

# SAMOA GOES ON THE AIR

AS dusk fell in Western Samoa last January 31, the inhabitants of over 150 villages gathered round their newly-installed radio sets—one to each village—to listen in to the first programme broadcast by their new radio station, 2AP Apia. The programme consisted of recorded music, Samoan songs and dances, and talks by the Administrator, Lieutenant-Colonel F. W. Voelcker, and others.

Behind this inaugural broadcast were several months of preparation and experimentation by engineers of the NZBS and members of the Samoan Administration. In addition to selecting a suitable transmitter site, special equipment had to be designed and constructed to suit both the tropical conditions and the lack of electric power in the various islands that make up the Territory.

An engineer of the NZBS visited Apia last year to make preliminary investiga-

this a programme presented in the studio can be beamed to the transmitter for broadcast, while for normal communications between the two sites low-power portable radio sets are used.

## Communal Listening

Each village in the Territory was provided with a receiving set around which the inhabitants could gather in a communal group when their station was on the air. As the villages have no power supply, battery sets were installed, and these were specially built by a Wellington firm. They have no tuning device but are permanently fixed on the wavelength—1,420 kilocycles—of the Apia station, to conserve the batteries. The hours of broadcast are from 7.15 p.m. to 8.45 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of each week, Samoan time.

For the first three years station 2AP will be operated by two former members of the NZBS, E. E. Lloyd, station-manager and programme organiser, and L. W. Workman, senior technical officer. The remaining staff have been obtained locally.

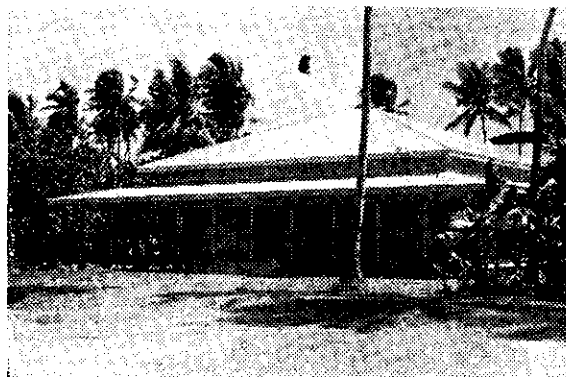
One of the main reasons for setting up the new station was to provide a rapid and accurate distribution of news, information, and administrative instructions, as the only newspaper circulated in Western Samoa is a monthly gazette in the vernacular. The recent constitutional change

from 'Mandate to Trusteeship' status has of course quickened political interest and discussion among the Samoans.

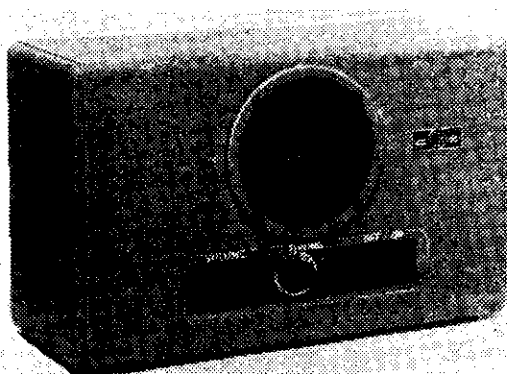
A supply of gramophone recordings and musical instruments, including a piano, has been sent from New Zealand, and the station will also be used to present talks on educational and health matters. In addition, when the newly-formed Legislative Assembly is in session, station 2AP will probably broadcast day-to-day reports of its proceedings.

tions and pick out a suitable site for the station, and it was decided to erect a two-kilowatt transmitter at Afiamalu, in the hills behind Apia, and to construct studio and office buildings at Apia itself. To gain access to the transmitter site several miles of road had to be reformed through the jungle, and this, together with the erection of the buildings, was done by the Samoan Public Works Department. The transmitter, mast radiator, and studio equipment were supplied by a Sydney firm who are manufacturing other broadcasting equipment for installation in New Zealand, while to generate electricity at the transmitter site two diesel-driven generators were set up.

To get over the problem of communication between the studio and transmitter—the construction of a telephone line through the heavy jungle would have been too expensive—a special "radio link" was designed and constructed by the NZBS. Through



Samoa's studio building



A Samoan battery receiver—one per village

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