

BRINGING SCIENCE TO THE PUBLIC

The proceedings of the jubilee congress of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, which opened in Sydney yesterday, will be of interest by no means solely to specialists. Lectures have been planned so that both the specialist and the non-specialist will benefit, and it is evident that an effort is being made not only to attract the attention of the general public but to enlist its sympathy with scientific methods, achievements and aspirations.

That is a worthy aim, and deserves every support. The public needs, and indeed is only too willing, to be informed. It has long accepted the proposition that this is an age, and ours is a society, which is dominated and is being transformed by the "dramatic explosion" of scientific knowledge. We all know that, in this fast-growing and developing country, much greater emphasis needs to be placed on both the quantity and the quality of scientific education and research—though not, it should perhaps be added, to the detriment of the traditions of liberal education. In this country (though here Australia is anything but unique) there are two

important obstacles to the advancement of science. The first is a failure of communication, or at least of exposition. If the public is ill-informed about the work, the achievements and the plans of the scientists in its midst, the fault is to a considerable extent that of the scientists themselves. It is most difficult, admittedly—though it is not impossible—to inform the layman about events in the scientific world without entangling him in a thicket of technicalities.

The second obstacle is financial, but it follows from the first. The universities constantly complain about lacking sufficient money for scientific research and education; the C.S.I.R.O. would like a great increase in its funds; scientists seem always to be handing round the begging bowl. Are they justified? A national scientific advisory council, to survey the state of Australian science as it stands, has been suggested. The idea is sound, for the public will be much more inclined to have more of its money allocated to scientific pursuits if it is satisfied that the money now being spent is being wisely used, without waste or unnecessary duplication.

Coexistence In Poland

It has been said that the Communist Party has the body of Poland, while the Roman Catholic Church has its soul. Since neither can exist without the other, the argument runs, each must coexist with the other. The common ground of coexistence is Polish patriotism, a force still so heavily surcharged with memories of 1939-1945 that practically every Pole, whether Catholic or Communist, continues to fear a re-armed Germany more than Russia.

Thus the argument runs, and there is much evidence to support it. But most of that evidence is drawn from the three or four years following Mr Gomulka's coup in 1956—years in which he feared any internal crisis which might give Russia an excuse to remove him. Since 1960 his confidence has been growing. He has left the peasants in possession of their private farms, and he has done little to enforce the nominal and

properties and revenues has been increased until it is now crippling. The Church has been stripped of almost all its charitable functions: of 460 church orphanages operating in 1959, only 30 remain. Church building and rebuilding (except in the cases of historic churches) has been forbidden. And an executive order in 1960 and a parliamentary law in 1961 have been implemented, cautiously, but steadily, to ban religious instruction from State schools and to close down fund-starved church schools.

Early this month Cardinal Wyszyński hit back. The bishops issued a pastoral letter condemning, atheism in forthright terms. Two years ago Mr Gomulka might have paused or temporised. This year he retaliated by forcibly closing down a convent school in the Cardinal's own diocese and ejecting the nuns. It is now doubtful whether the bishops will be given visas to attend the

Letters To The Editor

N.R.M.A. LEGAL SERVICE "Jingoism" And New Guinea

800 Inquiries Each Week

SIR,—John Watson, of South Coogee ("S.M.H." Letters, August 18), writes: "That piece of trite salesmanship, that the offending motorist may defend the charges in a Court, is not important. The N.R.M.A. evidently advises the motorist to pay up and shut up."

In case there is any inference that the N.R.M.A. is not concerned with the equitable treatment of its members, we would like to make it clear that Mr Watson's statement does not represent the policy or practice of the N.R.M.A. In any case, where defence is warranted, the N.R.M.A.'s free legal service will be extended. Where an offence has been committed but there are extenuating circumstances or the driver has a long breach-free record, the association makes representations to the police on the member's behalf. Many such instances occur.

In the vast majority of cases, however, members charged with breaches of the traffic regulations say that they have committed the offence and pay the fine.

Each week the N.R.M.A. handles about 800 legal inquiries; arranges about 500-600 appearances in Courts for members, most of whom wish to plead "guilty"; defends between 40 and 50 cases, in the majority of which the charge is found proven but the conviction is not recorded, under Section 556A of the Crimes Act; and directly makes representations to the police in many cases where it is felt that extenuating circumstances do not warrant a fine.

H. E. RICHARDS, N.R.M.A. General Secretary, Spring Street.

On-the-spot Fine For Pedestrian

SIR,—The charges of police revenue-raising apply not only to parking offences. While walking with my wife in Pitt Street recently I was stopped by a police officer. It appears that I was a little to the right of an imaginary centre line (it was worn away completely).

In a courteous exchange I pointed out that since coming to Sydney from London—where no such rule then existed—I had never read of its being an offence, but looked on centre lines as a sensible guide under busy conditions. The footpath was almost free of pedestrians on this occasion.

The officer told me that he had been sent out to do a job and proceeded to make out an on-the-spot fine for £1. Thinking that the public's goodwill was worth more to the force than a £1 fine I still felt confident that an explanation with my cheque would result in a refund. How wrong I was!

About the same time as the above incident I spent several hours in telephone contact with Hurstville police station and the Water Police reporting the danger to boats of a convoy of steel pontoons and its progress adrift on the outgoing tide on George's River after nightfall and ra-

Sir,—I am an ex-Serviceman, and neither a pacifist nor a Communist, but my reading of contemporary events in South-East Asia and New Guinea leads me to conclusions vastly different from those expressed in recent "Herald" editorials.

I see the agreement between Holland and Indonesia as the belated fulfilment of the understanding, reached at the time of Indonesian independence, that control of West Irian would be transferred to Indonesia. Dutch intransigence and their dishonourable attempt to avoid fulfilling their obligation have, over the years, provoked the Indonesians to direct action.

In my opinion the Indonesians have shown commendable restraint in the face of Dutch provocation. Furthermore, the alleged Dutch concern for the rights of the Papuans has a hypocritical ring. For centuries they almost completely ignored the Papuans, preferring to concentrate their energies in exploiting the wealthier islands of Indonesia.

Finally, is Australia's treatment of the aborigines, or the natives of eastern New Guinea, such a model of perfection that we can afford to condemn, in advance, the Indonesian treatment of the Papuans in West New Guinea? Your jingoistic exhortations and the implication that Australians should have been prepared to go to war over West Irian seem to me unrealistic, prejudiced, and irrational.

(Dr) JOHN CHILD, Gladsville.

Sir,—Thank you, indeed, for your very powerful and moving editorial, "Aggression Proclaimed Respectable." One feels ashamed that Holland was thus forced into the position of allowing her West New Guinea people to be now governed by Indonesia.

What hope, after Indonesian rule, even if it is written on United Nations paper, will they have of choosing their ultimate freedom? They have, indeed, been thrown to the wolves and the Communist front thus brought on to Australia's very doorstep.

One feels proud that the "Herald" has championed the cause of these West Papuans and shown to the world the pathetic weakness of the Australian Government. (Canon) G. G. O'KEEFFE, Double Bay.

Sir,—With the conclusion of the Indonesian-Dutch agreements on West New Guinea, Australia's prestige falls to an all-time low. Or rather the prestige of our leaders—for none seemed to raise a voice in protest.

A world which once looked upon the Atlantic Charter—with all its legal weakness—as a new path for human endeavour to follow should stand aghast at this cowardly betrayal of the Papuan people who live in the western end of New Guinea, particularly when United Nations pundits are screaming their heads off for immediate self-government and independence for the same race in eastern New Guinea. Free one lot; enslave the other!

Surely, soon the people of the United States will squirm when they learn to what depths their political leaders have fallen by this betrayal, not only of the simple Papuans but of the high principles the American people

New Guinea Big Test

By OUR POLIT

THE decreasing number of stout-benchers who still feel there is another election must be waiting for Guinea by the Minister for External apprehension.

Up to date, Sir Garfield has given little indication of awareness that the fate of Dutch New Guinea is viewed by hundreds of thousands of Australians with most serious concern. At no stage has this comparatively inexperienced Minister seemed to realise that the enforced settlement of the Dutch-Indonesian dispute will result in a dangerous degree of isolation for Australia.

Indeed, the casual observer would be pardoned for believing that Sir Garfield regards the affair as one for self-congratulation, in that an agreement has been reached which does represent a peaceful solution of this dispute. Such an attitude might be understandable in a man who appears to have brought little to Federal Cabinet as Minister for External Affairs except a colossal vanity, but what about the Prime Minister, Mr Menzies, and the other members of the Ministry?

SORRY AFFAIR

Federal Cabinet will meet this morning. The first item on the agenda must surely be Sir Garfield's promised statement to Parliament. It is doubtful if he will be ready to make it today, but it must come by tomorrow or Thursday at the latest and it will provide the last big test whether he can measure up to his responsibilities as Australia's Foreign Minister.

Not only Sir Garfield, but the whole Government will be under critical examination for Australia's part in a sorry affair.

Sir Garfield will surely expound the Government's reaction to the many problems which must arise from the enforced backdown by the Netherlands Government to Indonesian aggression. Leaving the long-term effects of the new Australian isolation out of it altogether, Sir Garfield will be expected to give firm answers to the immediate questions arising out of the transfer of West New Guinea to Indonesia after May 1.

Foremost will be the refugee problem, of natives of West New Guinea who will be looking to Australia for asylum. Probably a great number will come under the heading of the "Dutch puppets," so sneeringly referred to by President Soekarno.

Sir Garfield might also be expected to give a firm opinion on Dr Soekarno's quibbling about his agreement to hold a vote on self-determination for West New Guinea in 1969; whether such self-determination was going to be what the Indonesian President called "internal self-determination, self-determina-

tion among ourselves, external self-determination which we reject."

In the light of what transpired, Sir Garfield is likely to suggest that assurance given him by Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr Subandrio, last month in Indonesia, had no claim design on any Australian territory, and on East Guinea in particular, should be treated as final.

On his return to Australia last month, Sir Garfield he had told Dr Subandrio this assurance might not be formalised at an appropriate time. Dr Subandrio agreed this was a reasonable course. Since this has been established as "ground" that Australia will not take the initiative in closing any new treaty with Indonesia as a result of the rejected handover.



PRESIDENT NKURUM

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PRESIDENT KW... Church. Angry Church leaders.

But there are problems for the Church as well for Nkrumah in this inevitable clash. It is fairly certain that, sooner or later, there would have been trouble over the teaching being instilled into young Africans of Ghana and over the chants that have been made to lead. Marshalled into the Y.P.C.A. movement—officially described in Ghana as

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