

FOOD QUEUES

(Written for "The Listener" by DR. MURIEL BELL, Nutritionist to the Health Department)



HAVING just stood in a Friday bread queue with disappointment after my wait, but with some yeast and a recipe recently published in the *New Zealand Listener* as a second line of defence, I am reminded that there have been two amusing cartoons lately about food queues in Europe which bring back home to us the difference between our pleasant land and those where food and labour shortages are more acute.

One is by David Low, depicting an enormous queue, becoming in their anxiety rather unruly at the head end, as they wait their turn at the ice-cream cart. As its legend, the cartoon quotes the now well-known Churchill phraseology: "We will fight in the hills, in the fields, and on the beaches."

Another is published by *Punch*, showing a crowded foreign open-air arena, and a housewife with her basket telling her neighbour: "I didn't mean to come to the circus at all this afternoon. I thought I was in a queue for bread."

The journal *Food* has a verse introduced by the information that the allocation of coffee for home consumption has been increased by 20 per cent. The verse runs:

In shops to-day the things one buys
Are scarce, from clothes to lollipops,
But coffee stocks are on the rise
In shops.

They queue for soap, they queue for mops,
For condiments and cakes and dyes,
For fish on slabs that dankly flops
In shops.

The Sunday joint is scant of size,
There is a scarcity of hops,
But coffee stocks are on the rise
In shops.

In the same journal there was news of an order by the Ministry of Food—in October, just at the time, mark you, when the housewife would be making her Christmas puddings. The order ran:

"Owing to the shortage of oils and fats, shredded and/or flaked suet (excluding raw suet whether or not shredded, sold by butchers) has been prescribed as a rationed food. It is included in the cooking fats ration as an alternative to lard and compound cooking fat, and may not be obtained or sold for household consumption or manufacturing purposes except against a fats coupon or permit."

During the Christmas season, when no doubt many of us felt a little irked at the lack of freedom to buy all the meat and butter to which we have been accustomed, we had at least the freedom to buy as much fat and as much soap as we wanted. How many New Zealanders could manage on an ounce of cooking fat per week, even when they get twice as much meat-roast fat as the people of England get? A good thing, the saving sense of humour that cartoons or versifies in the face of hardships.

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could go out and nab someone for breaking them. No one stops to think what it's like where lawlessness runs riot, or just what we mean to the community. Do you realise—he was now really angry—that mothers even frighten their children by saying, 'If you don't be good the policeman will get you!' Turning us into bogey-men, mind you! It's no wonder, perhaps, that when they grow up they hate us. Stupid, that's what it is, when all the time we are every law-abiding citizen's best friend."

"But you think everything runs in threes? As we were talking about children, I suppose the same thing applies in their case. If you collect one lost child you end up by finding three?"

"Yes. Not altogether, mind you, but one after the other. And most of them just sit and howl. No matter what we do they sit and howl. That's their silly mothers for you. The kids think we'll eat them, of course."

"And what about breaking and entering. Does that go in threes?"

"Threes? That goes in three hundred and threes—and then starts again. As long as women leave purses on dressing tables and beds, and jewellery and money hanging about in their usual careless fashion, we'll have breaking and entering. Women are thoughtless and stupid where valuables are concerned."

"Are you a woman-hater?" I asked.

"Me? No! Why should I be?"

"Oh, no reason. I just wondered."

The telephone rang and he reached a gloomy arm towards it.

"Yes. Where? Did you ring for a doctor and an ambulance? I'll be there right away," and he grabbed his helmet and coat. "Excuse me! A bad motor accident. What did I tell you? That's the second. There's one more to come yet," he flung at me as he hurried away.

"But is anyone actually dead this time?" I called.

Only the clip-clop of his departing feet answered me.

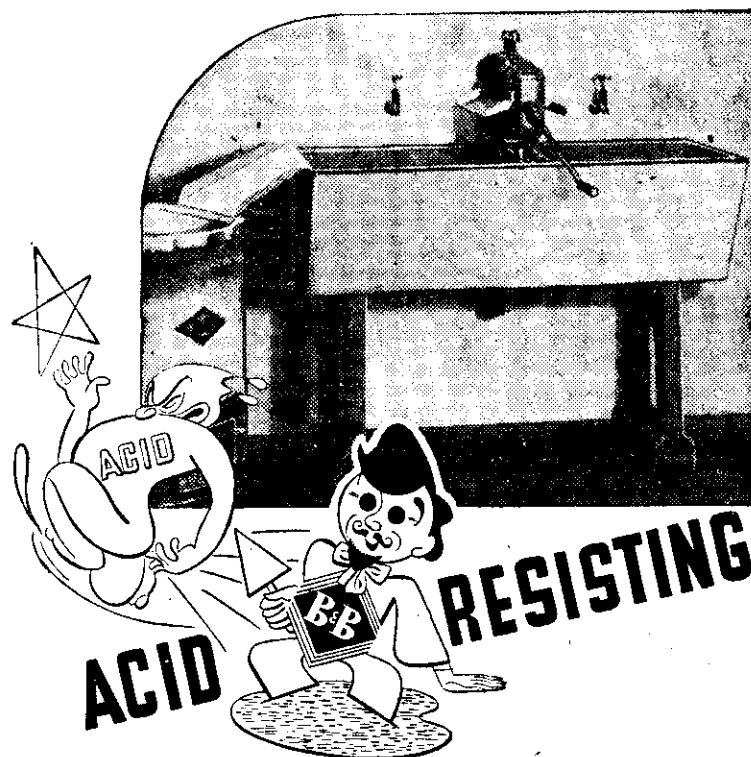
Australians for China

ADMIRAL SIR BRUCE FRASER has made arrangements with the British Centre in Sydney for an Australian concert party to visit China and entertain sailors of the Royal Navy stationed there, according to a recent ABC bulletin. The party was expected to leave at the end of January, either by flying-boat or aircraft-carrier, and to be away from four to six weeks. Members are volunteering their services. At present John Gielgud is entertaining troops in China and he is to be followed by a British ballet, Levante the magician, and then the Australian party.

TELEVISION IN BRITAIN

IN addition to Alexandra Palace, six other stations in the English provinces will be opened when the BBC television service is restarted, according to an announcement in a recent number of *London Calling*. All stations will send out the same programme. At present, no method of increasing the 40-mile radius from any station has been found, but it

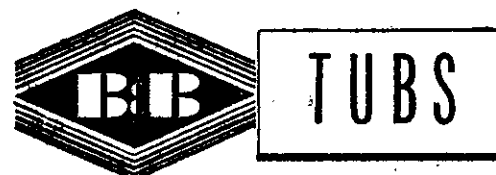
is estimated that, when the seven stations are in operation, 75 per cent of the British population will be able to see the programmes. It is reported that negotiations are shortly to begin to explore the possibilities of cinemas showing televised scenes of important national events. Maurice Gorham, at present in charge of the BBC Light Programme directed to Home listeners, will have charge of the television service when it resumes.



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