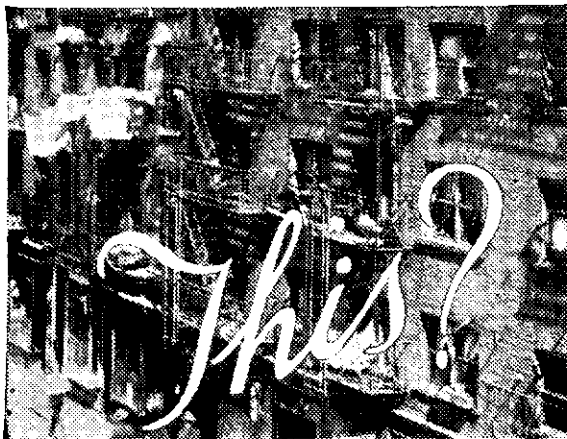




IS New Zealand thinking yet about the post-war world? Does the man in the street expect to see great changes or none? What do leaders of thought think?

To find out whether anybody is thinking at all "The Listener" has interviewed a number of representative men and women, and presents the result here.

It is to be understood that we did not submit considered questions or ask for considered replies. Our prime purpose was to find out whether such questions were in the minds of our fellow-citizens before we approached them.



UNIVERSITY PRINCIPAL

"WHAT are your ideas about the post-war world?" *The Listener* asked Sir Thomas Hunter, Principal of Victoria University College.

"I have no ideas at all on the subject," said Sir Thomas, "and I doubt whether any one else has either."

ANOTHER PROFESSOR

"WE have got to expect the world after the war to be a different world," said another university professor. "Work it out this way. Europe has led the world politically, economically, culturally, in the 19th century. It has been said that from the point of view of Japan these two wars are civil wars inside the European system which will destroy the grip of Europe over the Far East. It may result in the sorting out of Europe into a different shape, but there will be a different world pattern, not European unless we regard the U.S.A. as an extension of Europe."

"As regards New Zealand, we have been an extension of Europe culturally and economically, but we are not likely to remain so. Europe is not likely to need our exports, and it is perfectly clear that, however this war goes, the Pacific will be a matter for the U.S.A., Japan, and perhaps China, and not really any more for the control of the European colonising powers, England, France, Holland. Even if that control is artificially restored, it is inconceivable that we should get back to effective control. Unless there is a complete breakdown, the situation at the end of the war will be something like this: We shall have developed our productive powers to a high level, but we shall have forgotten all about interest payments, lease-lend etc. The whole show will be under centralised control under government supervision or the supervision of other centralised agencies. The problem of the post-war world will be whether the volume of production, both primary and secondary, can be switched over to a peacetime consumption without too great dislocation. The danger for the future lies in the difficulty of this switch over, plus the very highly developed central control: London-Washington, or perhaps just Washington. There may also be pressure in a fascist direction from, for example, demobilised troops. The main safeguard will be economic exhaustion. After all, democracy is not so much a political organisation as the life of

WILL IT BE DIFFERENT?

the ordinary man. It is not so much the business that goes on at Parliament House as whether you and I get a square deal and reasonable opportunities."

ECONOMIST

"ON the whole my view of the post-war situation is pretty gloomy," said Dr. (now Gunner), W. B. Sutch. "We shall have a continuation of the same controls over trade and industry, and this will make difficult the provision of jobs for all the tens of thousands of returned servicemen. It won't only be an economic problem, it will be a psychological and social problem of readjustment. But the business of finding work will be worse than the depression. Then there were something like 100,000 unemployed, but there are something like 160,000 servicemen who must all be fitted into the system and be given real work that will give them self-expression, something that will make them feel that they are contributing to the building of New Zealand. There are also all those who are on the production of war materials; these will have to be transferred to something that is for construction, not destruction. Another effect of the war has been to throw women into industry. They have even in a few cases achieved equality of pay with men. Is this going to be reversed? I rather expect that there will be a strong plea that they are taking the places of men and that they will again be forced back to the pre-war position."

"Then we will be faced with what to do with our meat, butter, wool, cheese and so on. At present, we have a firm market in England. Much depends on England whether this will continue. What about the purchasing power of the British public after the war? Judging by what happened after the last war we can't take too optimistic a view, but for a year or two after the war our produce may be used for the devastated areas. In industry we again have a problem. We have built up new industries, whereas formerly we only supplied part of the market. Now we are exporting boots, clothing, oatmeal, all sorts of things. The military market will disappear and the problem will arise as to who is to have the domestic market, manufacturers or importers. And what about the workers engaged in supplying military needs? On the

other hand, there are projects of national development which may ensure employment or some kind of work for all. But this does not ensure the disposal of our produce nor does it tackle the many social and psychological problems that must arise.

"One thing I do hope for," said Dr. Sutch, in conclusion, "and that is for the rapid elimination of all those controls of freedom of expression which have been made temporarily necessary by the war. New Zealand is one of the most conservative countries in the world, so we need not expect any changes of a radical nature here. No, I don't think that even in our financial system or its organisation there will be any revolutionary change."

EDUCATIONIST

"WHAT sort of a post-war world will it be? We can only guess and inside a paragraph there is room for only one guess," said F. L. Combs, Editor-in-chief of Educational Publications. "My guess is this, the world will either come under the control of a money power, a great international money trust which will direct a system of world monopolies such as steel, sugar, textiles, shipping (etc.), or democracy, in order to base its freedom securely, will take collective possession of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. The struggle between these two tendencies is going on pretty vigorously in western democracies at the present moment. Of course there may be a compromise between these two opposites, but it will be an uneasy because an unstable one. And because it is unstable, such a compromise will be ripe with possibilities of further armed strife, for war in the last analysis is mainly economic competition transformed into a military struggle for supremacy."

"It therefore seems to me that all who espouse democracy should work to see that it is economically free as well as politically free. It is a poor consolation to think that without economic democracy all the well-to-do as well as those on the bread line, go fettered in spirit from the cradle to the grave."

PUBLIC SERVANT

"IT is no good making wild speculations as to what things may be like," said a senior civil servant. "We must

decide how things should be and plan on that. The difficulty is to get a realisation of the need for planning. This is a world problem, not merely one for New Zealand. It is useless to think of the problem as one of markets after the war. The world is changing whether we like it or not, and we must have changes in our economic and financial system in order to adjust ourselves with the rest of the world. Individualism worked well enough in an age of increasing wealth but after the war the world will be poorer and won't be able to afford individualism. Unless we want to see the world break up again into warring units we have got to be prepared to take our place and adjust our institutions and actions and attitudes accordingly. Weak and imperfect as state control of industry may be, at least it has a rational basis and is directed towards an end which is not selfish."

THE CHURCHES

"I SEE two contradictory trends," said His Grace Archbishop O'Shea, "People are dying in thousands to preserve their liberties from enemies outside their countries. At the same time, other people are ready, in return for economic security, to surrender those same liberties inside their own countries. That is the easy way—but only for a while. They can have complete economic security and still remain free men only if they are prepared to pay the price, namely, strict justice and unselfish co-operation among all the individuals and groups that go to make a nation."

"The world will be assured of a peaceful and prosperous future when peoples and their governments remember and apply the words of Christ: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God, the things that are God's.'"

"I HAVE not the least idea what the world will be like in detail after the war," said the Rev. F. H. Robertson, Director of the Campaign for Christian Order, conducted by the New Zealand National Council of Churches. "That depends on how long the war lasts, how it is won, and to what extent by that time the nations have exhausted their energies and their resources. We shall have to tackle reconstruction, just as it will be necessary to tackle the re-

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THE WORLD AFTER THE WAR