

(continued from previous page)

East. Because of the times at which they met it was not usually possible to broadcast these to the Pacific.

Asked about feature programmes, Mr. Williams mentioned the weekly half-hour English-language *Memo from Lake Success*, in which outside correspondents from various countries gave their individual interpretations of current UN activities, and the quarter-hour *United Nations To-day* programme in English, which consisted largely of extracts from Security Council and other meetings linked with a brief narrative. Statements by the New Zealand delegate to UN, Sir Carl Berendsen, were always welcomed for this programme by the compilers because his forthrightness added interest to the broadcast. *United Nations To-day* recently won the George Foster Peabody award, an honour comparable with the Pulitzer prizes in the literary field.

Under a "guest commentator" scheme broadcasters from outside the United States nominated by their own companies were able to make certain broadcasts in their own language from Lake Success under contract to the UN Radio Division. The division's facilities were also placed at the disposal of accredited correspondents to broadcast back to their own countries free and independent commentaries on UN activities.

### "Completely Free"

"Just how free are these broadcasts and what is the procedure?"

"They are completely free. We expect the usual courtesies to be observed. It has to be remembered that the radio is for the benefit of all 58 member nations of the UN, and we feel it should not be used for an all-out attack on any one of them. I recall only one broadcast being questioned and this because it was considered to be in bad taste, but even so we did not feel we were entitled to ban it and it was broadcast.

"The procedure is simple. A BBC commentator, for example, may come along and say that at such-and-such a time he wants to make a five-minute broadcast to London. This he duly does and the BBC transmits his broadcast in whatever service it has chosen. Occasionally, a correspondent, instead of doing a live broadcast, will use our facilities for making a recording and send the disc to his home company." The number of commentators non-Americans could maintain at Lake Success was kept down by the dollar shortage, but UN delegates were also able to make statements for broadcasting.

This brought Mr. Williams to another service the UN Radio performed—the sending out of transcriptions to many countries. These included interviews, and features, "like the excellent *Report from Samoa* which the NZBS sent us." An extract from this report on the UN Commission's visit to the Islands had been included in the Radio Division's New Year programmes, Mr. Williams said.

### Propaganda for Co-operation

The UN Radio Division, he continued, existed to try and ensure that broadcasting throughout the world was used as widely and effectively as possible to spread knowledge of the aims and work of the United Nations and to win support for it. To do this it worked as far as possible through the broadcasting systems of the member States. A Canadian, Brian Meredith, who had held a prominent position in the Canadian Armed Forces network during the war, was responsible for liaison with the NZBS.

Broadcasts to the various parts of the world made by the division did not vary in content or objectivity, but they did vary considerably in presentation of material. Most American listeners preferred crisp, lively accounts of proceed-



UN BROADCASTS to Latin America bring in the largest listener mail of all. Mrs. M. L. de Burt, of the Latin American Section, is seen above with an average sample from the daily delivery

ings and dramatized programmes on the work of the Specialised Agencies. On the other hand listeners in the Soviet Union liked straight, factual reports. Feature programmes were popular with the French, and a recent UN Radio Division programme on atomic energy was carried by Radiodiffusion Francaise at the peak listening hour—8.30 p.m. All programmes in the major language: made extensive use of extracts from the recordings of meetings.

When the division began its service the five official languages—English

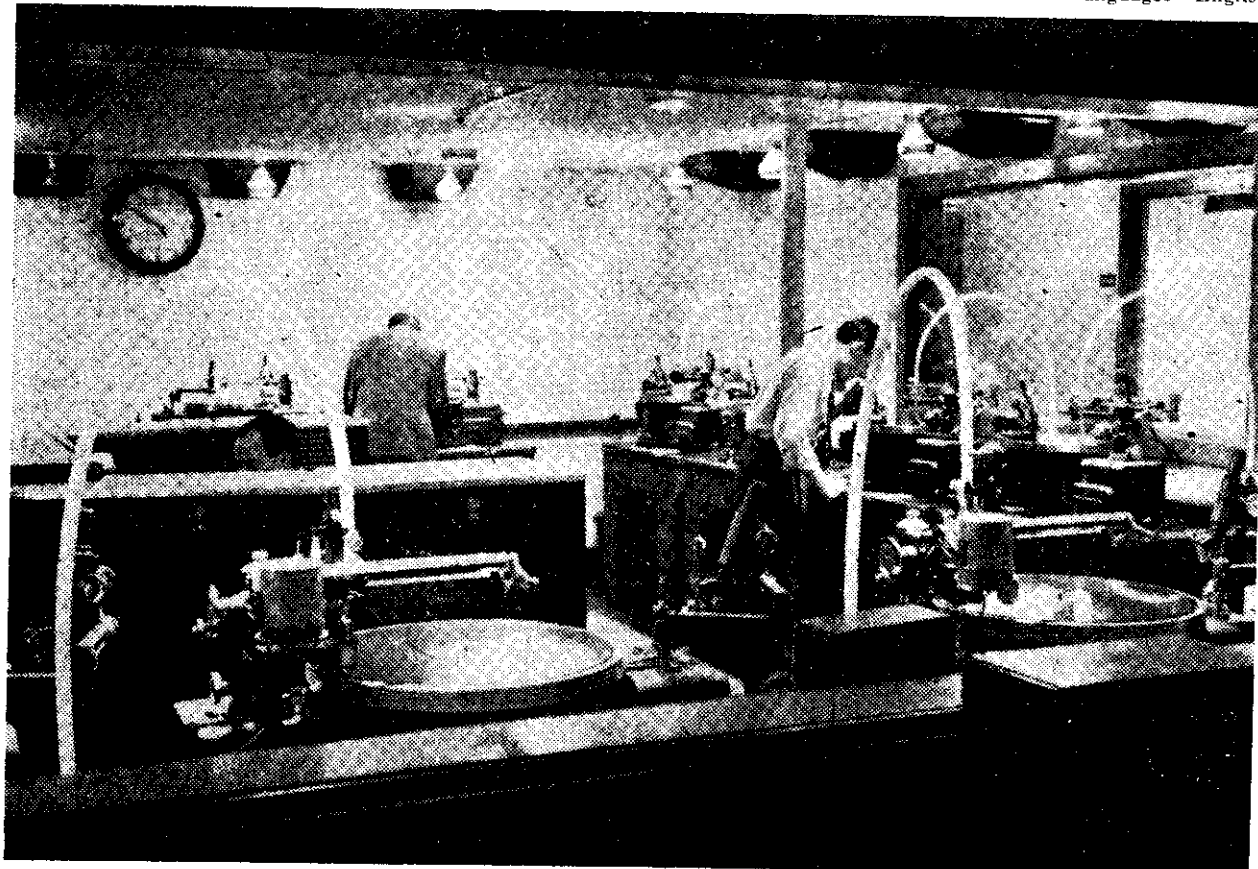
French, Russian, Chinese and Spanish—were used. Now there were 24 in use, including Arabic, Hebrew and Portuguese, and such lesser-known tongues as Tagalog (spoken in the Philippines), Amharic (Ethiopia) and Pushtu (Afghanistan).

As yet UN Radio had no transmitting facilities of its own except for the amateur shortwave station, K2UN, which opened several months ago—it nearly lost its aerial in the recent bomb attempt on UN headquarters—and the division depended on facilities leased by the U.S. Department of State, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Worldwide Broadcasting Foundation.

Responsible for technical planning was a liaison service under the charge of General Frank E. Stoner, who was chief of the United States Army Signals during the war. His deputy was G. F. van Dissel, of the Netherlands, formerly in charge of technical arrangements for the League of Nations broadcasts. A scheme has been drawn up for a worldwide network of feeder transmitters to take UN broadcasts to the radio systems of member States, but this plan has yet to be submitted to the General Assembly.

The division receives many letters from listeners, and Mr. Williams expressed appreciation of those sent in by New Zealand shortwave listeners. The Latin American service, which had many relays of UN broadcasts, had the largest listener mail of all, he said. They had also heard from a number of Chinese and had been interested to learn how UN broadcasts relayed by local stations there were picked up on crystal sets in districts where there was no power, and where battery sets were beyond the means of the ordinary people. The most amusing letter, however, was one received from a Swede, who wrote: "This is the first time I have listened carefully to a UN broadcast, and it was more interesting than I thought it would be."

—P.M.



GENERAL VIEW of the recording room of the UN Sound and Recording Section at Lake Success