

KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!

Radio Plays Vital Part In "Safety For Shipping" Campaign

IF at the conclusion of the four weeks' "Safety for Shipping" campaign recently inaugurated by the Hon. F. Jones, Minister of Defence, the New Zealand man in the street still goes round idly discussing the movements of shipping it will be evidence of more than irresponsibility. It will show that he has had his eyes and ears tightly closed to one of the most intensive campaigns of its kind launched in this country since the beginning of the war.

Newspapers, radio, and thousands of arresting posters in every city and town in the Dominion are all punching home the message that loose and careless talk about the movements of shipping may easily give away information to the enemy which may just as easily result in the loss of valuable cargoes and more valuable lives. The National and Commercial Broadcasting Services, co-ordinated for the purpose, are playing an invaluable part in the campaign, taking its message into every home.

"Maintain Perfect Silence"

The campaign was launched on a recent Sunday night by a National Service talk broadcast by Mr. Jones over the main national and all commercial stations. Appealing urgently to every New Zealander and especially to those who live in the vicinity of ports, Mr. Jones did not mince his words. "The Germans are a race of eavesdroppers and keyhole spies," he remarked. "There is only one way to frustrate them every time and all the time, and that is to keep silent about the movements and tasks of shipping, and maintain perfect silence even when your loved ones are aboard and you want more than anything else to know when they are to sail or come back from distant countries."

"This campaign concerns everyone in New Zealand," he added. "Continuous



THE HON. F. JONES, Minister of Defence, at the microphone opening the "Safety for Shipping" campaign

shipping is a vital need in production and industry. Do not in any way imperil it."

A military Intelligence Staff officer who spoke after Mr. Jones was equally frank about the danger of idle gossip. "I must remind you," he said, "that it must be assumed that the German Intelligence Service is here, in both the North and South Islands, in some form or shape, moving among you and listening to your conversation each day and every day. It follows that we must be scrupulously careful in our conversation."

"Friends and relatives of men travelling on ships would doubtless be horrified at the suggestion that they are imperilling lives by talking needlessly and carelessly about ships and their movements. They must be horrified, because it is a fact."

The morning after these radio talks, men and women going to work were reminded again of the campaign by newspaper advertisements and many thousands of posters, ranging from "24-sheeters" to small stickers, all bearing an illustration of a ship being torpedoed and a bold warning "Lest We Regret... Don't Talk!" These were distributed by members of the Women's War Service Auxiliary, and appeared in shop windows, in public waiting rooms, and in buses and trams everywhere. In some cities, parades of decorated army vehicles were held.

During the campaign, the main National stations are broadcasting on Monday evenings further talks by the military Intelligence Officer, and on Wednesday mornings the same officer broadcasts special messages to women, who are presumably believed to be more frequently guilty of daytime gossiping than men. The National stations also broadcast, from time to time during programmes and also immediately before national hook-ups for the news, a series of "Don't Talk" slogans along the lines of "Idle Gossip Can Sink Ships. Don't Talk," and "The Safety of our soldiers, sailors, and airmen depends on your silence. Don't talk."

Dramatised Warning

The ZB stations are assisting wholeheartedly in the campaign. In addition to carrying the Monday evening and Wednesday morning talks by the Intelligence Officer and the "Don't Talk" slogans, dramatised warnings will be played from all stations. Here is a sample which gives an excellent idea of how accumulated gossip can be pieced together to make vital information:

Announcer: In wartime, talk is dangerous. Even the most simple and innocent remark may provide the one

piece of information the enemy is waiting for. Conversations like this are pregnant with danger. This was overheard in a lift:

Woman: And they had no blankets in stock at all, my dear. The salesman was saying that the Government has ordered 3,000 pairs to be delivered by Monday. That's for the troop ship you know.

Ann: Overheard in a restaurant.

Woman: My husband was saying that they are taking on more carpenters down at the wharf this week-end. They have got to have the new fittings finished on that new troopship by Monday.

Ann: Overheard in a train.

Man: I can't get any timber to finish off my garage doors. They say the Government is buying up all the timber for the fittings on that new troopship, but they reckon they will have some to spare after Monday.

Ann: And as a result of these scraps of information, across the ether went the following message:

Voice: New troopship being fitted out hurriedly — probably to accommodate 3,000 men—anticipate troopship leaving this port Monday next.

Ann: You see, ladies and gentlemen, what you talk about may not be important as a single item of information, but pieced together, all these chance remarks can give the enemy vital information.

"VOICE FROM HOME"



HOW THE VOICE of Clive Drummond (above), heard in a radio programme brought back vivid memories of home is described in a letter which a Wellington resident has just received from his son who is an officer on one of His Majesty's ships serving in the Persian Gulf. "Talking of 2YA," says the young officer, "I had quite a thrill to hear Clive Drummond speaking in a New Zealand programme from the BBC. I shut my eyes and it seemed just as though I were sitting listening at home. It's marvellous to think that a man whom I have never seen should be able to bring home so near to me."

"Don't
pass it on,
but . . ."

Rumour, "The Lying Jade," is always busy in war time and especially busy about the coming and going of overseas ships. In the words of one of the slogans broadcast in the "Safety for Shipping" campaign: "If a rumour is not passed on, it dies. Silence kills rumours. Don't talk."

("Radio Times" Illustration)

