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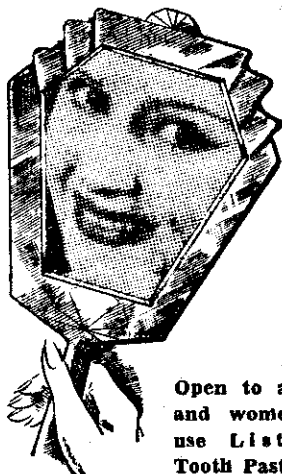
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# CONTROVERSY ON THE AIR

## Norway Has an Open Forum

**N**ORWEGIANS believe that an informed public is the only safeguard of democracy and that is why the Norwegian Broadcasting Service has controversial broadcasts. Some topics occasionally create a storm, but that, according to Arne Okkenhaug, is better by far than mental idleness. Arne Okkenhaug, who is director of school broadcasts for Norway, left Oslo in May of last year to study the broadcasting systems of other countries. He has been in Canada and the United States and is now in New Zealand seeing what he can learn from us.

Interviewed by *The Listener*, he said he believed all broadcasters, because of the heavy responsibility they have of

controlling something that goes into the very homes of the people, should learn all they can of the world they live in; that is another reason for his extended tour. And he is especially interested in New Zealand because, in many ways, it is so similar to his homeland.

### A Cross-Section View

"We discuss all sorts of things," he said. "We ask ourselves, for instance, if we should lean on Russia, or incline towards the United States, or rely on ourselves alone. Our policy as a small nation in relation to the big powers is something that concerns us vitally. We discuss whether we should teach more religion in the schools, or whether the influence of the Church should be lessened. It's an open forum. All these

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## BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

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about. At any rate, the more opposed the Americans are to a planned European economy, the more we need to co-operate with Russia. The idea of having a European policy without Russia, or still worse, which could aim at excluding Russia from Europe does not make sense: there are enough Communists in every country in Europe to wreck such a scheme. And not only Communists but the great majority of the inhabitants of Europe know that, with Russia left out, a united Europe will give them the Germans as masters and therefore they will not work for it. Advocating such a policy condemns you to the society of Quislings, and Vichyites, the men who originated the plan of excluding Russia from Europe under German leadership; and you've only to look at the sort of people who claim to be pro-British to see where we would land up—we have worked it out to the end in Greece, and the result does no credit to our principles.

I am not saying that carrying out a Socialist reconstruction of Europe—and that is what it would amount to—would solve all our difficulties. Of course it would not. It would, I think, go a long way to solving the problem of our security, which cannot rest any more on command of the seas. We can now only be secure if there is a stable European order of which both we and the Russians must be a part. But it would be foolish to pretend that this densely populated continent, and still more densely populated island, can be a self-contained, economic unit. That is why we cannot shift over to a new policy overnight. But there is an extension of the European continent which in the changing circumstances is likely to become more a part of Europe and less a part of the outer world. That is Africa; that is where we can find the new undeveloped sources of strength which the Americans found in their vast continent and which the Russians are beginning to find in Soviet Asia. Whoever develops Africa will alter the balance of world power in his favour; but it is a task beyond the strength of any single European power and it is certainly beyond the capacity of private enterprise. It can only be done by a Socialist Europe, not seeking to exploit

the Africans, but to bring them into Socialist partnership. There, too, there is much that we could learn from Soviet experience.

### No Illusions About Communism

There's one thing, though, that we cannot learn from Soviet experience and that other people can learn from us, in fact we owe it to the world to help them to learn it. The main object of British policy must be peace and prosperity; but we should make nonsense of our history if we were satisfied with that. For us—and this is not just a matter of British hypocrisy—a cynical or immoral foreign policy would not be, over a period of years, a possible policy. That is why many people honestly feel that, whatever advantages to the balance of world power there are in co-operating with Russia, we cannot do it; it would compel us to acquiesce in all the tyrannies of communism. I can understand the feeling. Good Lord, I have no illusions about what life is like under a communist system for anyone who thinks for himself; I would have been liquidated long ago. But all the same, I think that the way to overcome the evils of communism is to work with the communists and not against them—I do not mean in this country, they count for nothing here, I mean on the continent of Europe. The greatest disaster in modern European history was the failure of the revolutions in 1848; and they failed for a very simple reason: the men who believed in political liberty—in freedom of expression and the right of everyone to vote and so on—turned against the men who wanted better economic conditions (what they called the right to work). We avoided that conflict in this country and that is why we are so much better off politically than anywhere else in the world. But if once we get into the position of saying that free speech and free enterprise go together, we shall not save free enterprise; we shall doom freedom of speech. In other words, men are not prepared any longer to buy free speech at the price of poverty and unemployment. The answer to communism is not anti-communism; the answer is to do without a secret police what the Communists promise to do with a secret police—and to do it better.