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LISTENER

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The Language of War

THE language used by the acting-Prime Minister in his first review of the war situation was plainer than we commonly hear from men in his position, and bolder. For this he will be devoutly thanked. Most of us are cowardly with our words. We are afraid to express our emotions and to confess our thoughts, and our timidity is weakening our war effort.

But Mr. Fraser said bluntly that we are fighting to defend our homes as well as our liberties; our bodies as well as our opinions; our possessions as well as the social fabric on which our way of life is based. That is war, and it is time we engaged in war without any further apologies. We have to beat off the attack or go down under it; and we shall not beat it off if we lose sight of the difference between victory and defeat.

It is easy to say—though it is a lie—that the last war settled nothing; it settled our claim to live our own lives for a further twenty-five years. It is natural to shrink from the mental, moral, physical and material costs of war. We all shrink from them unless we are too young and too raw to know what they mean. But we are young indeed, and raw indeed—far too young and raw to be at large and in control of our own destinies—if we think that shrinking from them will save us from them. The Czechs shrank from them, and having no apparent alternative, surrendered without a blow. To-day thousands of Czechs are conscripts in the army of the oppressor; thousands are in concentration camps; all are without even the shadow of liberty.

Let us sweep aside all these dust-infected cob-webs with which fanatics would staunch the world's wounds. Where there is honest doubt let us reason with it. Where minorities resist, let us respect them. But let us not give way to them. Let us face the fact that we are fighting Germany and not the Bashibazouks. If we see it as a crusade, let us call it a crusade and not baulk at honest emotions. It is weak and crippling to respect every opinion but our own.

Radio Personalities

(11) J. F. Skedden, Station Manager, 4YZ Invercargill

INVERCARGILL'S Station Manager, Jim Skedden, is another of those who claim long association with broadcasting. He is a firm believer in its future, and thinks that it will develop both rapidly and extensively. Born in Fiji, he went at an early age to Australia where he received his primary education, and later came to New Zealand where his training was continued at St. Patrick's College, Wellington, and at Victoria University College, where he qualified for the legal profession. After being admitted as a solicitor, Mr. Skedden practised law in Wellington for some years, but later relinquished his practice to join the staff of the Public Trust Office. He remained in that department until he left to join the Broadcasting Board's staff.

Early Interest in Broadcasting

He became interested in broadcasting in its early days, and frequently played piano solos and accompaniments from the original Wellington broadcasting station, 2YK, when it was situated in the old "Dominion" building, and later when the studio was moved to the Dominion Farmers' Institute. Shortly after the opening of 2YA he began broadcasting from that station, and continued to do so for a considerable time. Later he broadcast on many occasions from Station 2ZW, Wellington.

Music His Hobby

Although law was his work, music had always been his hobby, and at the age of 17 he was appointed organist at St. Gerard's Church, Hawker Street. He studied under Lawrence Watkins, recently retired from St. Mark's in Wellington. Later on Mr. Skedden became organist at St. Joseph's, Buckle Street, succeeding in that position Bernard Page, formerly the Wellington City Organist, and just prior to leaving Wellington for Invercargill, was organist at St. Anne's Church. He has also acted as conductor of various choirs, and learned the violin for a period, but lately has not had time to keep up his practice of this instrument.

From Classics to Swing

Mr. Skedden's love of music is a deep one, and his tastes are widespread, covering all branches of music from the classics to swing. He is a firm believer in the need for different kinds of music to fit different moods, and

finds this one of the greatest gifts of broadcasting, as the listener can choose entertainment to fit his mood, at a trifling cost.

Mr. Skedden is keenly interested in dance music and over a period of years, both led and played in leading dance bands in Wellington. During part of that time he was Vice-President, and later President, of the Wellington Musicians' Union.

Sidelines

These interests would not seem to leave very much spare time, but Mr. Skedden found leisure to devote to amateur photography, to tennis, and later to golf. He also found time to pick up some technical knowledge of broadcasting, and to study drama from the broadcasting point of view. He is an enthusiast on all matters pertaining to radio, and his particular hobby is presentation, with special emphasis on the feature and recording sides of broadcasting.

As broadcasting has grown, his interest in it has increased. He recalls with amusement his first radio set, a very crude home-made crystal arrangement, with earphones, which were carefully

placed in a basin to enable more than one person to hear the programme at the same time. No doubt other early listeners will remember similar experiences, and the thrill of getting overseas programmes on the primitive battery sets which were then the last word in receivers. So intense did his interest in broadcasting become that his ambition could only be satisfied by working at this new art, and he seized the earliest opportunity of joining the Broadcasting Service. As radio is his main hobby, he considers himself very fortunate in being able to earn his living at a task which he finds so absorbing.

Keen Sportsman

He is a keen motorist, and when his duties permit he asks nothing better than to be out-of-doors, particularly if there is any hunting or shooting available. The excellent deer-stalking and shooting available in Southland enhances greatly that province's appeal for him.

Articles from Mr. Skedden's pen have been published in several papers, but of late he has had no time to devote to writing, though he hopes to return to it later on.



J. F. SKEDDEN