

RACE RELATIONS IN N.Z.

Sir,—Mr. J. E. Ritchie prefaces his criticism of Dr. Winiata's broadcast by asserting that "there are not enough contemporary field reports to justify a theory of symbiosis." He then goes on dogmatically to assert the opposite view, which presumably the admittedly scanty evidence from community studies is adequate to support. But this is not the only kind of relevant evidence. The concentration of most of the Maori population in certain rural areas and the low rate of inter-marriage are hard demographic facts which indicate that there will be a distinct Maori section of the population in New Zealand for many years to come. What kind of organisation and value system is likely to characterise this group? The answer will be provided primarily by the Maori people, who have shown their desire to retain a measure of identity, for example, in their reaction to Maori representation at the Coronation and the Royal visit to Ngaruawahia. Such visible manifestations of Maoritanga, like the steam escaping from a safety valve, are merely outward signs of tremendous pressure within. In such circumstances it is unwise to sit on the safety valve. If the Maori is made to feel that his legitimate cultural aspirations are constantly being frustrated, it may do much to undermine the generally good relations between the two peoples which exist and have existed in peace and war.

But the issue is not merely one of expediency, of guarding against the possibility of a resentful and disorganised brown minority in New Zealand. Dr. Winiata is right when he suggests that "for purposes of full social and psychological satisfactions the Maori group offers (and, in fact, gives) far more than the pakeha side." Dr. Winiata is better qualified to speak on this point than Mr. Ritchie, who has the presumption to tell Dr. Winiata (who has himself achieved distinction by Pakeha standards) how he can best help his people to do the same. Actually this and other comments by Mr. Ritchie are reflections of the ethnocentric assumption that the 20th Century European way of life provides a full and ideal range of satisfactions for human beings, and that the only hope for people with non-European values and attitudes is to approximate to it in all respects. Actually, preservation of the social and psychological satisfactions mentioned by Dr. Winiata is not at all inconsistent with adaptation to modern conditions. The institutions and forms of organisation through which these satisfactions are provided have changed and will continue to change. But the central core of values remains much the same and will increasingly stimulate the Maori to achieve improved status—by being a good Maori and not by imitating the Pakeha. The constructive task for both peoples is to discern how this tendency can best be fostered in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding.

RALPH PIDDINGTON,

Department of Anthropology, Auckland University College.

RUMOURED ROYAL ROMANCE

Sir,—One criticism only would I make of Mr. Hutton-Potts's commentary on the rumoured Royal romance. He states that the succession is "safe" without Princess Margaret. Whilst this is undoubtedly the case in so far that many heirs are available, the succession could easily be hers, or her heirs, unless she renounces.

There can be no doubt that public opinion is being felt out. Now, is it not fairly obviously the case that public opinion is being felt out as to the ac-

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ceptability of Princess Margaret not renouncing? For she is free as the wind to renounce and marry without permission or approval of anyone. I assume that if she does renounce and marry, the allowance of £11,000 a year payable on her marriage is also renounced. It would appear that the acceptability of some degree of recognition is being canvassed and considered, and in this connection I would only comment that it is a pity that such a decision has to be made in the lifetime of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, for should recognition and acceptance at Court be accorded a Princess Margaret-Mr. Townsend marriage it is hard to see how in justice to the parties concerned both recognition and acceptance at Court can be withheld from the Windsors. The circumstances are almost exactly parallel, the other parties being the innocent ones of divorce.

That consideration of the various pros and cons, and possible solutions is being given to this matter is made quite clear by Group Captain Townsend's being prepared to meet the Press and answer questions in vague non-committal terms. If there was nothing to it he obviously could not quickly enough make a categorical denial.

I. R. MAXWELL-STEWART
(Wellington).

NEWS FROM EAST AND WEST

Sir,—Your editorial about the need to broaden the flow of information in a divided world is very provocative. An effect of the cold war now being waged so hotly by politicians and journalists on our behalf (or in our despite) is the increasing contraction of the source of news and the field of unbiased comment. Furthermore, if one had ever doubted the immense power of modern propaganda the proof would lie in the wonderful job that the self-styled "organs of information" have done in conditioning so many of the world's people to the inevitability of war and the powerlessness of peoples to avert it so soon after the "never again" resolutions of ten years ago.

But not all newspapers in all countries share this unenviable record to which you have rightly called our attention. Just recently I have been eating my breakfast with the English-language newspapers of India and Burma propped against the cruet—e.g., the *Statesman*, *Times of India* and *Amritsar Bazaar Patrika* (India), or the *Nation* and *New Times of Burma*. What a contrast with the narrow reportage we are used to here! What a contrast, for that matter, with the newspapers (or some of them) on the other side of the alleged curtain. For here is what one hardly knew existed—the stimulation of reporting from all over the world with no regard to curtains at all; and editorial comment that treats the reader as adult, sane and capable of placing his own evaluation upon the facts.

So this is the answer to your question as to what would happen if news from East and West were universally available. In the first place it is available. In the second it is being printed in at least one part of the world. Now significantly this happens to be just exactly that part which is not committed to either side in the wearisome and quite overplayed cold war between East and West. India and Burma, having won their independence the hard way, treasure it more than we who inherited it from our ancestors. Their leaders realise what ours do not: that there can

be only two outcomes to a continuance of the cold war, namely, (a) it gets hot and we are atomised, or (b) it stays cold and we quake and tremble in our respective funk-holes until, fed permanently on intellectual pap like we are getting now, we and our unfortunate offspring revert to the mental and moral status of ants.

The moral, then, is that the cold war must end. One way it can end is by the adherence of more and more governments to that block of non-committed countries, led by India and Burma, which stand for a positive approach to the problems of living together in one world. Our own politicians and journalists, unfortunately, are busy rushing us off in the opposite direction. But this, on all contemporary evidence, is a blind alley, and we shall have to come round to a more rational way of thinking and behaving. When at last we do so, for want of any other sensible alternative, we shall find that the Indian and Burmese people, led by statesmen of some vision and instructed by a press with some sense of responsibility, have arrived there already.

H. W. YOUREN (Napier).

"CARMEN JONES"

Sir,—May I beg space in your paper to embark upon the fruitless task of disputing an issue which is not disputable, namely, a matter of taste. The object of my complaint is the film *Carmen Jones*, which appears to have captivated so many theatre-goers, discriminating and otherwise.

I would like to say, at the outset, that my grievance does not arise from any deep-felt antipathy to American influence in the sphere of music. In certain directions, which would take up too much space to discuss, America has done a tremendous amount for the art of music. Indeed, she has revealed, in some fields, a degree of initiative and generosity which could be well imitated by older countries and our own. At the same time, she has exported for public consumption abroad, the off-scourings which have gone so far, per medium of commercial radio to bring about a growing degeneracy of public taste, which the most strenuous efforts in the education field are hard pressed to combat. One lamentable aspect of this state of affairs is the petty pilfering of established works for "ear tickling" purposes. But petty pilfering pales before grand larceny, and the film *Carmen Jones* is nothing if not just that.

Let us concede that, by and large, opera is a matter of adultery, prostitution, and murder, and that, for all its questionably romantic associations, the bull ring is probably no more respectable than the prize-fighter's stadium, and that a stiletto in the ribs is probably as unpleasant a death as is strangulation. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Bizet's *Carmen*, in common with all other Romantic opera, sees these things through the rose-coloured glasses of the accepted "conventionalised" and colourful stage production.

If it is objected that this is where opera, as such, falls down, and that it is time that a note of realism should be struck in portraying human passions and foibles, I could find myself in agreement. But the solution, as I see it, does not lie in transplanting music which was nurtured in a Southern French nursery to the foreign soil of Harlem. If the Negro is to tell us a story of the *Carmen* type, he should tell it in his own idiom. The whole thing is incongruous—at times, laughably so. What is worse, it so

palpably arises from exploitation of the public craze for sensationalism, no matter how nasty or how cheap. One smells pounds, shillings and pence at the back of the whole thing.

Further, it fails technically, as the "dubbing" of voices (itself a spurious procedure) is not always felicitous. Let us have Negro operas about sordid things (if this is really what modern living demands), but let them be original and not a travesty of other people's ideas. Meanwhile, I dread the possibility of a reciprocal effort, when Europe produces a version of *Porgy and Bess* in which the characters come from the pages of *Parsifal*.

HARRY LUSCOMBE (Auckland).

"ART IS NEVER EASY"

Sir,—Referring to your editorial on this subject and to Louis Johnson's letter, I find your editorial wise and Mr. Johnson's words true, with, of course, those of Mr. McCormick.

If we change "Art" to "Fame" isn't it true that New Zealanders are very impersonal? We don't like individualists, except perhaps in the world of sport. We never mention our famous men and women in conversation. No wonder the famous are expatriates, and the would-be famous feel licked. Which reminds me that with the exception of John Robert Godley, the founder of Canterbury, there's not a single famous New Zealander on any of our postage stamps. Could we not include portraits of Rutherford, Katherine Mansfield, Peter Buck and others in a new issue? Our commemorative issues show landscape, ship, maps, people in groups, birds, and even a tuatara, but no famous individual. An issue devoted to a dozen or so of our most famous statesmen, scientists, sportsmen and artists might change the emotional climate somewhat and make us seem a little less indifferent.

W. HART-SMITH (Timaru).

TAVERNS IN THE TOWNS

Sir,—The editorial in this week's *Listener* had to be read twice to be believed—such a come-down from what we usually get from the pen of our editor. Threatened with broken homes, lonely evenings, drunken husbands coming home at all hours, streets rendered unsafe by the eviction of drunks and half-drunks at 10.0 p.m., etc., you will find the women of New Zealand very much up in arms and maybe stronger than you think. Why, in any case, an editorial on the subject? New Zealanders will never moderate their drinking; the only remedy is to give them less time for indulging, certainly not more.

ON GUARD (Nelson).

SPARS FROM HOKIANGA

Sir,—Since there is some interest in the early visits of H.M. ships to this country I will pursue the matter with inquiries to Britain, the outcome of which I will beg leave to publish. In answer to Mr. Reed concerning the visit to Coromandel Peninsula of H.M.S. *Coromandel* in 1804-06, I understood that at that time she loaded kauri spars from Mercury Bay using Cook's sailing directions to get there. She was described as a spar transport with bow-ports through which to load them.

W. HUGH ROSS (Huntly).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

J.H. (Whangarei): If copies are available they can be obtained from Unesco Publications Centre, 100 Hackthorne Road, Christchurch, S.2.

W. L. Renwick (Eastbourne): Temporary suspension.