

THE STRUGGLE FOR EUROPE

Sir,—I have just been listening to Chester Wilmut (per the BBC and 2Y2) discussing the conduct of the war as set forth in his above-named book. Here is the gospel according to Wilmut: Hitler's fundamental error was to underestimate the military strength of Russia. Roosevelt's was to under-estimate the Russian's territorial ambitions in Europe. That of the Americans generally was their failure to respect the sacred principle of the balance of power. That of the Allies as a whole was their subordination of political to military considerations. They actually fought the Nazis meaning to beat them and exterminate their system, instead of realising that the last war was merely the opening gambit of the next one (and the one after that, if anyone is left to fight it.) Gad, sir, Churchill was right!

It has taken a good many years since 1945 to condition public opinion to the point where this sort of stuff can be put over without much fear of protest. That it is now being attempted is a tribute to the success of reiterated propaganda in blunting the moral sense that sustained our cause when there was little else to do so.

This is the discredited outlook that has dragged the world through a series of wars, each of which solves nothing, but poses problems more insoluble than the last. The self-styled "realists" who have resurrected it are now busy remilitarising Germany and Japan to do their will. When at last their *realpolitik* becomes unstuck again (as so often in the past) and their protégés turn upon them, they will once more call upon ordinary decent people to get them out of the mess of their own making. As before they will rely upon the outraged and uncalculating moral sense of millions to save the day.

Hitler erred fundamentally, not in under-estimating Russian military power, but in failing to foresee the revolution created everywhere by a system based in cruelty and deceit. Wilmut likewise errs in analysing the last war upon the supposition that the manoeuvrings of generals and politicians constitute history. H. W. YOUREN (Napier).

POETRY IN TRAMCARS

Sir,—May I fill in one or two gaps in your article on verses in Wellington tramcars? According to information supplied by the general manager of the Transport Department, three poets besides David McKee Wright have been so honoured: Hubert Church, Arthur Adams and Philip Grey. The poem by Arthur Adams, from *The Four Queens*, begins:

Here, where the surges of a world of sea
Break on our bastioned walls with leagued
long sweep.

Philip Grey's, like Church's, is about Victoria College:

No heritage of honour born of time
Has dowered thy halls, unheeded on thy
hills . . .

This is one of five poems by Grey included in *The Old Clay Patch*, the anthology of V.U.C. Whether Grey went on writing verse, I don't know.

May I suggest that this idea be extended? Wellington has changed and so has poetry. In their appraisal of Wellington, the older poets seem to have been struck by her strength rather than by her beauty, but Wellington is, in certain conditions and from certain angles, a very beautiful city and harbour. A selection of more recent verse placed in public vehicles might do Wellington fuller justice, and would add to the aesthetic, emotional and intellectual

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recreation of travellers. Some of the "tougher" verse might offer an agreeable change from crossword puzzles.

ALAN MULGAN (Wellington).

Sir,—Your article on poetry in Wellington trams brings back many memories of lonely night rides with only those verses for company. There are, as you imply, three trams carrying these poems. For those not acquainted with the verses, they will be found in trams bearing numbers between 220 and 230, the others besides 225 being almost certainly 224 and 226. These three were the last completed before the famous "Fiducia", numbers 227 to 231 following later.

The third poem is, as you suggest, by Arthur Adams, but its name escapes me also. I fancy it ends ". . . and only Tararua's peaks remember yesterday." D. F. B. EYRES (Seddon).

THE KON-TIKI ARGUMENT

Sir,—Thanks to "Doodlebug," I can continue to enjoy my favourite pastime of authority-baiting. My "bad slip" is a minor one. I quote from page 125: "Although the bow and arrow is a principal weapon as soon as we enter the Melanesian islands westward of Polynesia, and thence had spread as a fighting weapon only to neighbouring Tonga, it was not even known at the eastern extremity of the ocean." Which reinforces my argument.

"Doodlebug's" second paragraph is utter nonsense. Again I beg, read the book, pages 439-446, to find what Heyerdahl really did say. And why drag in Elliot Smith? What technique is this? To make a hash of a reasonable statement, link it with another nonsensical statement, and infer that everyone is a fool except the critic? This is not my idea of calm reasoning. Calm reasoning would ask of the carving counter-argument: What culture source conditioned Maori carving to echo original motifs when once again the migrants found big timber?

Heyerdahl's counter hypothesis warrants a fair appraisal. So far our local scientists have disappointed me. It seems, therefore, the amateur must step in. This discussion could easily switch from the main theme to "Amateur versus Expert" instead, true to my original intention, of championing Heyerdahl's own calm, scientific reasoning. But his crime has been to confront the champions of an old and creaking hypothesis with a smoothly-running new one. My role is therefore a dual one.

As for the "emotional attitude of the poet," there's nothing wrong with emotion as such; it is only to be deplored when it sways judgment. I have yet to meet the authority immune to this very human affliction. It always tickles my sense of humour when I find scientists and authorities behaving emotionally while quite convinced of their own calm and lofty detachment.

Dr. Duff and "Doodlebug" are authorities and I am an amateur, howbeit with an elementary knowledge of anthropology and ethnology—o lovely words! But this does not automatically make these two gentlemen always right, nor myself in holding a counter opinion, wrong. It is very difficult for an authority to deal unemotionally with a new hypothesis, particularly one that threatens to destroy everything he has been taught. It is easier for the non-authority, particularly one who has a respect for pure scientific method, to judge between

the relative merits of an old theory and a new one: he has no vested interest in the older and more solidly established opinion. To find scientists treating new theories with patronising scorn is as old as science itself.

VIRACOGA (Timaru).

SERIALS FOR WOMEN

Sir,—I wish to add my protest to that of "D.H." in *The Listener* of February 20 about the poor type of serial being served up in the Women's Sections. From 3YA, which has an extremely good and varied selection of programmes under the capable hand of Miss Jocelyn Hollis, we are inflicted with the most adolescent futile rubbish by the name of *Three Generations*, which I understand has already been broadcast on the ZBs and 3XC. Many housewives, particularly in the country, look forward to the morning serial as a pleasant break in the monotony of the daily routine, but *Three Generations* is so boring that it almost curdles the morning coffee. Here's to a quick end to the Rogers family and their petty troubles!

M.F. (Maungati).

RONGAKAKO'S FOOTPRINTS

Sir,—On his second visit to the East Coast in 1841 Colenso, the well known missionary-explorer, noticed that "the clayey rocks along the Te Araroa coast had been so acted on by the sea as to be worn quite flat at many places." Near high tide mark the Maoris "showed him the impression of the foot of the illustrious Rongakako, the print of his other foot made in striding hence being near Poverty Bay, a distance of more than 50 miles." Little was known of Rongakako except that he lived a long, long time ago.

Rongakako's footprints are still there, and formed the subject of an article in *The Listener* of December 12, when they were erroneously attributed to a large reptile. It is good to know that Rongakako's other footprint near Poverty Bay still clearly shows on the north coast of Tolaga Bay in clayey rocks similar to those at Te Araroa.

The rocks at both places contain the same marine shells, and according to geologists who deal with happenings in the time of Rongakako are of Miocene age and some ten million years old. They even suggest that the marks are not footprints but borings made by some animal or worm that lived in the bed of the Miocene sea. But who can believe that the illustrious Rongakako is merely a Miocene worm!

TAMATEA (Lower Hutt).

ANTI-SEMITISM IN RUSSIA

Sir,—In *Lookout* (February 28) Mr. D. G. Edwards said that what many regard as anti-semitism in the Communist-dominated countries is really anti-Zionism, whereas semitism and Zionism are the same thing. Zionism—a contraction of the Hebrew term "Lovers of Zion"—is a movement established in Russia following the barbarous massacre of Jews in that country about 45 years ago. The movement was to hasten the creation of Herzl's "Judenstaat." To the Jewish people Zionism symbolised their hopes for nationhood. Therefore a Zionist is a person who is active in helping the Jews return to their re-established homeland—Israel—or a person who contributes to the viability of Israel. Consequently, action against Zionism or Zionists is aimed at prevent-

ing Jews returning to their homeland by destroying the organisation set up for the sole purpose of transferring whole Jewish minorities to Israel. This constitutes discrimination, and since it is aimed at the Jews, it is anti-semitism. Mr. Edwards also failed to mention that at the "trial" in Pyague the prosecution stressed, wherever possible, the Jewish origins of the accused, and where Jews implicated in the "plot" had changed their names, the fact was emphasised.

Mr. Edwards said, in the course of his talk, that not all Jews are Zionists, implying that they are anti-Zionists. Very subtle. However, the attitude of those Jews was that, Zionism being the expression of their Jewishness and desire for nationhood, it would inevitably lead to more anti-semitism in which the many Jews who would not be able to return to their homeland immediately would suffer. Mr. Edwards asserted that anti-semitism is illegal in Russia, but it does not follow that there is no anti-semitism.

EX-POPULAR FRONTIST

(Wellington).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Sir,—Recently I have listened to both Selwyn Toogood on *Money-Go-Round* and Jack Davey from Australia on *Give It a Go*, and I have noted that both very frequently use the same questions, even to the extent of committing the same errors. Both asked for the name of the bridge in Venice which has rows of shops on it, and the answer in each case was the Rialto. There are no shops on the Rialto, and the question is undoubtedly confused with the Ponte Vecchio in Florence, which has. What I would like to know is, do they copy from each other or refer to the same source for their questions?

HAKI (Wanganui).

(This letter was shown to Selwyn Toogood, who replies as follows: "We do have an arrangement with Jack Davey for the use of some of his questions. Generally, all questions are checked for accuracy, but with *Money-Go-Round* requiring about 5000 questions a year an occasional error is unavoidable."—Ed.)

THOMAS BRUNNER'S JOURNEY

Sir,—"Cantnell" has held that "Sun-downer" was in error in giving 550 days as the duration of Brunner's exploration in 1846-48. Brunner's diary entry of June 15, 1848, reads 550 days, not 560 as "Cantnell" has stated. Brunner said goodbye to Fraser on December 13, 1846. Although his first diary entry was December 3, 1846, the first ten days were spent in traversing farm country and staying with settlers.

JOHN PASCOE (Wellington).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Mother (Te Awamutu).—Afraid not practicable at present.

Argosy (Te Awamutu).—Sorry: the correspondence is closed.

Talent Quest (Peekakariki).—Regret your suggestion could not be adopted.

J. F. Lyon (Wanganui).—(1) Agreed that the C.P.O. performance of the work is the better. That is no reason for rejecting the performance by the B.P.O., especially in a dinner music programme. (2) The recordings of this band are particularly well suited to that type of programme, certain noisy discs excepted, which are not used in it. (3) Between February 1 and February 15, five other orchestras were used 24 times; that one, six.

A.G.C. (Dunedin).—(1) The Broadcasting Service cannot answer for other agencies; but its own arrangements to record band contest performances are confined to recordings for broadcast. The Service has no authority to make recordings for public sale. (2) All performances were broadcast. (3) The Service may arrange to require other broadcasting organisations for courtesy programmes but has no several authority to make recordings and distribute them "for propaganda overseas."