

"INTEREST IS THE STARTING POINT"

EDUCATIONAL programmes for broadcasting should begin not in the studio, but outside, and although child education and adult have their differences the same principle applies to both. This, in essence, is the view of Mary Somerville, O.B.E., newly appointed Assistant Controller of Talks to the BBC.

In an interview with *The Listener* on her arrival in Auckland from Australia, Miss Somerville explained that her new appointment would concern programme policy and the initiation of new developments in educational broadcasting. The BBC was planning a new attack on "further"—or adult—education, and this would involve study of the outside interests of different groups. "We shall use their interests as a starting

(Continued on page 9)



MARY SOMERVILLE (left) and Jean Coombs (director of NZBS School broadcasts), from the verandah of an Auckland hotel, look at the harbour

(continued from previous page)

work in the sphere of school broadcasts by conducting a survey of the subject-matter, methods, and achievements of school broadcasts in various countries. Such a survey, it was suggested, could be carried out as a matter of urgency in collaboration with the International Bureau of Education in Geneva or some other competent organisation. Thus Unesco, by analysis and collation, will be able to draw conclusions and make suggestions to national radio organisations.

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ALMOST anybody who studies Unesco's world plans for radio is likely to be troubled, no matter how sympathetic his general approach, by at least two considerable doubts. One concerns the language difficulty; the other the problem of copyright affecting the exchange of programmes. On this latter point, the U.S. delegate to the Conference pointed out that, although the public in the U.S.A. were "enormously interested" in Unesco (even dangerously so, since they expected too much of it), certain words of caution were necessary; the programmes supplied through Unesco would have to be good or they would not be accepted, and in addition, copyright and performing rights were very complicated in his country and might lead to difficulties.

The various national radio organisations are, in fact, being asked to forward, as soon as possible, their views

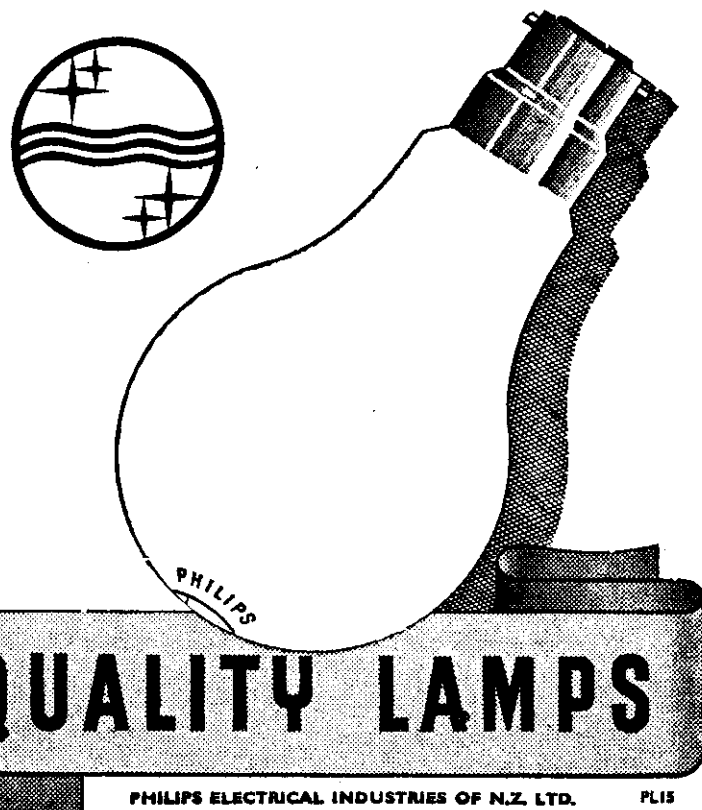
on copyright and performing rights to the Radio Section of Unesco. It seems clear that without some considerable measure of international agreement on this subject—and on the related question of customs duties affecting the exchange of recordings—Unesco's plans are likely to be hampered.

Language is an obvious difficulty; but when *The Listener* made some enquiries on this topic, we found that it was not considered an insuperable obstacle—not even in the field of school broadcasts. Programmes centering round some particular country or region of the world could be built up; the material could include national music, children speaking to children about the things that interested them, children's choirs, bands, and so on. Such programmes, we were told, would fill a genuine need and give children a great sense of reality. Already in the Junior Red Cross, for instance, surveys of activities by members in different countries were exchanged: this would be merely translating that idea to another and wider sphere. Obviously each such broadcast would need to be made available in several languages; but part of Unesco's job would surely be to provide the necessary translations. In the case of French, however, translated versions might not always be required; they would scarcely be needed, for instance, by senior classes in English-speaking schools where French was taught and where French broadcasts were already in common use.

—Staff Reporter.

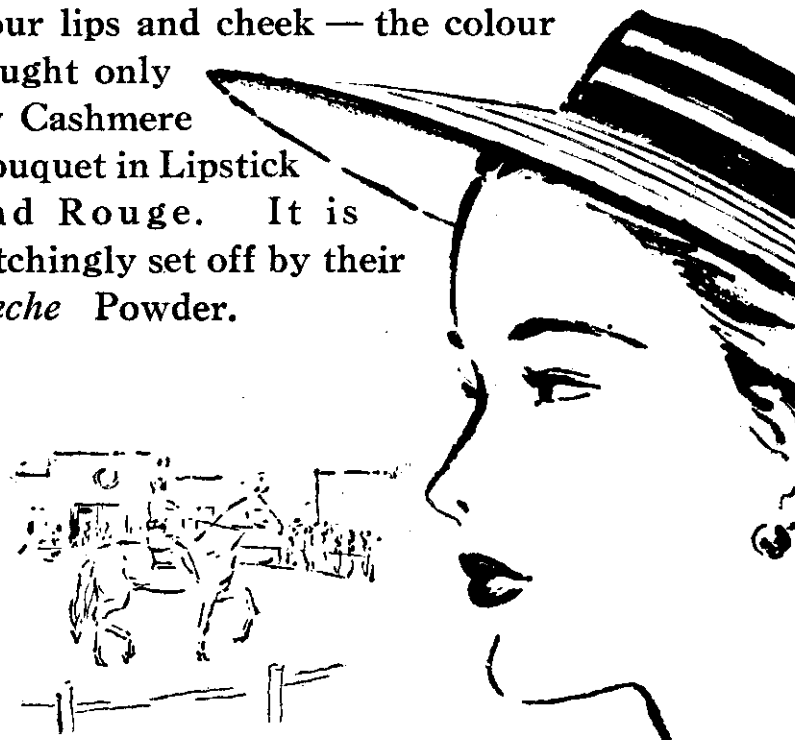
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