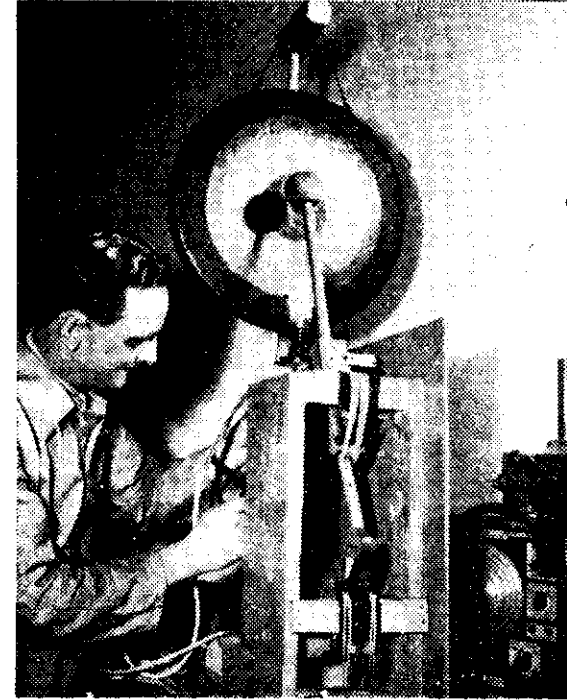


# Waiting for the Gong

TEN years ago, when 12B was very young and the staff was engaged in gathering up a stock of "props" for sound effects, one member was sent in search of a gong. And it had to be a "big, loud gong." In a second-hand shop in Upper Queen Street he found a Chinese hand-gong priced modestly at twenty-five shillings, and bought it. Since then it has had many uses and been heard thousands of times, by hundreds of thousands of listeners. It has

been an important piece of property in *Yes-No Jackpots*, *Spelling Jackpots* and the *Housewives' Laugh* session, for instance. Many a contestant will recall having kept, so to speak, one eye on the microphone and the other on the hand of the announcer, with striker raised.

In the last few months the old gong has been used by the Productions Division in Albert Street for sound effects, but 12B has now reclaimed it for work in a new amateur vaudeville show being heard from the Radio Theatre on Mondays at 10.0 p.m. Items in this session last only as long as the gong permits. To ensure that the gong, but not the judges, might be seen, it had to be made automatic. With some odd pieces of wood, a sheet of three-ply and two or three rubber bands, the transformation was made. Now the striker hits the gong when a button in the judges' room is pressed.



"Some odd pieces of wood, a sheet of three-ply, and two or three rubber bands"

From the moment an item starts, the eyes of the audience and performer are on the striker. Sooner or later it trembles, rises slowly towards the suspended gong, and then it is only a matter of seconds before the clang comes, a light flashes and the act is over, to the benefit or otherwise of audience and listeners, depending on the way you look at it.

## "THE EDGE OF PEACE"

ON United Nations Day, Sunday, October 24, the main National stations will broadcast *The Edge of Peace*, a play specially written and distributed to all member states of the United Nations. The script was written by George Ivan Smith, a former director of the Pacific Service of the BBC and now head of the English section of the United Nations Radio Division.

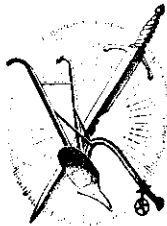
The play is in the form of a verse fantasy describing the visit of an allegorical figure, Man, to Valhalla, the mythical warriors' heaven. There he meets all the famous and infamous conquerors of the past—Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Nero, and Julius Caesar, Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, and others. They are assembled around a vast table at the head of which is The Chairman, the archetype of all warmongers and profiteers.

The Chairman and his minions have brought Man before them to find out what they can about the latest means of waging war, the atomic weapon. But Man proves to be an unusually stubborn and un-co-operative person. His spirited replies to the warriors' questions arouse their professional jealousy. Bismarck wrangles with Frederick of Prussia. Napoleon and Hitler argue over a phrase, Caesar abuses Nero, and amidst

this ghostly turmoil of vanity and martial arrogance the voice of Man is heard making his quiet plea for peace. "I have few words to tell. I am a farmer living by the sea, where wheat is hard to grow."

Despite the new atomic inventions he still has hopes of permanent world peace, and although The Chairman shows him his war propaganda weapons—the blind belief in national right instilled into school children, the malicious spreading of rumours, the inflammatory newspaper article—he still thinks war can be prevented. "If man could think of man before he acts," he says, "with trust between us we could only need a common force to guard our common life."

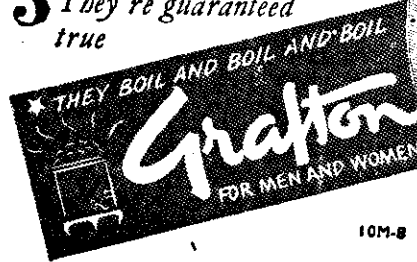
This is the theme of the play, the reminder that we the peoples of the United Nations have resolved to condemn all forms of propaganda which might provoke a threat to peace. Although *The Edge of Peace* is written in a form of blank verse it is not intellectually pretentious, but the producer, Bernard Beeby (supervisor of productions for the NZBS), regards it as a very powerful drama that should command a wide listening audience. It will be broadcast at 8.15 p.m. on Sunday, October 24.



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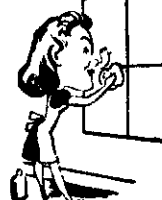


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