

# "RADIO IS MASS COMMUNICATION"

## Head of Great American Network Airs His Views

**M**AJOR LENOX H. LOHR, president of the National Broadcasting Company of America, has a blanket definition of radio. "It is mass communication," he says.

According to the "Montreal Gazette," which interviewed him recently, Major Lohr includes in his definition every phase of radio from European news "flashes," through Jack Benny's programme, to the broadcast concerts of the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Arturo Toscanini. He does this to emphasise the tremendous responsibility owed by the broadcasters to the public. "We are a public service, whether or not we conduct competitive networks."

The NBC president contends that radio is playing now, and will play in the future, a dominant role in the maintenance or destruction of the democratic way of life. To the representative of the "Montreal Gazette" he quoted the example of the totalitarian countries to show how potent a weapon broadcasting can be when it falls into the hands of one party of the propagators of a single idea. In this respect he claimed that radio in the United States will always be free, even if the country is at war.

Absolute impartiality in regard to every controversial subject was the basis rule of NBC broadcasting, Major Lohr claimed. And, he added, this must hold good just as much in regard to programmes for private concerns as for European political broadcasts.

"We cannot sell time to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. We can only give them time. Our religious broadcasts must consist of donated time and must be absolutely free from sectarian influence. They must be neither Catholic, Protestant nor Jewish but for Catholics, Protestants and Jews alike."

### No Threat to Press

When asked what he thought about the present relations of the radio and the press, Major Lohr claimed that they were complementary. "It has yet to be proved that radio has interfered in the slightest degree with newspaper circulation," he said. "In fact, there is evidence to prove that radio has, if anything, helped to increase the circulation of the dailies, weeklies and magazines on this continent. It must always be borne in mind that a radio network is not and never can be a news agency. We deal in flashes. The newspaper gives the full report and commentary."

"I also believe that freedom of the press and freedom of air are indissolubly blended," the NBC president continued. "Destroy the one and you destroy the other." Major Lohr also stated that today his company enjoys practically a hundred per cent co-operation with the

great news agencies of the world. "It must not be forgotten," he added, "that a third of the radio broadcasting stations in the United States are actually owned and operated by newspapers."

### Farmers Before Foreign Office

In speaking of the news flash, Major Lohr pointed to the role played by the radio in relaying the terms of the Munich Pact in September, 1938. "There is an amazing thought in the fact that farmers in Alberta knew the terms of that pact before the British Foreign Office did. We rented a line from Munich, and had the whole communication way cleared to Radio City in New York. Our European man raced with the terms of the treaty from the Brown House in Munich to the telephone, shouted "Give me the air," which was the signal for instantaneous clearing of the coast-to-coast networks on this continent. Our Munich man then read the terms directly to the millions of North American listeners. It took British offi-

cials at least 20 minutes to communicate the terms by telephone to the Foreign Office in London."

Major Lohr quoted another case where a woman sat by a radio watching war raging in a Spanish town. She could see the battle, but could get no idea of who was who or what was happening. Those facts she learned by shortwave from the United States, as she watched the fighting.

The NBC official placed great stress on "integrity" in broadcasting. No recordings are allowed on the NBC networks. "If we want to broadcast a song sung by Lily Pons, we pay three thousand dollars for it. We could, of course, go out and buy a record of it and pay a small royalty. But we figure the public must have the real thing."

### Radio in Wartime

Major Lohr has scant faith in the effect of radio propaganda in wartime so far as the belligerents are concerned. "An Englishman naturally won't believe

what a German broadcaster says." He thinks, however, that the influence on neutrals is pretty considerable.

Speaking of education by radio, Major Lohr claimed that it must be served in an entertaining form. He compared it with the English university system where students attend lectures if they want to, and, where consequently, the most interesting lecturers draw the largest classes.

He thinks also that its appeal must not be restricted to one section or group of the people. In this respect, he quoted the instance of a New York clergyman who preached a very successful sermon in his church, so successful that he considered giving it over the air on his weekly radio programme. But when he examined it in the light of broadcasting, he found not only that it was too narrow in its doctrinal and social appeal, but that it was "positively un-Christlike" when considered in relation to all classes of the population.

## HOW TO PLEASE YOUR WIFE

### Ten Tips For Husbands

Ten tips for husbands were given by Phyllis Anchor in a talk on "Marriage" in her "Speaking Personally" series from 2YA on August 1. There have been a number of requests — mostly from wives! — that it should be published; and we give here a summary:

**A**N idealistic young man I know surprised me recently by asking my advice on the ever-interesting subject of marriage. He was eager to make his marriage a success, and wanted to know what made a woman contented and happy in her married life. I not only disclosed my own pet theories, but asked six friends to assist me. They could all lay claim to many years of domestic bliss, and after much discussion, we drew up the following ten commandments for the prospective bridegroom to follow:

(1) The first rule was that a husband should always try to retain the courtesies he practised whilst on the honeymoon. Women appreciate these little attentions, and are very hurt when a man drops them a few months after the marriage ceremony—which leads us to...

(2) A husband should always behave "out of company" the way he does in it. That is, when a man is polite to his wife in front of others, he should maintain that politeness in the home,

(3) A husband should not begrudge his wife a few girl friends. It is ridiculously selfish for a man to expect to share every moment of his wife's spare time. He should remember the hours he spends with his own pals.

(4) A husband should not compare his wife's clothing or cooking with lady friends or their acquaintances. This often leads to bitter arguments and unfavourable comparisons between yourself and the man-next-door!

(5) A husband should not delve into a wife's past. Jealous tantrums will follow which are an insult to intelligent people.

(6) A husband should never discuss his wife with friends. Nothing annoys a woman more than to be talked about behind her back.

(7) A man should keep his sport in its proper place, whether it be golf, bowls or fishing, and not let it take the place of more important conversation every meal hour. He should not neglect his wife too much over the week-end, so that she gets known as that "unfortunate sports widow."

(8) A husband should not begrudge his wife earning an independent living if she so desires. There may come a time when he'll be glad of her financial assistance.

(9) A husband should be scrupulously fair over money matters, and give his wife as generous an allowance as he can possibly afford. Nothing is more stinging to a woman's pride than having to ask her husband for every penny she needs.



(10) And finally, a husband should learn the great law of give-and-take which goes to make all happy marriages. He should remember his sacred vows to love, honour and cherish the partner he has chosen for life, be tolerant and understanding, and above all, sympathetic in sickness and trouble. Happy the woman who can say her husband fulfills even six or seven of these commandments!

Before our little conference concluded, one of my friends added, "Tell the young man from me, he can break nearly all those commandments and still be adored by his wife, if he never utters those abominable words... 'Why didn't you do so-and-so for me — YOU'VE NOTHING ELSE TO DO ALL DAY!'"

### Mandolin Orchestra

Troise and his Mandoliers is the name of an orchestra of about 16 players, most of them armed with mandolins of various sizes—graded just like a string orchestra is graded into violins, 'cellos, etc. Each of these players can, on occasion, use a banjo; these banjos, too, vary in size and, of course, in pitch. For background there are accordions and guitars. Obviously everything which this orchestra plays has to be specially scored. It will be heard in 1YA's "Music, Mirth and Melody" session on Monday, September 4.

### Comedy is Hardest

"You can take it from me—comedy is the hardest thing in the world to do, most especially and particularly, comedy on the air," says Eddie Cantor. "I ought to know. I never wanted to be anything but a funny boy. From my first days in the Ghetto in New York I wanted to make folks laugh. They gotta laugh. Laughter is medicine—it's tonic—it's food and drink—it's sunshine—it's health—it's life." Eddie Cantor will be heard from 3YA on Wednesday, September 4, at 10.24 p.m. in the "Music, Mirth and Melody" session.