

BY RAIL TO KYLE

UNTIL the end of next year, at least, trains will continue to run between Dingwall and Kyle...

To whoever is Minister of Transport will fall the responsibility of deciding whether to allow the line to be closed after 1971 or to continue to subsidise it.

All parties talk of the importance of transport and communications and the need to improve the superstructure of the development of a f.e.s. Views differ, however, on priorities, and it is not unfairly insisted by home rulers that, if the recommendations of the likes of the Cameron Report on Highland transport had been properly assimilated and acted upon, the closing of any railway north and west of the Great Glen would be seen as wanton destructiveness.

PROMISES

"We shall apply Scottish solutions," Labour's election manifesto promises, "to Scottish problems." Great stress is laid on regional development and, if returned to power, Mr Wilson's Government will seek "new ways" to make the measures introduced since 1964 more effective.

HATCHETS

It is forgotten that, when in 1963 Dr Beeching proposed leaving the Highlands without railways north and west of Inverness, he saw nothing untoward about the Highlands. He brushed aside Scottish arguments as "unreal" and Mr Marples declared himself "absolutely at one with Dick Beeching."

Their policy was defeated by public outcry—in parts only, and for how long? There are still men with a hatchet in their briefcase. If it would be wrong to say that we are back to where we were before the 1964 election, there is no more confidence now than then in the impartial wisdom of the Transport Users' Consultative Committee, to whom the proposed closure of the Kyle lines is to be referred. At a moment, when different Ministries are at pains to put forward their best foot forward, Mr Mulley should be looking for scope to develop the quickest and surest means of transport by land in the difficult terrain of the Highlands.



THE PEARL Murray Youth Project for Guide Dogs has passed its target of £20,000. Three days before fund-raising officially ended yesterday, the target was surpassed and the total stood at £20,003/4/9.

It will, however, be some time before the final figure is known. Groups of children and young people who have not yet raised their £250 are still racing against the clock to do so.

The magnificent sum has been raised in 15 months. It was in February last year that 'The Press and Journal' launched the scheme which bears the name of the woman's editor, Pearl Murray, whose idea it was.

She had for some time been interested in the humane but expensive work carried out by the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. And, following a 1967 Christmas appeal — to which readers responded with an amazing £2000 when they had been asked for £250 — she detected an enthusiasm and interest on the part of young people in the job of providing guide dogs for the blind.

From that was born the project, and it soon became obvious that it roused the imagination of both old and young.

In less than three months some 8000 children were working for the project — it is impossible to estimate how many thousands of youngsters were involved by the end. And by the summer of last year, Pearl Murray had covered thousands of miles encouraging the young people in the effort they were making for those less fortunate than themselves.

As the schools opened in 1969 for the autumn term the total stood at around £10,000 — more than enough to provide guide dogs for those blind people in Scotland who wanted them.

Support came from people in every walk in life—from the lords lieutenant of various counties, from directors of education, youth leaders, ministers, headmasters, schoolteachers and from a host of ordinary and often anonymous readers.

Typical was the speech made by the headmaster of Lossiemouth High School, Mr William Campbell, addressing his assembled pupils. "There is a tremendous responsibility," he said, "lying heavily on the shoulders of the Press and television. This responsibility or influence can be for good or for evil. One can have from the Press and television sensationalism. You will not find sensationalism in Pearl Murray's writing. It is a power of good she and her paper are doing."

Typical, too, was a letter from an anonymous reader, signed simply "E.M." which arrived last week. It said: "Enclosed please find £3 to raise your total, mentioned in 'The Press and Journal' of May 22, to £19,300. Sorry I can't send more but I've been ill for over a year and can't work. However, I trust this pittance will help and I do hope the target of £20,000 is reached. This is a marvellous project you started."

Well, the target has been reached—and passed. But not until all the money is in will the final figure be known.

What is more important is that during the run of the project, 'The Press and Journal' has been able to highlight the vast majority of ordinary, young people, children and teenagers who have proved that the lazy lay-about image applies only to a minority.

Today's total is a tribute to the youth of Northern Scotland. We are proud of them.

Latest contributions — The Beehive Club, Aberdeen, £30; Helen and James Gall, Kingussie, £28; Grantown-on-Spey Telephone Exchange, £250; Stemster School, Cairnness, £135; Alexander's Social and Welfare Club, Elgin, £103/5/-; plus partial bank interest of £103/3/-.



Pearl Murray flew to Shetland the other day to present two replicas to youth organisations—one to Shetland's Guides and Brownies, the other to the Youth of Shetland which included a number of schools, youth clubs and other organisations. Each of the two groups raised £250.

Shetland youngsters pull off a double

ABOVE—Guide Dog Shuna, the first to visit Shetland, is the centre of attraction as Guides and Brownies cluster round in admiration.

BELOW—Pearl Murray is pictured with (back row left to right) Mrs Marie Brooker, county Guide commissioner; Mr Alan G. Clouston, Shetland's youth and community leader; Mrs Kathleen Durham, former county Guide commissioner; (front) Kay Hutchison, Ronald Emsoun, Janice Thomason and June Burns, Mr Alec Duguid is on the right.



LETTERS

THE WRONG COLONEL

SIR, — A small comment on your leading article of May 27. I feel that your reference to Colin Mitchell's interests suggest that he is primarily interested in military matters as against politics. It appears to me that this could have been better expressed as an interest in loyalty to his job and to his associates, a quality surely valuable in a Parliamentarian.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The reference was not to any remark by Lt-Col. Mitchell, formerly of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, but to a passage in a speech by Maj-Gen. F. C. C. Graham, who has been Colonel of the Argyll (as we described him) since 1958. Addressing a garden party at Staffing Castle on May 23, he said he had every confidence that a Conservative victory at the General Election would result in the abandonment of plans to disband the regiment.

SIR, — The Branch Committee of the City of Aberdeen Red Cross would like to thank the public of Aberdeen for their generous support during their house-to-house collections and flag day in Centenary Year. We raised a total of £732/1/11 with their help.

THANKS, SAY RED CROSS

Patricia George, branch director.

TEXT FOR TODAY

HERE'S YOUR HOROSCOPE

Let me introduce our sister Phoebe, a deaconess... receive her in the Lord. Romans xvi, 1.

From the very first there was a place opened to women in the Christian church. The break-through came early on, but centuries were to elapse before women had a truly honourable place. And even now, in many quarters, they are considered secondary citizens of Christ's Kingdom.—G.

Advertisement for Knitwear Cleaning Offer, featuring a woman in a dress and the text 'FOR A SHORT PERIOD ONLY' and '4 for 3'.

Advertisement for Fix-the-Rail, featuring a train and the text 'FOR A Bigger PRIZE'.

Advertisement for Stevensons, featuring a woman in a dress and the text 'LAUNDRY, DRY CLEANING' and 'Stevensons'.

Look-in

with Frances Horsburgh

A SCHOOLGIRL'S chance midsummer outing in 1919 made her an eye-witness to one of the most extraordinary events in naval history. Fifty years ago, Mrs Rosetta Groundwater, a former Provost of Stromness who now lives at Kirkwall, was taken to see the German High Sea Fleet—74 ships in all—which were held at Scapa Flow during the armistice period following World War I.

As she watched, Mrs Groundwater saw the Kaiser's battle fleet sink, scuttled by the Germans in an act of calculated defiance rather than see them fall into enemy hands if the peace talks failed.

In "The Great Scuttle," the "Yesterday's Witness" programme on BBC 2 tonight, Mrs Groundwater will be describing what she saw. Also taking part will be three other eye-witnesses to this incident—Capt. R. C. V. Ross and Mr W. G. Waterson, who were midshipman and boy seaman respectively in the British guard squadron at Scapa Flow, and Vice-Admiral Friedrich Ruge, a lieutenant in the German Navy and acting captain of one of the destroyers.

"Joan," last Wednesday's play on BBC 1 which was a crisp exercise in Kafkaesque mystery. Subjected to a probing personal interview in a nameless government department, for no apparent reason, the young woman journalist (Ann Bell) showed admirable spirit. Only when she discovered herself apparently locked in did she panic. It was the kind of nightmare situation which aroused by prolonged hesitancy over the future of, say, the Kyle of Lochalsh to Toscaig Ferry and the threat of several rural bus services is very real.

A strong holding operation is necessary in the years during which the vaunted massive planning of regional development is bringing new life to selected growth points.

There is no BBC play this week on Wednesday. Instead we have "Jack Benny's New Look" — a programme recorded in Hollywood in which the old maestro plays host to Nancy Sinatra, Gary Puckett and those old stagers George Burns and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson. There's also film star Gregory Peck who is going to do a solo song and dance in "The Shadow of Your Smile." I can't wait!

FINE performances last week on Gramplan from Wilfred Pickles who, in "For the Love of Ada" has finally bought the ring and popped the question. Irene Handl's acting matches his professionalism every step of the way to the altar...

In order to give more coverage to weekend viewing, Frances Horsburgh's 'Look-in' column will appear each Friday.

Orkney woman saw the Scapa scuttle



Edward Woodward whose Callan characterisation remains as sensitive and finely edged as ever. Although Callan kills, Callan cares and more important so do we, the viewers.

ALTHOUGH I am something of a fan of Rolf Harris I was disappointed in his Bank Holiday show on BBC 1. It was distinctly lacking in sparkle and relied far too heavily on the well-tried formula of his previous series.

In the past some of those long set-piece scenes with the Young Generation have been excellent, but last week's choice of a Tudor setting with Rolf obviously very unhappily cast as Henry the Eighth resulted in an embarrassingly poor sequence.

Don't be content to rest on your hard-won laurels, Rolf — get your thinking caps on BBC producers and give us a new series with a fresh and original format.

THINGS I am not very happy about on TV... the repeat showing of all those old films on Sunday nights on BBC 1 under the pretentious title of a Kenneth More Season... The previous series was heavily planned and I don't relish the prospect of watching Harry H. Corbett founder once again in poorly-scripted wastelands... the present state of "The Doctors," the BBC's continuing medical saga. After a promising start the series has degenerated into banality with trite dialogue and heavily contrived situations.

YOUR SWITCH-ON GUIDE TO TELEVISION AND RADIO

Table with columns for BBC 1, BBC 2, RADIO, and STV, listing various TV and radio programmes with their times and channels.