

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

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No Pause and No Gloating

SINCE there was no longer a danger that any victory but the last would turn our heads, it was safe last week to ring the bells and sound the sirens. Now we renew our determination to push on to the end. The battle rolls on. Every breathing space for the enemy, the only enemy now remaining in Europe, means death and disablement for an increased number of our men, a rise in the volume of human anguish on both sides, an addition to the appalling material losses, and a longer journey through the blood and sweat and tears. Therefore, no breathing space could be given last week, and none has been given since. Assault convoys were moving up to attack the Germans while the ink was drying on Italy's acceptance of defeat. For that is war—the speediest, most violent, most ruthless annihilation of resistance to encourage or save the others. And because that is what war always means, there was no gloating over the enemy who had fallen. Bell-ringing in London, Washington, or Wellington means, we know, bell-tolling in Naples and Rome. As long as we are civilised we remember that, and draw a line between rejoicing and jeering. In any case, we have far too many reasons for restraint on our own side. While the collapse of Italy is a victory in which New Zealand is especially interested—since there was no battle from the first to the last on the African side of the Mediterranean in which New Zealand did not take part—there was no battle in which New Zealanders did not die from Alamein to Tunis. They lie all the way—as far as from the Bluff to North Cape and back again; and victory can never cost less than that. When it does not come at all, when a whole nation finds itself deceived and betrayed and reduced to asking its adversary for terms, decency forbids cheap sneers.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

HERE'S TO THE CHATTERBOXES!

Sir,—As I read *The Listener* letters, which I do with joy, I have noticed how little attention is paid by critics to the talks. Now as the mother of a family, which keeps several conversations going at once, I find I can listen to talks when I simply cannot concentrate on music, and so talks have been my chief entertainment since I bought my first radio licence.

When one thinks back, what a splendid assortment of talks we have had—informative, amusing, constructive! I even enjoy the "Dig for Victory" ones, though there is too much repetition, but I only endure the political chatter. Travel talks are, however, the favourites, so

letter is beyond me. What I did say was that I like to see scenes of Germans being exterminated (to use Churchill's word). Pictures are for entertainment purposes, and if Lloyd Brown expects people to sit through them like wooden dummies he had better stay home, as he is asking the impossible.

Before I close I should like to draw your readers' attention to a speech by Roosevelt in which he says: "We spend our energies and resources and the very lives of our sons and daughters because a band of gangsters in the community of nations declines to recognise the fundamentals of decent human conduct."
—GEORGE BELL (Wellington).

PROGRAMME CHANGES

THE Election Campaign has necessitated many last-minute changes in our programmes, and may necessitate others. We have done our best to incorporate all the changes announced before the closing of this issue, but cannot guarantee that the present arrangements will not be disturbed again. We therefore urge all readers (1), to listen for the day by day announcements of Election broadcasts, and (2), to study the printed programmes carefully and not assume that ANY STATION is following its usual routine.

give us more "West Wind" and I would like "Horseback Holiday" to go on forever. I would like, too, to commend the many good talks which get in the Children's Hours on all stations; some of these could have been featured at a later hour, so good have they been. So here's to the chatterboxes of radio! May their tongues always wag.

—WACC (Avondale).

BRUTALITY ON THE SCREEN.

Sir,—In reply to Dennis Hartley's letter, on whose authority are the films he lists regarded as landmarks in the industry? As to his remarks that *A Yank at Eton* was bad in every way, I should like to point out to him that the film was meant to be a farce, and if it was taken as such it was one of the best we have seen. To his insulting remarks that the public of New Zealand (he can mean no other), are no judge of anything artistic, I can only say he is not very observant, or he would know that men of standing who have visited New Zealand in recent years have remarked on the intelligence, knowledge of politics, and of world affairs shown by the New Zealand public. Yet Dennis Hartley says they are no judge of anything artistic.

To "Soldier's Wife" I feel no resentment for her letter, as I know how my mother (a widow) must have felt when she stood on the wharf and watched the ship bearing the youngest of the family heading for the open sea. But I should like to draw her attention to recent speeches by Churchill and Roosevelt, both Christian men, in which they say that the Axis Gangsters must be completely exterminated.

To the sarcastic Lloyd Brown I should like to point out that he is clouding the issue when he suggests that I like to see brutality on the screen. How he or any other person can construe that from my

Sir,—An appropriate comment on this subject appears in the *Saturday Evening Post* (May 22) in an article by an American pilot who took part in the Bismarck Sea battle, in which a Japanese convoy was wiped out to the last ship and last man. The pilot-author reported that "we were all tickled over the show," and goes on to say:

"From start to finish, it was like a football superclass, even to the audience and the play-by-play accounts. At our base operations tent in Port Moresby, 160 miles distant from the action, we had our loud-speaker tuned to the command set, and sometimes we had nearly 1,000 men around, cheering like fools."

That report is a pretty good indication of how the fighting men consider war; how otherwise could they fight to win? At any rate it is a complete answer to G.M.'s naive opinions about audiences and war-films. Your contributor writes as if we lived in a sane world. The next step towards civilisation is to kill Germans and Japs—the more the quicker the merrier. A few cheers by the way will help to humanise the process.

—F.G. (Wellington).

(We have no space for further letters on this subject.—Ed.)

POINTS FROM LETTERS

H. G. Mackintosh (Christchurch), praises "the splendid programme rendered by 'A Male Voice Choir,' from 3YA on Friday, August 27."

F.L. (Invercargill), and E.S. (Ashburton), support N. M. Hunter-Brown's appeal for "the best only" in programmes, but W.L.S. (Auckland), suggests that dissatisfied listeners have "failed to study the programmes diligently" or to use them wisely.

G. de S.B. (Campbell's Bay), says that instead of grumbling at the NBS, listeners should "do something to help them on their by no means easy task of catering for the public." He suggests that we should do something, too—for example, provide space under two heads for:—(1) Appreciation—"no letters; just names of items and signatures;" and (2). Recommendations—again "just the names of items they would like to hear." Listeners, he insists, should help one another and "by so doing, help the NBS in its praiseworthy attempts for the common weal."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Mrs. W.B.T. (Inglewood): We have not been able to secure copies.

Master B.R. (Timaru): We regret being compelled to say No.

A.W. (Wellington): Some objection to granting your first request, and an insuperable obstacle in the way of the second.

H.S.F. (Mairangi Bay): No.
"Anxious to Know" (Lyall Bay): No. Pure white.

L.A.D. (Jackson's Bay): Ten per cent right and 90 per cent wrong. We shall not forget the first when the time comes.

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