

## Public Opinion

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length

### POTATO SURPLUS

Sir, — In an opinion recently expressed you viewed with apparent favor a suggestion to reduce the price of potatoes to the consumer. Is not the potato cheap food at 10 lb. for 1/1? What's the good of our Government paying us £12/10/ per ton if it is going to sell the potatoes to the retailer at a loss of more than £4 or £5 and then tax us all to make up the difference? There are very few people who cannot easily afford to pay 1/ per 10 lb. for all the potatoes they like. The existence of the subsidy, whether necessary or not, presents, I think, in either case a very poor picture of social and economical conditions in Australia to-day.—

### FAIR EXCHANGE |

P.S. — All the potato crops in Tasmania are not good. Many Brownell crops, in fact, are poor.

### A PIGEON'S FLIGHT

Sir,—Recently my brother sent me an "Advocate" dated 20/2/45. In this was an account of a five-weeks-old homing pigeon returning home. But if this bird at five weeks old had never flown from the loft before, how could it know the surroundings to return to? My husband is a pigeon fancier and has raced pigeons in Rosebery (Tas.) He would like to know just how his bird at five weeks old knew its surroundings sufficiently to come home.—  
(MRS.) FRANK WHITE (Cannon Station, Hay, N.S.W.).

### ATTITUDE OF METHODIST CHURCH TO DANCING

Sir,—I crave space to reply to your correspondent, R. Booth, who writes on the above subject in your issue of the 19th inst. Mr. Booth was not at the Methodist Conference, and contents himself with using secondhand information culled from the Press rather than seeking his facts from proper sources. The question discussed at the conference was whether the time had not arrived for Methodist law to be altered so that dancing under proper

supervision could be held on Methodist property. The debate was of a high order, and there certainly was no squabbling or spleen exhibited. For the benefit of your correspondent, Methodist law has nothing to say about dancing; members of the Methodist Church are not prohibited from dancing. They are enjoined to make the question of their amusements a matter between themselves and God — that, your correspondent must agree, is entirely reasonable.

That the proposal to legalise dancing on Methodist property was lost by a small majority is beside the point. The Methodist Church, like any other church, has surely the right to declare its own policy on such a matter without being accused of "hastening the collapse of Christianity as now preached." It is interesting to note that in the same issue of "The Advocate" there appears an item of news to the effect that a mob of people at a dance at Launceston did its best to obstruct a couple of policemen in their task of maintaining the law. If your correspondent cares to write me privately, I can enlighten him further as to some dances which are of such a nature that they are an offence of decency. It was facts like these which prompted many of the Methodist ministers to vote for dances held under proper and suitable control. Your correspondent owes an apology to the Methodist Church.—

R. H. HOWIE |

(chairman, Mersey Methodist District).

### POLISH SETTLEMENT

Sir,—I am sorry I thought in my last letter that "Traditional Mind" was erring sincerely. It seems from his answer that his errors look rather purposeful. He is obscuring clear issues by irrelevant phraseology and inaccuracies, and his faith in Polish landlords' rights to their plunder is pathetic. "Traditional Mind" endorses my casual suggestion of a referendum only as an opportunity to throw a handful of mud at Stalin and the Red Army. Doesn't he know that Polish rulers had 20 years to carry out a referendum without Stalin's interference? Have they done it? No. And those White Russians and Ukrainians who dared to ask for a referendum were sent to gaol. And the Soviet Government took the referendum almost at once after occupying those countries, with the result that an overwhelming majority voted for joining the Soviet Union. I did not

joining the Soviet Union. I did not mention this in my last letter purposely, expecting from some people a mistrust of a referendum under Russian control, and my suggestion implied a referendum under English and American control.

After indicating what sort of polling system there ought to be, "Traditional Mind" says: "But Stalin doesn't do things that way: he acts by means of the Red Army and the G.P.U." I am not going to defend Stalin. He's got used to slander, and one more doesn't matter. Besides, he would feel rather uncomfortable if he had received a fair deal from the people like "Traditional Mind." And the G.P.U., as far as I know, exists only in "Traditional Mind's" imagination. But the Red Army. . . . From "Traditional Mind's" expression one must infer that it is nothing better than a nefarious gang of thugs. And we have been thinking all the time of the glorious Red Army. . . . Never mind Hitler doesn't like the Red Army either. And I charitably hope that the tortured "Traditional Mind" will find in this fact all the consolation he needs.

One more piece of unpleasant news to "Traditional Mind." There is a new Polish Army, 500,000 strong and growing every day. And this army is not a Polish landlords' army, but a Polish people's army. It is fighting side by side with the Red Army, and they are very friendly to each other.

May I ask "Traditional Mind" if he doesn't think that attacking furtively from behind cover is a bit cowardly in a well-organised and protected-by-law State? It certainly doesn't accord with English tradition or, in fact, with any human tradition. In this light he adopted a pen-name that he inherited his traditional mind from some inhuman sources.—

-S. SUTCHKOFF (Edith

Creek).

#### **IMPRESSMENT OF BINOCULARS**

Sir,—While agreeing with "Short-Sight's" grievance regarding impressment of binoculars, I disagree with him about the price paid. I had a pair impressed, and received pounds more than I expected.—

W. A. TOUZEAU

(Wynyard).