

## WHILE LONDON BURNED

Sir,—Anti-aircraft gunners deployed in the defence of London and S.E. England hardly deserve the contemptuous reference to a "handful of wildly inaccurate anti-aircraft guns," employed in the article entitled "While London Burned." The German pilots engaged in the Battle of Britain did not so regard them, according to General Werner Kriepe, commanding one of the Luftwaffe fleets taking part. The total of enemy aircraft known to have been destroyed by A.A. gunners in Great Britain is sufficient testimony to their efficiency.

Picturesque writing need not be at variance with the facts, especially when less than justice has been done to the many thousands of Territorial Ack-Ack gunners of both sexes who pursued their un-spectacular task with great devotion to duty.

R. E. DAVY, formerly Lt.-Col., R.A., T.A. (Henderson).

(The gunners tried valiantly, but according to General Sir Frederick Pile, G.O.C., Anti-Aircraft Command, "During the three days from September 8 to 10, the Command shot down 15 planes, but only four of them were destroyed at night." In those three nights alone, no fewer than 600 bombers attacked the city. The gun control system, according to the General, "was based on our old assumption that the enemy would fly on a straight course and at a constant height and speed, and as the information depended on sound (with its consequent inaccuracy), and as the cumbersome machinery produced only a small volume of fire from a large number of guns, it failed lamentably." Pile says further that "after three bad nights' bombing in London, in which it was obvious to me, sleeping in my bed, that our system was no good, I became both angry and frightened at the same time, and lay awake the rest of the night thinking how to deal with this business." Accuracy did, of course, improve. In September the number of shells fired per aircraft shot down was 30,000, in October 11,000, in November and December 7000 and in January 4000. London however received 19,000 of the total of 24,000 of bombs dropped on it during the Blitz before November 14.—Ed.)

## PARTY IMAGES

Sir,—On hearing Professor R. S. Milne's talk on "Party Images and the Public Mind" I was surprised to find that Wellington Central had been the sample selected. This electorate is probably one of the worst in New Zealand to use as an unbiased sample as far as Social Credit is concerned. By reason of the continuous movement of some of the population Social Credit has been unable to form a really strong organisation in this electorate. Some very fine members have joined from this area but in very many cases they have moved to other localities. In the last election therefore this electorate was not covered at all well with literature. This inadequacy clearly reflected itself in Professor Milne's survey. The survey showed only the detrimental images of Social Credit created by the other two movements. The images, for example, that the policy was "intangible" or "airy-fairy."

The survey did not show the favourable images for Social Credit and some of the Wellington Central members have been asked to say what favourable images they have of the policy. There are two main images: the first and most important favourable image of Social Credit is a debt-free money system in which the Government on behalf of the people takes back its sole prerogative of the issuance of all money, such money to be issued proportionally when population rise and increased production demand it and to be issued free, i.e., to finance public works, to repay public debt or to issue it to the people as a national dividend. The second main image is the proper control of the currency so as to prevent further inflation. Inflation is of course essential to the

# LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

present parties in order to depreciate the National Debt and so make it possible to bear this increasing burden.

Furthermore, just as the favourable images were absent from the sample so were the unfavourable ones to the other movements. In members' mind National tried to solve the "over" full employment problem by flooding the market with imports and thereby used up our overseas funds. Labour on the other hand seeks to protect the "over" full employment situation by import control leading to shortages. In either case the country suffers because of the sectional interests of both parties.

It would be interesting to know if the field workers in the survey asked whether or not any Social Credit literature had been read or speakers heard. Presumably Professor Milne selected Wellington Central as it is close to the University without taking into consideration the relative strength of the three movements? D. C. BORLEY, Economic Adviser and Research Officer, N.Z. Social Credit Political League, Inc. (Christchurch).

## CHRISTCHURCH WILLOWS

Sir,—In my early teens one of my delights was a trip by river launch up the Paterson River, a tributary of the Hunter River, New South Wales. Not far from Paterson township a stretch of the river was "walled" on both sides by weeping willows, which trailed into the water. We were always told that the original cuttings came from Napoleon's grave. I was surprised to read the same story about the New Zealand willows. There may even be a few more places in the world where cuttings were planted!

GRANDMA (Upper Hutt).

## "RUGBY IN MY TIME"

Sir,—I wish to commend you on your choice of Winston McCarthy as the most qualified person to write on New Zealand Rugby in the last decade. On the score of experience alone, with the Kiwi tour of Great Britain, the All Blacks tours of South Africa and Great Britain in 1949 and 1953 respectively, the Springbok tour of New Zealand in 1956, Winston McCarthy selects himself as critic. J. R. Kelly and C. G. Croft may show themselves as authorities on the Renaissance, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but surely it does not follow

that they are as erudite over players, personalities, rules and games, with a thorough memory of interesting tries, goals and incidents as he whom they derisively entitle "The Screaming Skull." Unless of course these two armchair critics play their Rugby with the celebrated ass's head that graced the weaver's skull in Shakespeare's immortal play. It shows a very limited approach to writing to assume that a journalist writing on Rugby should use "the high-sounding terms" that characterise writers like Marlowe and Shakespeare. Some readers who enjoy Winston McCarthy's chatty informal reminiscences may also enjoy some literary giants, and I personally think there is room for both. Many thanks for these enjoyable talks to Winston McCarthy, and many thanks to *The N.Z. Listener* for publishing them.

S. D. BRUSTOWE (Milton).

Sir,—I have for a long time past posted on to England my copies of *The Listener*. It is, after all, one of the few journals in this country with some sort of cultural outlook, if only in parts. However, I think you may agree that I am justified in sending this last number with the enclosed portion removed. I am not concerned with the brilliance or otherwise of McCarthy's Jonesy, who "must play rough," but I feel certain that he would not find a place in most of the club teams in England that the All Blacks are likely to meet in their next tour, not twice, anyway, if the alleged tackle depicted is part of his stock in trade. I hope in the selection of the next touring team those responsible will bear in mind that there is more in a Rugby tour than playing Rugby.

W.D. (Whangarei).

(Slightly abridged. The "enclosed portion" was the photograph of Peter Jones pouncing on Tommy Gentles. A little rough, perhaps, but these moments are often exaggerated when the camera isolates them.—Ed.)

## "DR NO"

Sir,—It seems to me that *The Listener* review of the novel *Dr No*, by Ian Fleming, did not say enough. In an article in the *New Statesman* entitled "Sex, Snobbery and Sadism" Paul Johnson takes a much more emphatic line against what he calls the "Fleming phenomenon." "The sadism of a school-boy bully, the mechanical, two-dimensional sex-longings of a frustrated adolescent and the crude, snob-cravings of a suburban adult" are, he says, "dished up

with all the calculated accountancy of a Lyons Corner House." Paul Johnson concludes: "Recently I read Henri Alleg's horrifying account of his tortures in an Algiers prison; and I have on my desk a documented account of how we treat our prisoners in Cyprus. I am no longer astonished that these things can happen." Now it seems that S. S. and S. have an equal appeal in New Zealand. Not only has *Dr No* arrived in book form, but he is being serialised in one of our popular weekly newspapers.

There are a lot of excellent arguments against the censorship of books in any form. Whatever we may think about such arguments, we have to deal with the fact that there is censorship of books in New Zealand today. Quite recently, a friend of mine, who keeps a bookshop (and who, incidentally, cancelled orders for *Dr No* after reading the N.S. article), was questioned on his order for two books. The books under suspicion were *Crime and Punishment* by Dostoevsky, and *The Confessions of Zeno* by Italo Svevo. Words then, such as "crime" and "confession" are suspect; foreign authors ditto, especially with Russian-sounding names. Ian Fleming, however, sounds good and British. It is unlikely that our customs-house censor would be free from welfare-state snobbery; so, to clinch the bargain, whisper in his ear that Sir Anthony Eden stayed at author Fleming's house after the Suez crisis.

My bookshop friend, who makes a valiant attempt to import good literature, is almost crippled by the import restrictions on books. We wonder how much of our overseas funds has been paid into the Fleming pocket. We wonder, too, what action the new Government will take about the ignorance of custom-house censors and the difficulties besetting the few who would tend to correct such ignorance by the importation of good books.

IAN HAMILTON (Auckland).

## LOOKOUT

Sir,—Although the programme *Lookout* is announced each week as "a New Zealand commentary on the international news," a distinctively and independently New Zealand point of view is not often noticeable. This is partly because many *Lookout* speakers are still comparatively recent arrivals from Britain and because even some New Zealand-born commentators still choose to identify New Zealand interests and foreign policy with those of Britain. This was well borne out during the Suez action but even as recently as a few months ago I heard one *Lookout* speaker refer to "our House of Lords..."

For these reasons alone, the two recent *Lookout* broadcasts of Dr Martin Finlay of Auckland were memorable and stimulating. His timely and outspoken warnings on the impending American intervention in Lebanon—despite open UN disapproval—was, I feel sure, applauded by every thinking New Zealander. Now that this has become a stark and perilous reality with the seal of British approval and the active support of British intervention in Jordan, the need for outspoken and independent New Zealand comment is greater still.

O. E. MIDDLETON (Waiau Pa).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. D. Lee (Auckland): In a correspondence which could lead to advertising we must keep as close as possible to the point raised in the first place.

A. D. F. Welch (Wellington): Sorry; letters must be related to broadcasting or to topics raised in *The Listener*.

