

CREDIT

or so we have seen her take the initiative in disarmament. Her readiness to reveal details of troops at home and to waive the veto in disarmament inspection shows that frankness, especially over atomic weapons, will elicit frankness. Here again we may take comfort from history. For more than a century the Russians have been thought of in Britain in terms of steam-rollers and bears, while the ideological gulf was wider then than now, but it was only in the admittedly avoidable Crimean war that the two Powers clashed. To say that the modern world is too small for two big ideologies is a counsel of despair.

THE attack on the veto by the smaller Powers and the Russian concession on disarmament are only sallies in what I believe is developing into a full-dress assault on the evil Leviathan of national sovereignty; that is to say, the theory that externally the nation-state knows no law but its own interest. Efficient disarmament inspection would cut the heart out of Leviathan, for what is he without his weapons? Perhaps the defence of the veto will prove the last stand of the sovereignty-mongers. The attack proceeds on a broad front. It is evident, in a more equivocal form, in the Balkans, in Churchill's call for a western federation, in pronouncements by Bevin and Byrnes, in the Bretton Woods agreement. No less significant is the Nuremberg trial. The court will be remembered for punishing breaches of the rules of warfare and crimes against humanity. But its chief title to fame

is that it has made a crime of aggressive war. The world's conscience has been vindicated in law. "Reason of state" ceases to be a valid plea; public morality is brought nearer to private morality.

SUCH abstractions have meaning only in the long run. In the short run, the problem of a convalescent world is one of food, clothing and shelter. It is at least to the credit of the relief organisations that the worst prophecies of famine and exposure—in large parts of Europe, India and the Far East—have not been realised. This is little enough. But peace settlements with the Nazi satellite states have been completed—the Paris conference was important rather for its exhibition of national postures than for its subject matter—and the removal of uncertainty eases the work of their rehabilitation. In Europe many millions have voted for the first time, and millions have been returned to their homes. It is too early to pass judgment on the progress of social and economic reconstruction, but the year has underlined the lesson that bread will win the battle of democracy. Therein lies the importance of the economic merger of the British and American zones in Germany.

SEEN steadily and seen whole, 1946 justifies no extravagant fears. No sane man will go bail for the future, and it is for the historian of a later day to write the epitaph of 1946. There is little reason to think that in doing so he will have to avail himself of those white lies which Dr. Johnson permitted in lapidary inscriptions.

DEBIT

Poland and the Baltic States in collusion with the German defendants is reducing international law to the level of a lottery. And what good will it do? If the object is to impress upon the German people the wickedness of such acts, it will surely fail; the victims will sooner or later come to be regarded as martyrs and even the murderers and torturers and the promoters of medical science in the concentration camps will come to share a little of the light that will gather round their heads.

If our news services had been a bit more candid we should all of us understand this better. As it is, it has been left to a writer in *The Economist* to reveal that in the course of the trial the German Secretary of State gave evidence about a secret treaty attached to the non-aggression Pact which provided for the partition of six European states between Germany and the Soviet Union! For some odd reason the learned judges in summing up omitted to notice this extremely relevant fact; it is a little too much to expect that it escaped the notice of the German people.

THE second mistake, as I see things, has been made in India. I am far from thinking that the idea of introducing self-government into India was a mistake, but we have been going far too fast and have ended in giving way in a fit of panic to the clamour of a comparatively small class who have no claim whatever to represent the toiling masses. What India needs is another hundred

years of orderly government; and in my opinion the only chance it had of getting this was by a continuance of British rule.

In a remarkable book that has been too little read, Sir Claude Schuster and Mr. Guy Wint, in examining the proposal to democratize India, drew attention to the terrible fate of China, following the attempt to introduce democratic government in a hurry into a country that was unprepared for the change. The result in China was anarchy and civil war for 30 years, and it's not yet over. Yet China has a deep-rooted tradition of unity and public service that India is without. Even with these things the experiment would be hazardous; without them it cannot possibly succeed. Not only are the masses unprepared, but so are the leaders. Those who think that India can be given orderly government and that the burdens of the toiling masses can be lightened by the efforts of men like Gandhi and Nehru are living in a world of shadows. All that will happen is that they will turn us out and be turned out in their turn, and all will end in confusion. If the British retire—and Mr. Nehru has celebrated his arrival in power by a bitterly hostile reference to the British civil servants which will encourage them all to start their packing—India may get one-party rule in the interests of the manufacturers and lawyers and money-lenders; but a far more probable result will be a return to the anarchy in which we found them.

So much for 1946—a year of almost unrelieved gloom—and the half hath not been told.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS

Secondary Pupils in New 2ZB Session

THE routine technique for organising a question-and-answer radio session (we imagine) is for the question-master to spend an hour with *Whitaker's Almanac*, the *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, or any others of the many handy devices of erudition so often concealed behind the phrase, "If memory serves." Out of these labours arise such questions as "Is an ampersand an electrical, a typographical, or a gold-dredging device?" But this time-tested recipe would not work in a new experimental session to be heard shortly from the ZB stations.

This, known as *The Voice of Youth*, is, in a sense, a sort of junior brains trust, but instead of dealing with questions on a series of widely-differing subjects, it is confined solely to matters concerning young people. The idea was thought up by Elsie Lloyd, a member of the staff of the NZBS Production Studios. She arranged for five pupils (three girls and two boys), whose ages range from 14 to 17 years, to be selected from three Wellington secondary schools. A qualification was ability to present a cross-section view of some problems encountered by youth when considering the future. A master at one of the colleges was asked to be chairman and then came the making of recordings at the studios.

The other day a staff reporter of *The Listener* was invited to a pre-audition.

The chairman opened the session by asking: Do you think your father and mother should decide your careers for you?

Everybody spoke at once—the question interested them keenly. One girl said No, quite emphatically. Parents, she maintained, could guide their children to a certain extent, but a young person's ideas changed with the years. She herself wanted to be a school-teacher, and even if her parents didn't approve, well, she would still be a teacher.

A boy's turn came. If he wanted to go to sea and his parents objected, what would he do? He, too, was definite—he would go to sea, if the sea really called him. Another of the girls thought all boys and girls should be perfectly free to go their several ways. But she qualified that—parents helped with their money and, after all, it was *their* money. Here the chairman took a hand. "Yes," he said, "but remember, too, it's *your* life."

Just Ordinary People

Then the panel were asked if they would look for exciting jobs. One answer was that they were all just ordinary people who liked an ordinary life, with its comforts; but they should listen to what their parents had to say. And most agreed that the best time of all to decide on a career was when taking the intermediate school course. Tersely one

of the girls reminded the others: When you are parents yourselves, just remember what you are saying now.

For radio purposes the experiment is interesting in its unusual style of presentation and its freshness. It becomes even

more so as such topics as co-education in secondary schools, how much pocket-money should be allowed (and the purposes to which it should be applied), and the qualities necessary in a good school-teacher, are discussed.

The first episode of *The Voice of Youth* will be heard from Stations 2ZB and 3ZB on Sunday, January 19, at 7.0 p.m. and 1.0 p.m. respectively; and from 1ZB, 4ZB and 2ZA on later Sundays.



MEMBERS of the 2ZB "Voice of Youth" discussion group in action with their compère, a Wellington schoolmaster