

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Sir,—If women have a democratic right to vote to be zealously guarded against all attacks, so has "Dukie" a right to be similarly guarded, even against the attacks of nitwits; the right to express his opinions in whatever manner he thinks best.

J. G. D. PATTERSON (Gisborne).

RADIO ADVERTISING

Sir,—"Better Listening" who eloquently expresses his distaste of the commercials presented with his favourite soap-operas has obviously not read *The Hucksters*, a novel by Frederic Wakeman. To enlighten him I would suggest that you print the following extract from a conversation between an American soap magnate and his "account executive."

"Mr. Norman, I'll tell you a secret about the soap business. There's no difference between soaps. Except for perfume and colour, soap is soap. The difference is in the selling and advertising. We sell soap twice as fast as our nearest competitor because we out-advertise 'em. And good advertising is just using repetition until the public is so irritated with your brand that they—well can't forget it."

COUNTRY BOY (Waipukurau.)

RUSSIA: THE DIFFERENCE

Sir,—No reasonably intelligent person would attempt to deny that Soviet Russia to-day reveals an immense improvement in the lives of enormous masses of people. The Russians had little freedom under the Tsars and they may be content with what seems to us little freedom under the Soviets—and by freedom here I mean that political freedom to change the Government if one does not like it.

Whether a change as the result of a free popular vote in Russia would result in something better than government by the Supreme Council of the Soviets it is impossible to say. We British people believe that the people should be given the right to change rulers in that way even when the exercise of that right may involve a change for the worse. There is no escaping the fact that the Russian people are at present apparently permitted to vote only for those who are offered for their choice by the authorities. They can either vote or abstain from voting and that is the limit of their freedom. They cannot nominate and vote for anybody else.

This fundamental fact, coupled with the fact that the people have not access to the world's press and have to depend on an official press and official radio for their information as to what goes on in the world, makes the Soviet populations more or less of a closed community with a limited outlook. It may be the best kind of thing for them, or it may not—there is no opportunity of ascertaining this. But I think it is reasonable to feel a little doubtful about a system that has to be sheltered from the winds of free enquiry and criticism. Russia has as much right to her way of life as we have to ours. Unhappily for world affairs, the Russians and the Western Democracies stubbornly maintain that each of their respective systems is what ought to prevail in the world at large. One hopes to see eventually a "live and let live" way evolved.

J. MALTON MURRAY
(Oamaru).



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