

1942.

NEW ZEALAND.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

NATIONAL BROADCASTING SERVICES

(FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31st MARCH 1942).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to the Provisions of the Broadcasting Act, 1936.

REPORT.

THIS report is furnished in two sections, the first dealing with the National Broadcasting Service and the second with the National Commercial Broadcasting Service.

SECTION I.—NATIONAL BROADCASTING SERVICE.

I have the honour to submit the following report on the operations of the National Broadcasting Service for the period 1st April, 1941, to 31st March, 1942.

Receiving Licenses.—During the year 371,259 receiving licenses were issued, an increase in the year of 15,779. In the past eleven years there has been a sixfold increase of receiving licenses. At 31st December, 1930, the number of licenses was 60,162. By 31st December, 1936, in which year the Government assumed direct control of the Service, licenses had risen to 231,364.

Hours of Transmission.—The total transmission time of stations was 52,256 hours. Only 28 hours were lost owing to technical faults and power-failures.

Programmes.—The National Broadcasting Service was at 31st March, 1942, supplying programmes to sixteen stations. Technical details are as shown on page 2 of last year's report.

Two privately-owned stations are subsidized by the Government.

Broadcasting and the War.—The extension of the war to the Pacific added further to the responsibilities of the National Broadcasting Service. Broadcasting has been used more than ever by the Government and other authorities in accelerating the war effort. The mobilization of man-power and resources, the enlightenment of the public on wartime responsibilities, national savings and war loan campaigns, and appeals for patriotic funds provided opportunities to serve the Nation's cause.

The Service provided broadcasts of war news and commentaries and kept in close contact with our Forces overseas by talks and personal messages from members of these Forces. A considerable proportion of time was needed for wartime activities; nevertheless, normal cultural entertainment and other activities have been satisfactorily maintained to provide diversion and information and thus help to maintain public morale.

News and Commentaries.—By courtesy of the British Broadcasting Corporation news broadcasts from London have been rebroadcast seven times a day, together with commentaries and war talks. At 9 o'clock each evening the main stations have continued the N.B.S. Newsreel, and at 7 o'clock local news by courtesy of the daily newspapers, as well as sports results, market reports, &c.

Talks.—Overseas and local speakers were broadcast every day, dealing with the war, including many speakers of international importance. His Majesty the King broadcast on Christmas Day and on the National Day of Prayer, while Her Majesty the Queen was heard broadcasting to the women of America.

Broadcasts by the Right Honourable Winston Churchill included his Atlantic meeting with President Roosevelt and his speech to the Congress at Washington.

President Roosevelt's broadcasts included his speeches to Congress proclaiming a state of war with Japan, and outlining his gigantic armament programme.

Speeches were broadcast by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Canada, by British Cabinet Ministers, and other distinguished overseas speakers.

The Prime Minister, the Right Honourable P. Fraser, was rebroadcast from the B.B.C. during his visit to Britain.

In New Zealand His Excellency Sir Cyril Newall broadcast several times, including a New Year message to the Dominion.

The Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, and members of the War Cabinet, the Leader of the Opposition, and many other representative citizens broadcast on matters of national importance.

Talks were broadcast by the four New-Zealanders who were awarded the V.C., or by their parents.

Distinguished overseas visitors to broadcast in New Zealand included Mr. E. M. Van Kleffens, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands; the Right Honourable R. G. Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia; Sir Ronald Cross, United Kingdom High Commissioner in Australia; Sir Evelyn Wrench; the Right Honourable A. Duff Cooper; and Mr. William Holmes, Past President of the British Trades Union Congress.

A special series of E.P.S. talks and, by arrangement with the Health Department, weekly morning talks on health matters were broadcast, as well as series dealing with our industrial war effort and recruiting for the Air Training Corps.

Overseas Rebroadcasts.—A listening watch was maintained on overseas stations, and more than a thousand talks, programmes, and commentaries were rebroadcast or recorded for future use.

Broadcasting and the Forces.—The Broadcasting Unit with the Expeditionary Force provided a valuable link with the people at home.

Greetings and talks from the Forces, recorded in the Middle East, were presented every Sunday morning, together with greetings and talks from the New Zealand Forces in other parts of the world. Over 2,800 greetings and 180 talks and commentaries from our fighting services were presented, including many historic events and personal experiences.

The Broadcasting Unit has ranged from Egypt east to Palestine, Syria, Transjordan, and Irak, and west to Tobruk.

By the kind co-operation of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and of the Fiji Radio Service messages from New-Zealanders in Canada and Fiji were broadcast.

On Christmas Day two special programmes included Christmas greetings from New-Zealanders in England, Canada, Fiji, and the Middle East.

To keep in touch with our Forces overseas short talks dealing with life in New Zealand were sent to the B.B.C., and to the Broadcasting Unit in the Middle East were sent special programmes of New Zealand interest. The talks sent to the B.B.C. were broadcast from London to New-Zealanders in the Middle East; recordings sent to the Broadcasting Unit were, by courtesy of the Egyptian State Broadcasting Service, broadcast from a Cairo station.

The broadcast signalling instruction for trainees taking a correspondence course with the Royal New Zealand Air Force was extended.

Music.—Regular programmes of recorded music by the world's leading composers and artists were broadcast, as well as the best available local artists and musical societies, choirs, &c. Nearly 2,000 broadcasts were by local artists, and 676 by local musical societies, choirs, bands, &c.

The presence in the country of Mr. Andersen Tyrer and of Mr. Thomas Matthews made possible the studio presentation of outstanding works; of special interest were the "Divertimento" (Bartok), "Concertino Pastorale" (John Ireland), and the concert overture, "Aotearoa," and "Allegro for Strings," by Douglas Lilburn, the young New Zealand composer.

Special programmes dealt with the bi-centenary of the completion of Handel's "Messiah," the Centenary of Anton Dvorak, and the "Music of Our Allies."

Mr. Maurice Clare resigned the conductorship of the N.B.S. String Orchestra, since when local conductors and Mr. Andersen Tyrer have been engaged as guest conductors, and the orchestra has continued to do excellent work.

Overseas artists to broadcast and give public concerts included Ignaz Friedman, the Polish pianist, and Harold Williams, the British baritone.

Plays and Feature Programmes.—In addition to many serials and feature programmes, fifty major dramatic productions were broadcast. Authors included Shakespeare, Moliere, Ibsen, Hugo, G. B. Shaw, Masfield, Tagore, Arnold Bennett, Karel Capek, John Galsworthy, and A. A. Milne.

Of the play scripts purchased, 111 were written in New Zealand. In addition to serials from other sources, many were produced and recorded by our own Productions Branch. Dramatic features specially written and produced included "The Second Year of War," "Hail America," and "Dunkirk."

Light Music, Variety, and Bands.—Apart from overseas and local recordings, increasing use was made of combinations of local artists in the presentation of variety programmes. Special dance sessions by New Zealand players were broadcast, and relays from cabarets.

Various bands, including that of the R.N.Z.A.F. and bands from military camps, gave studio broadcasts. Community singing was relayed and variety concerts arranged by the Service at a military camp. Twice daily half-hour programmes entitled "Music While You Work" were instituted for factory workers.

Outside Broadcasts.—Wartime censorship makes it more difficult to broadcast from points outside the studios. Nevertheless, relays were carried out of events of national interest. These included civic welcomes to Their Excellencies Sir Cyril and Lady Newall, and other meetings associated with distinguished visitors.

Parliamentary Broadcasts.—Regular broadcasts from the House of Representatives were carried out, observing wartime restrictions relative to matter not available for broadcasting. The national observance of a minute's silent prayer at 9 p.m. during the chiming of Big Ben was recognized by the members of the House by standing while the chimes were broadcast in the Chamber.

Religious Broadcasts.—From the main centres morning and evening services were broadcast each Sunday and short devotional services each morning, as well as a short evening wartime prayer service each Wednesday. A number of special intercessory services were broadcast.

The practice of observing for silent prayer the minute during the chiming of Big Ben at 9 p.m., commended by His Majesty the King, His Excellency the Governor-General, and the Prime Minister, was adopted by all stations, and the Central Religious Advisory Committee published a leaflet, "The Dedicated Minute," for the guidance of the people.

The Central Religious Advisory Committee consulted with local Church Committees in arranging the broadcasting of Sunday church services by churches of various denominations and upon other matters. The thanks of the Service are due to the Central Religious Advisory Committee and to the local Church Committees for their valuable co-operation.

Broadcasts to Schools.—The weekly broadcasts of educational sessions were continued on the usual basis until the end of 1941. For 1942 the war and other circumstances have necessitated a reorganization of these sessions. They will be arranged on a national basis by a committee representing the Education Department, the Educational Institute, and the National Broadcasting Service. Owing to restrictions on the use of paper, the usual booklets for the schools broadcasts are now only issued to each teacher, and not to each pupil.

The weekly quarter-hour session in French for post-primary schools was continued. The usual booklet was supplied to 144 schools. Over eight thousand pupils listen to these broadcasts.

The Education Department's Correspondence School broadcast a weekly session to its pupils throughout the country.

Women's Sessions.—Morning talks for women were given at all main stations, covering a wide field. By means of talks from Britain, or by women returning from overseas, information of the sacrifices and war effort of women in Britain and elsewhere has been broadcast.

Aspects of woman's life in New Zealand have been dealt with. The daily session, "For my Lady," has included serial dramas and introductory programmes on great writers and great composers.

Talks specially prepared by the Department of Health, the St. John Ambulance Association and the Red Cross Society, and the Home Science Department of Otago University have been broadcast regularly. In many talks and appeals woman's relation to the war has been emphasized.

Sporting Broadcasts.—Commentaries on sporting events were continued on a somewhat restricted scale. The club and representative Rugby matches broadcast numbered 125, as against 136 the previous year. Wrestling and boxing matches, cricket, tennis, and other sporting fixtures, as well as racing and trotting meetings, were also covered.

Special Services.—Special services, such as gardening talks, book reviews, &c., were continued. For security reasons, no weather reports or birthday greetings to children were broadcast.

Considerable use was made of our stations in connection with the war effort, including broadcasts associated with "Safety for Shipping" campaigns, national savings, war loans, salvage of waste material, binoculars for the Forces, production and marketing, registration of citizens for various purposes, emergency precautions, war damage insurance, recruiting for the R.N.Z.A.F. and the Air Training Corps, calls for workers in various industries.

Broadcasting facilities were afforded for many appeals for patriotic funds, including an Anzac night appeal conducted by the broadcasting stations and the telephone service, which produced a sum of £45,000.

Requests for information regarding missing cars and motor-cycles were made on 537 occasions, and 315 appeals relative to missing persons.

Programme Analysis.—The allocation of time to the various types of programme and service, except for the provision of time for broadcasts connected with the war, has been substantially the same as in last year's report.

National Broadcasting Service Recordings.—Shipping difficulties have caused uncertainty in the supply of materials, and a consequent curtailment of recording. Important recording activities associated with the war, however, have not so far been affected. B.B.C. talks and news bulletins were recorded regularly for broadcasting at times convenient to New Zealand. Recordings of historic interest were also made of New Zealand and overseas events, including many made by our Broadcasting Unit in the Middle East.

"The New Zealand Listener."—The *Listener* has continued throughout the year to print advance programmes of all stations, national and commercial, and to provide publicity for broadcasting services generally. There was a steady increase in sales during the year. To conserve paper-supplies it was necessary to make a further reduction in size during the year from forty-eight pages to forty.

Relations with Overseas Organizations.—The National Broadcasting Service is again indebted to the B.B.C. for many privileges and much assistance. Particularly valuable is permission to rebroadcast the Empire stations and facilities for the broadcasting in England of matter prepared in New Zealand for our Forces overseas. The Service has supplied the B.B.C. with commentaries on New Zealand affairs and other material for inclusion in its programmes. The B.B.C. also made available to us some excellent recorded features such as "Under the Crooked Cross," "We Also Serve," "English Pageant for St. George's Day," "The Battle for Britain."

The Australian Broadcasting Commission extended valuable assistance to the Service and made available recordings of historic interest made by the Commission's Broadcasting Unit in the Middle East.

Arrangements were made with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to record personal messages from New Zealand airmen training in Canada for our use.

The Fiji Radio Service made available facilities for the broadcasting of messages of New-Zealanders serving in Fiji, but unsatisfactory reception caused this service to be suspended.

The Service is indebted to the Egyptian State Broadcasting Service for placing at the disposal of our Broadcasting Unit in the Middle East regular periods to broadcast to our Forces.

Facilities were made available by the Service in connection with regular relays by radio telephone to the National Broadcasting Company of America of New Zealand news talks.

Technical.—Owing to the war, development work on studios or transmitting-stations remained suspended. Technical constructional work, however, was carried out to provide special broadcasting facilities in an emergency.

Listening watches have been maintained day and night on a number of overseas stations with regular recording of news bulletins, talks, &c.

The Radio Research Committee has restricted its work to such as has a direct bearing on the prosecution of the war. Other types of research have been suspended owing to shortage of staff.

The quality and efficiency of transmissions have so far been maintained, but necessary equipment is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, and unusual vigilance and effort by a shortened staff are needed to maintain supplies and to keep the equipment functioning normally.

Financial Report.—The Revenue Account for the year ending 31st March, 1942, and the balance-sheet appear in parliamentary paper B.-1. [Pt. IV].

The revenue for the year amounted to £460,689, which comprised license fees, £420,201; receipts from sales of and advertising in *New Zealand Listener*, £28,248; interest, £11,257; and rents of land and buildings, £983.

Expenditure for the year was £261,130, leaving a surplus of £199,559. The chief items of expenditure were—programmes, £111,688; operation of stations, £43,368; administration, £32,817; *New Zealand Listener*, £30,956; depreciation, £35,788; Broadcasting Unit with New Zealand Expeditionary Force overseas, £4,110; miscellaneous, £2,403.

The capital assets at the beginning of the year were valued at £244,666. Additions amounted to £7,003, depreciation was £35,788, leaving a balance of £215,881 at the end of the year.

A further £260,000 was invested during the year to provide for future development, and to overtake arrears of construction and equipment which have been held up owing to war conditions, making a total of £800,000 now invested for this purpose.

JAMES SHELLEY, Director of Broadcasting.

SECTION II.—NATIONAL COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE.

GENERAL.

Commercial Broadcasting under War Conditions.—The period under review represents the second complete year of operation under stress of war conditions, and in spite of these abnormal conditions the Service has established new peaks in both sales of station time and also in net profit. Since its inception sales revenue has climbed steadily from the sum of £98,419 in the first complete year of operation to the end of 31st March, 1938, to the sum of £224,514 for the year under review, last year's figures being £205,953. The net profit for the year was £62,983, an increase over the previous year of £10,899. As a general economy measure the customary accounts have been omitted from this report and will be published in B.-1 [Pt. IV] only.

National and Patriotic Services.—The authorities continued to use on an increasing scale the facilities of the Service for the broadcasting of National Service talks, announcements, &c., and considerable usage was made of the Service's own production unit for recording matter for the various branches of war publicity, &c. Marked success was achieved in the Liberty Loan and Bonds for Bombers Campaigns, &c.

Diversified Entertainment.—The functions of the Service to attract and hold the largest volume of listening by the provision of bright, popular, and diversified entertainment were maintained and further progress was made in the development of the Service's production studios and the utilization of local talent.

New Station Premises, Auckland.—On 6th October, 1941, Station 1ZB moved into new quarters in Durham Street, these premises being probably the most up-to-date and efficiently designed broadcasting studios in the Southern Hemisphere, comparing favourably with the latest trend in America and Great Britain.

C. G. SCRIMGEOUR, Controller.

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