

YOUR WAR AND MINE

A Town And Country Review

(Written for "The Listener" by K.C.B.)

A WEEK ago I would have said "A million and a half New Zealanders are at war!" Today, after seeing a fair proportion of these warring people I would rather say that a million and a half individuals are fighting a million and a half wars.

Perhaps, if you had come along with me and sat beside me in bus, tram and train; if you had been at my elbow in business conferences, in the streets, in restaurants and in hotels; if you had listened to wayside chatter, farm opinions and fireside gossip . . . then you would have appreciated with me the fact that each man, woman and child in New Zealand has his own particular way of settling Hitler's account. Each one is working, you may be sure of that, but it amazed me to see the variety of ways in which money was being raised for patriotic purposes. Here a pig was being auctioned, there a horse was the object of a popular raffle. Women knitted and boys gathered bottles; girls drove trucks and old men watched and dug deep into their pockets.

Let's investigate some of these "war efforts." Let's see these people working and talking as I did, then perhaps you'll see what I mean when I say every individual to his own war.

Views on Cossacks

A small, nondescript youth was talking to me over railway coffee and sandwiches. "Pretty sticky in Russia," he said. "But I bet those Cossacks will knock hell out of Fritz. Hundreds of thousands of them there — and all mounted chaps with curved swords. Those parachute jokers won't stand a chance . . . not with the Cossacks swooping down on them as they land."

A soldier sat down in the seat next to mine and smoked peacefully. He was a

sergeant from a military camp nearby and was being transferred.

"Good to get a rest," he said, "I've been slogging along for weeks without a break. But what's it matter. I'm as fit as a fiddle now. Put on a stone and a-half so far—great life, you know! Never go back to the office when this show blows over! Not on your life!"

An airman hung his greatcoat on the hook next to mine and went to sleep in the next seat. An hour later he woke up and stretched.

"Went to a show last night," he said. "Painted the town, then boarded this train. I tell you I'm making the pace tough. Work all day, then bump it along at night. Still, what's a war for anyway?" And he went to sleep again.

A tall man with a red face and huge hands stepped into the carriage further up the line.

"Ten Quid a Week"

"I'm heading North again. Been on a holiday for a couple of weeks. Work? Oh, cows! Making ten quid a week and keep. War? No, not me. Got two feet as flat as the Takapau Plains. I'll do my bit defending the old cowshed, but that's as far as I'll get!"

The train pulled up and he bailed out. In town that afternoon a business man stretched and thrust himself back into his leather chair.

"I'm going to earn 5 per cent. dividend for this company this year or bust," he said. "Times are bad, and we're being taxed pretty heavily, but my chaps are putting their backs into it, and they're a great team. I've worked hours extra each night making up for a couple of chaps who've gone away. You see, we can't replace staff these days because it takes years to train new men. Still, there's a war on you know!"

A girl behind a counter wrapped a parcel, tied it neatly. She yawned.

"Tired?"

"Yes! I went to a party last night to see my fiancée off. He's an observer in the Air Force, and he's going to Canada soon. I've been keeping late hours recently knitting pullovers, scarves, socks and whatnots. He's been my local war effort for months."

The Parade Goes On

Outside in the street a Home Guard unit passed marching steadily three abreast. They were fit men and were heading for their sector.

"They're going wiring to-day," said a small boy standing next to me. "My daddy isn't there to-day because he got a bad back last week digging trenches."

And so the parade went on. I talked to a girl who had just returned from a jumble sale. They made almost a hundred pounds. Another lady had been baking for the Red Cross. Another had

spent the afternoon cutting up old sheets and material for equipment cleaners.

One Dissident Voice

One man — one isolated case — said quite frankly he would never go to war, and would never support New Zealand's or any other country's war effort. But this man was like finding a toadstool in a ring of mushrooms. He didn't represent the "great public" any more than a single rusty nail condemns a sound building.

All these individual efforts are now being concentrated at the focal point which is to be found "somewhere behind New Zealand's guns."

A million and a-half wars, being fought by people who know what they want, and know they have to pay a price for individual and collective liberty.

-And MY WAR AND MORRISON'S

A Back Seat Blitzkrieg

(Written for "The Listener" by "ETAOIN")



"NOW if I were Budenny," said little Morrison, glaring through his spectacles, "I would throw all my mechanised units over the Dneiper now and force the Germans back along their own supply lines." To give point to his remarks, he swung his lunch-box viciously like it was a 50-ton tank he was buzzing across the Dneiper or the Peipus or what-have-you in the pious hope that it would catch Reichs-general von List slap on the mon-ocle. It did catch one of the strap-hangers in the small of the back, but Morrison didn't notice it. He was in full cry, mechanised units and all, after the retreating Nazis.

THAT'S just a sample of what I hear every evening. Every evening there are a million Morrisons bumping belligerently homeward in the rear compartments of a hundred thousand buses with nothing but flatulence in their tummies and their heads stuffed with the latest military jargon as churned out by the cable services of the evening papers. Just look at Morrison, for example, physically he's more like an Informed Circle than anything else and I doubt if he could throw out his chest, far less

a mechanised unit, but you should hear him on tactics. I never argue with him myself — if you're a three-section commuter like me and you're up against a terminusite, or termite, like Morrison, it's bad strategy. You can throw him back in confusion on the Pripet marshes maybe, but what's the good of that when that's where you get off and Morrison's additional threepence worth of back-seat is enough respite for him to dredge himself and his panzer units back on to dry land and scupper you *in absentia* to the entire satisfaction of his remaining cronies. You can never beat the Morrisons.

There was one fourpenny single tried it last week. He threw four panzer spearheads at Morrison in as many minutes, but it was no use. Morrison just bit their heads off and spat them back at him. Then the fourpenny tried to bend Morrison's front line and make a Battle of the Bulge out of it but Morrison at once developed a pincer movement and the fourpenny retired so hastily that he backed up against the button-push and when the bus stopped he said that was where he got off and Morrison was left in possession of the field.

NOT that Morrison confines himself to land tactics. You should have seen him at the Battle of Taranto. Musso, hadn't a single racing skiff left when he had finished with him. He power-dived

(Continued on next page)

"Ghosting" Goebbels

AN air of consternation
Pervades the Deutschland station
There's panic in the wireless from Berlin.

A caustic Goebbels baiter
Confounds the commentator
And interrupts the Nazi bulletin.

THEY'VE tried elimination
By brassy orchestration—
The "Ghost" awaits cessation of the din,

Then strikes in controverting
With knowledge disconcerting
The propaganda Goebbels spreads within—

In accents so compelling
So definitely telling
Why Hitler and his gangsters cannot win.

THEY don't succeed in jamming
This voice so double-damning,
And this is getting under Goebbels's skin.
Despite controlled broadcasting



And bombast everlasting
He knows the truth is slowly sinking in.

—H. Gallagher