

EVEREST CLIMBED

Sir,—Station 12B's Sports Session on Friday evening, in paying tribute to Sir Edmund Hillary, proclaimed, inter alia, "New Zealand beats the world" (a nicely ambiguous statement), and was also inclined to infer that, as a race, New Zealanders are supreme among men. Again, on Sunday evening the 15-minute production from 1YA, "Everest Has Been Climbed," referred to Hillary as "the greatest mountaineer in the world."

It may be that these assumptions are correct; but surely, to separate any one man's efforts (noble as they were), is to discount the fact that Everest expeditions, by their very nature, are team efforts involving the sinking of personalities in the common aim. To assume that a man is "the greatest mountaineer" because he has climbed the highest mountain is to draw conclusions that are not necessarily supported by known facts; indeed, was not Hillary accompanied by another in the successful assault? Moreover, news is just to hand that two other men were very close to the summit when their oxygen apparatus failed them. Obviously luck does play a part.

All those absorbing accounts of previous Everest expeditions are notable for their modesty, their humility and their generosity. They show, too, that the magnitude of the task and the majesty of the Himalayan scene seems to lift men's thoughts and efforts beyond the terrestrial to the spiritual, where the individual is submerged in the whole. Let us in our joy guard against the damaging of that spirit of Everest. One feels sure that Sir Edmund Hillary himself would be the first to deplore the division into nationalities, and the over-glorifying of personalities in this mighty epic of combined operations.

A. P. B. WATSON (Orakei).

DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Sir,—Mr. J. Malton Murray repeats the error of some previous correspondents who insist on attempting to apply quotations and terminology, used by Lenin 30 or 40 years ago, to conditions which, so far as Russia is concerned, have long ceased to exist. My earlier quotations, which could be multiplied a hundredfold, show that the term "toilers" does not signify in Leninist terminology simply "wage workers" but also peasants and those other strata of poor people who, while not industrial workers, formed the bulk of the toiling population in the Russia of Czarist days and the times which immediately followed. As I explained earlier, Lenin saw the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as an alliance between certain classes for the purpose of building a Socialist society.

That socialist society has now been built and is developing toward a fully Communist society. There are still social classes, but not antagonistic classes. The main function of the socialist State now is to guide society towards full Communism to defend the country against the aggression of a dying but still dangerous capitalist world. As there are no longer antagonistic classes in the Soviet Union, there is no need for separate political parties. The party system in Britain dates only from the beginning of the 18th Century, and after that comparatively brief period has arrived at a stage when the two main parties are agreed on all but details and are really Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Mr. Murray is in error in saying that candidates for the governing bodies in the U.S.S.R. can only be nominated by the

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Communist Party or its leaders. Article 141 of the 1936 Soviet Constitution specifically grants the right of nomination to all public organisations and to trade unions, Communist Party organisations, co-operatives, youth and cultural organisations.

In any case, Mr. Murray is wrong to think that voting for a candidate is the beginning and end of genuine democracy. When Lenin said that "Every cook must learn to rule the State" he did not mean simply that she should have the vote every three years. He envisaged a social order in which "Every citizen to a man must . . . participate in the government of the country." The American Andrew Jackson had a glimpse of the possibilities of the "common" people when he declared that any man could carry out the duties of President of the United States. Unfortunately, in his country, government got into the hands of big business and the democratic constitution became a screen behind which operated Tammany and Boss Pendergast and their Republican counterparts.

SID SCOTT (Auckland).

AGGRESSIVENESS

Sir,—It took a half-century for the world to accept the pervasiveness of the sex instinct in human affairs. It appears that a similar lag exists in recognition of further results of human investigation revealing that the aggressive instinct is equally basic and operative, thus just as equally "normal." It is difficult to believe that the film censor could be blind to this fact, but his observation to the contrary in *The Listener* leaves no doubt.

That our public entertainment on the screen realises this fact is clear. A recent "hit," *The Quiet Man*, has as its underlying theme the inevitable culminating, smashing, prolonged fight with bare fists, taking pride of emphasis over the equally inevitable romantic clinch. Another hit, *Bend of the River*, would make an interesting study of frequency of killings and the total thereof. In a world where total war twice in 25 years has failed to quell the distinct possibility of bigger and better mass killings, the normalcy of aggressiveness need not be doubted.

J.B. (Auckland).

"THE GOAT AND THE BOTTLE"

Sir,—I read your editorial with enjoyment and then turned to the photograph of its subject on page 9 (*Listener*, June 5). The puzzle to me is solved. In the photograph you will note that the goat's head and that of Picasso himself are in juxtaposition. On each is an expression of amused derision—a leg-pull if ever there was one.

R.T.D. (Wellington).

STRATFORD SHAKESPEARE

Sir,—It argues well for live theatre when a young person (Barbara Ewing, *Listener*, June 5) rises in defence of a visiting drama company. I wish Barbara could have been old enough to have seen the Old Vic Company on its visit here four and a half years ago; she would have had still another exciting experience.

She asks "How could Miss Jefford be playing herself into the scene when she was dead, since she was dead?" The answer is a simple matter of dramatic technique. Playing dead, the actor, as well as relaxing his body, empties his mind, for we believe that "thought

comes over" and that an actively functioning brain can be felt by sensitive members of the audience. As a professional critic I always regret having to analyse and sometimes condemn something which the less experienced have appreciated, but since it is the critic's task to point the way to what is generally accepted as the best, I and my fellows often have to resign ourselves to the indignation of the many.

JUDITH TERRY (Auckland).

CHILDREN IN HOSPITAL

Sir,—As the mother of two small children, and a trained nurse, I disagree with several of the expressed opinions of your "Children in Hospital" article. First, I query the sentiment of the quoted article from the Journal of the American Medical Association Trust as an adult emotion. A child has merely instinctive awareness. It demands, but is not conscious of, love and stability. Surely the greater the measure of a happy and loving home atmosphere so, proportionately, taken away by hospitalisation, the greater the emotional shock and distress to the unreasoning small child. I grant the many difficulties of daily visiting, and there are more here than in Britain, but let not this blind authorities to its desirability.

To a Senior Pediatrician I would point out that you cannot explain a hospital routine to an eighteen-month toddler. It is wishful thinking to say that no personality damage results from what, to a small child, is a terrific upheaval going from home to hospital, and a most desolate loss with "Mummy gone now!"

A wiser man has said that the first five years of life are all important: they make or mar the man.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (New Plymouth).

RETURN OF THE SCAPEGOAT

Sir,—I repeat, in reply to Mr. Barnard, that—with the exception of Mr. Lehmann—no Jew has sat in the United States Senate since the Civil War (1864). There is not a single Jew holding the post of even Assistant Secretary in the Eisenhower administration. Is it merely coincidence that the American Government, which inveighs hypothetically against anti-Semitism behind the Iron Curtain, is so completely *Judenrein*?

In the Socialist countries we find that Czechoslovakia has a Jewish Foreign Minister and a Jewish Minister of Justice—the man, incidentally, who brought the Slansky gang to book. In Hungary the President, in Poland, the Vice-President, and in Rumania the Foreign Minister, are Jews. The percentage of Jewish population in these countries is not more than one per cent. In the United States it is three per cent.

The Jewish Frontier, an American Zionist (and anti-Communist) paper has this to say in its January issue: "If by anti-Semitism we mean exclusion of Jews from summer resorts, or from medical colleges, or from residence in specific locations, or from holding certain public offices, then we must admit that there has been no anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union for many years." All these things are commonplaces in the United States the paper points out. It is there that we find the bombing of synagogues, the "church nearby" advertisements, the hooligan attacks on Jewish

schoolchildren. With other manifestations of the jungle morality of capitalism they have been abolished from the Soviet Union. That is why I am and shall remain its fervent defender.

From an American friend I have recently received two cuttings from the *New York Times*. One dated Berlin, January 28, reports that that day, in the Eastern part of that city, in three separate trials, persons who had slandered Jews had received up to two years at hard labour. "Hurrah," I say for Socialist East Germany. The other from Williamsburg, Mass., dated February 9, states that the Williams College Chapter of Phi Delta Theta had been suspended for accepting a Jewish student in contravention of a clause in its constitution that restricted membership to "men of white and full Aryan blood." "Shame," I say on the capitalist United States.

These are facts. I deal in nothing else. If, in face of them, Mr. Barnard still maintains that anti-Semitism is tolerated in the Soviet Union he is incapable of distinguishing black from white.

J. W. WINCHESTER (Wellington).

Sir,—I do sympathise with J. W. Winchester in having to live in such a deplorable country as ours and in such a deplorable Empire. Only a fervent missionary spirit could fortify him for such an ordeal, but our Government may be induced to relax the passport restrictions to permit him and others to go to his ideal Russia and thus leave some room for the poor oppressed and dispossessed Maori. Nothing discounts the efforts of the admirer of Russia so much as his apparent reluctance to go and live in that earthly paradise. If he could only go there and send us photographs and reports of the joyous conditions which we may expect if we adopt Russian rule, we could be suitably impressed.

W.S. (Tauranga).

(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

EXPLORING NEW ZEALAND

Sir,—"Cantnell" holds up P. J. O'Regan and A. J. Harrop as authorities for details of Thomas Brunner's explorations. I cannot agree. Both of these writers have recorded inaccurate entries. My source for the details given in my script was from the work of Charles Heaphy, who accompanied Brunner on the journey in question. If "Cantnell" writes to me I can send him the full quotation, which is too long to give here. Nor can I agree with O'Regan's comment on Brunner's view from the Victoria Range. I have already explained that the gap in the main divide through which Brunner looked was the Lewis Pass.

JOHN PASCOE (Wellington).

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

D. Armitage (Wellington).—Your letter has appeared elsewhere.

Concerned (Oamaru).—Your appreciation has been widely shared and has been expressed appropriately.

H. R. Urquhart (Auckland).—Many thanks. Regret it cannot be used without moving too far from the point at issue.

Old Listener (New Plymouth).—Changing the wavelength would result in trouble with other New Zealand or Australian stations.

C. R. Welsh (Wellington).—Weather and cricket (and in due course football) are regulars; but Sir Winston Churchill is not likely to intrude often upon your pleasure.

Mavis Barton (Heretaunga).—It shouldn't happen. There is probably something wrong with your receiving set. A radio serviceman could advise you and make adjustments.