



LEFT: Rod Talbot, IZB announcer, watches the lights of Auckland as listeners respond to IZB's recent appeal to save power.

tails is kept for repetition as soon as the city power returns.

An unusual effect of the emergency cuts was the threatened loss of navigational aids which transmitting stations give to New Zealand aircraft. The value of broadcasting stations to air authorities has been shown in the extensive use of the NZBS transmitters for navigation, by pilots of the R.N.Z.A.F., National Airways Corporation, and other operating companies, mainly in adverse weather. So that this aid should not be missing, arrangements have been made between the air traffic control centres and the NZBS for transmitters to come on the air on request from the air authorities. The transmitters radiate (when required) only unmodulated carrier waves without music or any other means of identification. The effect is simply to provide the sound of the station's "carrier" on its normal wavelength.

The Commercial Division of the NZBS has suffered a greater loss of time than the YA stations. Normal ZB broadcasting hours are from 6.0 a.m. to midnight or 18 hours a day. Now, they too have been reduced to six and a-half, and the ZB stations have had many problems to deal with. From a completely full advertising schedule for all stations, approximately two-thirds of revenue-producing time has disappeared. This has meant a vast increase in book-keeping, for the Commercial stations have an annual turnover of about a third of a million pounds. Many contracts have had to be suspended indefinitely, and several popular programmes have gone off the air, but the ZB stations have managed to retain some branches of their community service. Listeners in the main centres have come to rely on the breakfast session for the correct time, and more than ever now, since electric clocks have been upset. To assist householders, the ZB's have arranged a time service from the studios in the early morning period. Listeners simply dial the station number and are given the time without asking.

Radio and the Power Crisis

FOLDING up his newspaper, and with the air of having reached an important conclusion, the man next to us in the tram remarked: "With broadcasting hours cut down by half, those programme chaps must be having an easy time. Later in the day we made inquiries among "the programme chaps," and found that far from giving them a rest, the emergency power cuts had meant some powerful headaches.

Every year, starting in March, there is a temporary reduction in the hours of broadcasting, but it has never before been greater than the normal winter schedule. For a little while before the present emergency, the winter hours were 6.0-8.0 a.m., 9.0-11.0 a.m., noon-5.0 p.m., and 6.0-11.30 p.m., a total of fourteen and a-half hours. Now, under the emergency arrangements, the hours are from 9.0-11.0 a.m., 1.30-2.30 p.m., and 6.30-10.0 p.m.—six and a-half hours, or less than half the normal winter time on the air.

Programmes are arranged from three weeks to a month ahead, so when the emergency schedule was applied, they had to be pruned heavily. This meant a careful examination of all features and the selection of those having the greatest listener-interest. The analysis presented a difficult problem, for both listener-interest and the times allowed under the new schedule had to be considered.

For instance, the programme organisers found that an afternoon programme of classical music could not be presented in the 1.30-2.30 period because half an hour of that time was already allocated to the broadcasts to schools. So the auxiliary stations were brought on for broadcasting the classical hour. The

NZBS is well aware that many serials have a keen listening public and so the more popular of them have been transferred from their usual places in the programmes, and included in the emergency schedule.

A New Pattern

To do all this, programme arrangers have had to break down the broadcasts already arranged and work to quite a new pattern. The evening concert period has not been greatly affected, however, and the engagements of local artists continue as arranged. Since the programmes are built up so far ahead it is still necessary to continue this work, at least in general outline, so that the service will be ready to resume normal transmission at a few hours' notice when the power position eases. The work of building up programme material has to continue under the reduced schedule till a definite forecast of the length of the emergency cuts can be given.

The broadcasting engineers, too, have had their problems. They have had to arrange power for operating both studio and transmitter apparatus at the times when the emergency cuts apply in the North Island cities. Diesel stand-by plants have been provided so that town and country listeners not affected by city reductions can hear programmes in the normal way. City-dwellers having battery-operated radio sets can of course continue to hear their favourite programmes.

For the first week of the cuts, broadcasting studios in Wellington were lit by candles and hurricane lamps, and at times, recorded programmes were taken to the transmitters for broadcasting, but new and larger Diesel engine equipment has been installed to take care of further emergencies. The BBC listening post usually maintained at 2YA, on relay

from Makara, occasionally found power insufficient for reception owing to cuts applying to Makara also. On these occasions, the post was transferred to Makara for direct listening. To meet the case of city listeners who are cut off when the station is broadcasting on its stand-by plant, the service repeats special features such as Wickham Steed's Weekly Review of World Affairs at a time when the city power has been restored. When city power is off on Saturdays from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m., sporting information is continued, but a careful check of the de-



E. W. MATHEWSON, electricity load despatcher at Hamilton, who supervises the distribution of electric power throughout the North Island