

"We must regard New Zealand as being the centre of our own particular world"—this map, an equidistant azimuthal projection centred on Wellington, is reproduced by courtesy of the N.Z. Geographical Society, Inc.

HUB OF THE PACIFIC

A New Look at New Zealand

PERHAPS because of the way in which most maps are drawn. New Zealanders have a tendency to regard themselves as the inhabitants of a tiny country hidden away in the south-eastern corner of the world, comfortably remote from trouble centres. We have become complacent about it, wrapped in the security of isolation. But it is unwarranted complacency, and the security of isolation is quite imaginary.

That, at all events, is the viewpoint of J. M. W. Fox, of the Geography Department at Auckland University College, who will explain his case in a series of three talks, *New Zealand in the Pacific*, which will be broadcast from 1YA at 9.30 p.m. on consecutive Wednesdays. In the first, on October 26, he will discuss "New Zealand's Position in the World," and will later deal with "Bases of Power," and "Strategy and Counter-Strategy."

The principal objects of the talks are to bring listeners face to face with some of the implications of Pacific strategy, to make them aware of what dangers exist, and to stimulate thought about what efforts New Zealand should make to counteract threats to her own security—if indeed there are such dangers or threats. Mr. Fox has his own decided beliefs on these matters, but he is chiefly concerned that listeners should be told the facts and be prepared to think seriously about them.

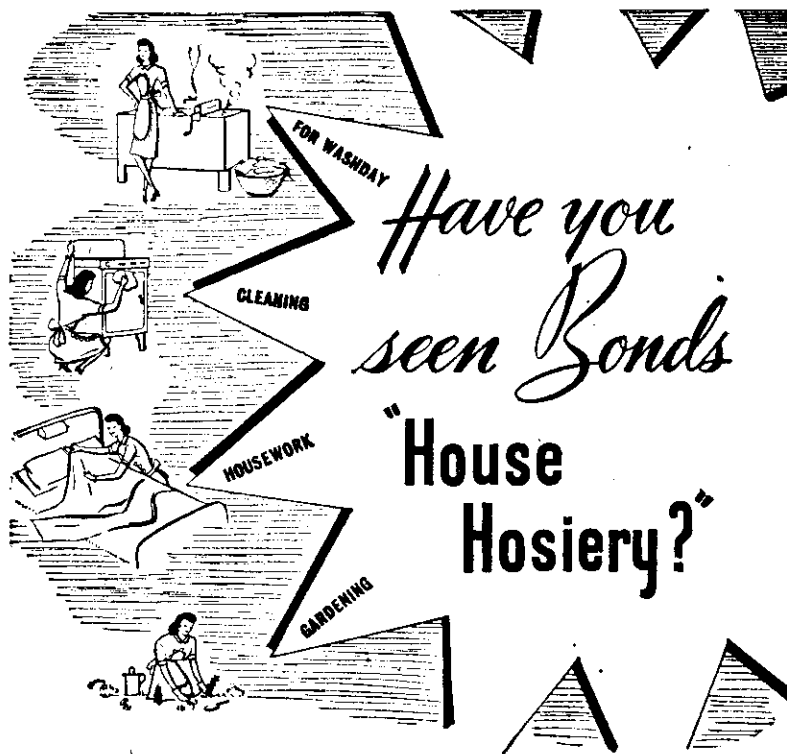
We must, he says, regard New Zealand as being the centre of our own particular world—not an isolated dot on the

outer fringe—and come to realise what the distances involved really do mean. He contends that they mean we are far from isolated, and very much nearer to Asia and Europe than many of us would like to imagine. We are in the centre of a world which is slowly closing in on us.

Throughout the series Mr. Fox will speak as a geographer, and he defines the major bases of power as size, population, natural resources and technology. With this in mind he will ask how far New Zealand and Australia constitute great powers, and will consider their geographical strength in comparison with that of the other Pacific powers, particularly the United States, and the U.S.S.R. which, he says, must be thought of as on the Rim-land of the Pacific.

In his final talk Mr. Fox will deal with the so-called "empty lands," whether or not they really exist and if they do exist then whether or not their emptiness is a potential threat. He will consider the possibility of danger from the Asiatic mainland and will suggest that the north-western Pacific islands are still the stepping stones to Australia and New Zealand—as they were for Japan in the recent war. Mr. Fox believes that these lands are one of the keys to our defence and that it is of the greatest importance to New Zealand and Australian strategy that they and the Indonesian territories should be occupied by friendly peoples. Another major bulwark in our defence structure, he considers, is the fullest possible use of our own natural resources, particularly those which would enable us to support a larger population.

N.Z. LISTENER, OCTOBER 21, 1949.



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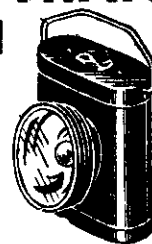
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