry siren sounded so good and the tram bell, too! Such little things, but from now on I shall never forget the every-day sounds of back home. Even the sound of Aunt Daisy was welcome to us young chaps. Anyway, the programme is on every Friday night, so will become a big event in our lives up here. Somebody is certainly deserving of thanks."

AID FOR CHINA.

To Several Correspondents: Thank you for your letters. The matter is under consideration. Meanwhile we are holding your contributions.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT.

J. C. Reid (Sandringham): We shall try, but since there is a different cast for each play, the full list will fill considerable space.