

on West New Guinea. Last night's statement can only have confirmed the Indonesian Government in its opinion that Australia's interests and views can be flouted with impunity, now and in the future. Australia's policy has been set out as peace at any price—any sacrifice of national interest or of international justice and fair-dealing is preferable, according to Sir Garfield Barwick, to

Open Wound In Berlin

Last Friday two 18-year-old East Germans tried to climb over the Berlin wall into the American sector of West Berlin. One reached safety; the other, hit by machine-pistol shots from Communist guards, fell back and was allowed by the East Berlin police to bleed to death within a few feet of freedom. This is the kind of incident that obviously contains, in a cruelly divided city and divided nation, the seeds of a situation dangerous to Europe and therefore dangerous to the world.

The subsequent outbreaks of rioting on the western side of the wall—riots which on Monday reached critical proportions—were not all directed against the East German Communists and the Russians who protect the Ulbricht regime. Americans were also subjected to the mob's violence, since it was angrily believed that the U.S. authorities should have sent a medical team into East Berlin to attend to the dying youth. The raw nerves and fierce resentment of the Berlin demonstrators were not to be calmed by explanations that, in a city bristling with the arms of rival

Home Life In The City

Many people will be glad that the City Council has approved in principle of changes in building rules to allow more residential development in the city. Why, after all, do the developers concentrate their housing activities so heavily on fringe areas and not on the inner city? The reason, according to the Lord Mayor, is largely to be found in the existing building code. If Alderman Jensen's diagnosis is correct, the remarkable thing surely is that the City Council has not taken appropriate remedial action long before this.

Obviously there are very great advantages in permitting residential development above commercial buildings in parts of the city. Alderman Dixon stated them clearly when he noted that people would be able to settle in areas where gas, electricity, water and sewerage services already exist,

the turn events have taken, its approval of an agreement imposed on the Dutch by armed force and its total failure to recognise that there is any danger in the situation for Australia. Sir Garfield Barwick declared, indeed, that it would be wrong to have any "sense of foreboding." In plainer words, the Government intends to do nothing to prepare for unpleasant eventualities.

authorities, the Americans on the spot could not easily judge the occasion to intervene.

Clearly, if the threat of a calamitous explosion in Berlin is to be diminished, something has to be done to reduce the tension along the Berlin wall. The best way to do this would be for the Western and Soviet Governments to negotiate a settlement of the city's status. Since Moscow, however, will not agree to this except on its terms, then commonsense and common interest surely demand that a limit must be set to provocation.

And in the whole range of provocation in this brave and isolated city is there anything more terrible, more demeaning to the human spirit, than the shooting down of German refugees escaping from one part of their own country to another? In any event Western garrison troops must not be made the target of abuse by those whom they are protecting, even if this abuse comes from a minority. Herr Brandt should exert all his powerful influence to still the cries of "Americans, go home!"—for if this were to happen, it would be goodbye to freedom in West Berlin.

and where there are already paved and guttered roads. He might have added that such people would have few problems, either, in using the public transport already available, and indeed would find their travelling expenses markedly reduced. After all, the very severe strain on public facilities has been one of the most unwelcome by-products of Sydney's suburban sprawl in recent years, and any residential development which lessens that strain should be certain of a favourable reception. Other advantages, claimed by some aldermen seem more problematical. It is hard to see, for instance, how such development will ease traffic congestion; the reverse seems more likely. And Alderman Moran is surely optimistic in imagining that city developers could charge only "about seven guineas" for flats.

to children under 15 years of age unless the children were declared wards, then the ordinance should be amended.

The Government agrees with this view and is having the ordinance examined so that, if legal advice shows it to be necessary to do so, amendments can be made. The question of declaring persons over the age of 65 is of a similar kind. All persons of aboriginal race, except those who are nomads, are entitled to social service benefits whether they are wards or not. Regardless of race, if a pensioner is living in an institution the pension can be paid in part to the institution and in part to the pensioner.

"Some Difficulty"

In the case of an aboriginal who is not living on a mission or settlement, the Administrator's Council saw some difficulty in the payment of the pension if the pensioner were a ward. I am not sure of the grounds for the council's doubts, but the whole question is primarily one for the Director-General of Social Services and is being closely examined.

It should be made clear that the Administrator's Council has not changed the law. It has carried a series of resolutions setting out the principles it wishes to observe in discharging its function in advising the Administrator on any proposal to declare a person a ward. If I may say so without disrespect to the council, I differ from it only in preferring to fix the critical age at 21 and not 15. PAUL HASLUCK, M.P. Minister for Territories. Canberra, A.C.T.

Benefits From The Medical Fund

Sir,—J. B. Suttor ("S.M.H.") Letters, August 17) complains that he was refused benefit for medical care given to his son while a classified public patient in hospital following a bicycle accident "one evening recently." The accident took place over six months ago. Mr Suttor fails to disclose vital passages in our communications to him.

Under the N.S.W. Public Hospitals Act there is no charge for medical care in public hospitals unless the patient has been classified as "intermediate" or "private." Should a "public" patient have been incorrectly charged for medical attention, the doctor concerned is breaking the law. The National Health Act prohibits a medical benefit fund from granting a benefit under circumstances when a State law is broken.

A hospital patient is classified according to a means test. In my experience, hospital admission officers generally face their responsibilities fairly and conscientiously. Regardless of the Leans test, a patient may ask to be classified as "intermediate" or "private."

A patient admitted to a public ward is not necessarily a "public" patient. Such patients are frequently classified as "intermediate," particularly where it is not possible to have separate wards for patients of different classification. For instance, many public hospitals have only one children's ward, but the classification of the patients may differ.

When claiming benefit, Mr Suttor was asked to declare whether the hospital had classified his son as public, intermediate or private. He stated "public." Even then his claim was not refused out of hand. The above explanations were conveyed to him and, in case he might have made an error, he was invited to clarify the matter with the hospital. We are still awaiting the outcome of his inquiry.

J. F. CADE, Medical Benefits Fund of Australia, Sydney.

in more specific statements. "Our skies may soon be black with chickens coming home to roost."

(Mrs) B. I. BRAMSEN, Gosford.

Sir,—We put a Government in power and naturally expect it to run our country for us, but, when such vital incidents occur as this giveaway of Netherlands New Guinea, just how much is our present Federal Government in touch with the views and wishes of the man-in-the-street, his fears for our future, and his criticism of the wisdom of Government action?

MARJORIE V. HAVEN, Neutral Bay.

Animal Diseases In Indonesia

Sir,—The satisfaction expressed by a senior Federal Cabinet Minister with the forthcoming handover of West New Guinea to Indonesia will not be shared by Australian primary producers in view of its grave threat by disease to our livestock industry.

Foot-and-mouth disease, rabies and Newcastle disease—three of the world's animal scourges—are widespread in Indonesia. Unless prompt action is taken, their extension to West New Guinea will be inevitable. Once introduced to the New Guinea mainland, they will inevitably spread to Papua-New Guinea because effective quarantine restrictions cannot be applied in underdeveloped countries.

Australia, therefore, is facing an extremely grave and dangerous situation which could spell ruin to our livestock industry. Only by acting quickly to control and eradicate, or at least to contain, these diseases within Indonesia itself can Australia be adequately safeguarded. Surely this is a task for those nations who were party to and responsible for the transfer.

An accurate survey of animal diseases in Indonesia should be made as if it would not be prudent to accept existing records. Australian veterinary authorities should be included in any such survey team.

COLIN C. BLUMER, former chief of the Division of Animal Industry, N.S.W., Department of Agriculture, Eastwood.

Cost Of Opera House

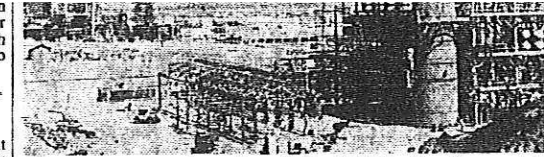
Sir,—Those who air their grumbles about the Sydney Opera House might be overlooking these facts: (1) Numbers of worldly people both here and overseas consider that our finished building will be great by world standards; and (2) Sydney is a wealthy, prosperous city, able to afford £15 million or more for a great civic building.

On the subject of expense, we should remember how much has been paid in recent years by Helsinki, Melbourne and Rome for the conduct of Olympic Games lasting about a fortnight in each city. There didn't seem to be any grumbling from the citizens of any of these at the expense, and all were probably poorer than Sydney.

It does seem that, while our Opera House has been designed by a brilliant and daring architect, he has no "client" in the usual sense of the word. A committee is not a satisfactory "client" for a work that is, and should be, unconventional. A suitable "client" should be appointed, briefed, and then he and the architect and engineers should get on with the job.

It is an indictment of democracy if a work of art is to be knocked about and may be destroyed by rival political parties seeking political capital.

LINDSAY PARKER, Vacluse.



A section of the British oil refinery at A

AROUND THE GALLE

Adamant Since In Victorian's

OVER 50 paintings by Victorian artist Roger Kemp spread their intensity and drama over the large walls of Farmer's Blaxland Galleries.

Sincerity—that belaboured word used by all insignificant, if well-meaning, artists as a justification for their dull, mediocre output—is the essence of these paintings.

It is a sincerity so forthright and direct, and so adamant in statement, that one cannot be other than impressed. Even the sense of drama created by the stressed shapes, turgid colours, and sombre moods does not detract from the artist's positive outlook. There is an abruptness of attacking, abstracted forms. A staccato declamation is forced harshly against the deep resonance of the richly orchestrated character of his painting.

Kemp immerses himself in many themes; indeed, the catalogue list is almost a description of his works. Titles such as "Doves of War," "Celtic Symbol," "Contemporary Symphony," "Climax," "Gothic" and "Science and Humanity" could be described by others named "Abstract Drama," "Shapes in Motion," "Continuity," "Disturbance," "Complex," "Shapes and Colours" and "Structure." The list goes on and on, but it serves to reveal the artist's clarity of mind within set and

rather repetitious ranges of forms, movements and colours. Kemp, particularly in his largest and more recent canvases, shows that he can make a decided and telling statement in paint.

This exhibition will be opened by Dr John Swan at 1.15 this afternoon.

EVA KUBBOS, in a collection of excellent coloured drawings and prints, has thrown her previous European-based graphic art into a new turmoil of expansive freedoms.

There is a new evocation of forms and calligraphy. Rhythms are more insistent—strong, yet seductive, and like many of our leading local contemporary artists, she gets a quality almost of painting into the more developed drawings.

It is true that there are decided influences from Olsen, Hensing and Rapotec, but Eva Kubbos has proved that she can stand firmly on her own feet and in the tangled web of influences here—like a skilfully prepared package deal of Sydney's best graphic art—Miss Kubbos can still be perceived.

There is a basic simplicity of form underlying the development passages that follows clearly from her past work, and one feels that given a little time only good will come of the artist's skilled involvement with a more inflective and exciting expression.

This show will be opened by Mr R. Raymond at 6.30 p.m. today.

Mail For Troops

Sir,—For the sake of our Servicemen in Thailand, would you please give prominence to this letter?

Some of our men have not had mail from their families since they were sent there two months ago and the blame lies fairly and squarely with the postal authorities.

People inquiring at post-offices are told the postage is 6d for air mail to Servicemen in Thailand. A few days later they receive a communication from the P.M.G.'s Department to the effect that they must pay a further 1/ within six days at the Superintendent's Counter at the G.P.O. or the letter will be sent by boat.

However, by the time the extra money is forwarded to that office, the letter appears to have been sent by boat and is still somewhere between here and Thailand.

It is obvious that our Postmaster-General does not realise what letters mean to Servicemen serving in a foreign land or this petty treatment of their mail would not be tolerated.

S. R. HAYS, Eastwood.

Catty Suggestion

Sir,—To avoid terrible errors in forecasting the weather, such as occurred on Tuesday, the Sydney Observatory should get a good cat and a reliable boy to watch it. Then when pussy puts her paw over her ear when she is washing her face, the boy could report it and then we would know that it is going to rain.

HUME R. SLOANE, Mosman.

