



A Camera Travels With The N.Z. Broadcasting Unit

EARLY this year, the New Zealand Broadcasting Unit attached to the 2nd N.Z.E.F. in the Middle East made a two and a-half weeks journey from Egypt through Palestine, Syria, Transjordan and Iraq. N. R. Palmer (officer in charge), Norman Johnston (technician), and A. L. Curry (commentator), all made the trip, and the unit travelled complete with two drivers, batman, camping equipment, and rations. Contacts were made with New Zealanders on active service in that part of the East, and with Greek troops, who recorded messages to their countrymen in New Zealand. The material the unit gathered, which will be broadcast here in the near future, should provide a unique radio picture of New Zealanders on service in surroundings that are rich with history.

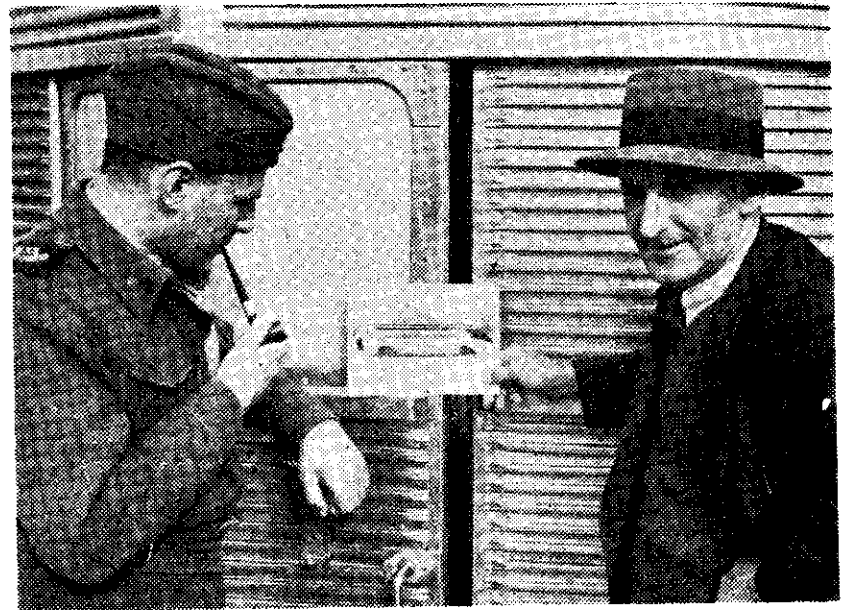
The route lay through Jerusalem, which, under dull winter skies, was not seen at its best; Haifa, where the unit stopped at a hotel on the slopes of Mount Carmel; Beirut, Damascus, Tiberias, across the Jordan, and through the rolling hills of Transjordan; and then along the oil pipe line into Iraq. At Damascus the unit met Norman Nairn, one of the New Zealand-born brothers who ran the famous desert bus service between Damascus and Baghdad. Mr. Nairn recorded an interview, and described the operations of his service which still carries diplomats, Army and Air Force officers, business men and Arab Sheikhs in air-conditioned comfort over ancient caravan trails.

The trip was not without its incidents. Beirut, a large, rambling city, is noted for its chaotic traffic regulations, and in a letter home, one member of the unit remarked that for fully 15 minutes the drivers were in doubt as to whether traffic kept to the right or left. In mountainous country not far from Beirut, the unit encountered frozen roads, a snow storm, and an army convoy coming from the opposite direction. Darkness was falling, and it was decided to bivouac for the night. The drivers slept in the cab of the truck, one of them finding his boots frozen to the floor next morning.

"Palestine is disappointing in winter," writes N. R. Palmer. "Syria is much more like New Zealand, with its wild hills and steep slopes, the pitched tops of the houses, the high mountains."



Left: The unit makes good speed in the Iraq desert. Above: Ice-bound after a night in the Lebanon mountains



Above: Norman Nairn explains his plans for a new coach to N. R. Palmer



Above: Breakfast on the Sinai desert. Left: The Nairn bus in Damascus about to depart for Baghdad