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## E.P.S. TALK

# CIVIL DEFENCE

[The first of a series of BBC talks for E.P.S. workers and others concerned in civil defence, presented from the main National Stations in New Zealand on Wednesday evenings at 6.30 p.m. This introductory talk was by Wing-Commander P. I. Hodson, C.B., Inspector-General, Ministry of Home Security, and was broadcast here on June 10.]

**I**N this series of talks on civil defence I am hoping to be able to pass on to you some of the practical experience we've gained in all different branches of civil defence during the raids which we've experienced in Great Britain. But I want first of all to tell you how vitally important it is to have a really well-trained and efficient civil defence service.

The object of air attack is to interfere with production and the life of the community, and if this object is to be defeated, the civil defence services must play a major part—they are complementary to the work of the fighting services. And remember that this work is not just passive defence. I like to think

of it as the civilians' counter-offensive, because that's what it really is. The enemy attacks the civil population and the civil population counter-attacks by organising itself to save every life it can, to reduce the suffering caused by the raids to a minimum and to see that the life of the community can be carried on, no matter how difficult the conditions may be. I assure you, the civil defence services in Great Britain played a major part in defeating the German attempts to deliver a knock-out blow during the Battle of Britain. So I hope you'll all feel that in helping with civil defence, wherever you may be, you are helping in a vital plan and you will make your contribution to our ultimate victory just as surely as if you were in the fighting services themselves.

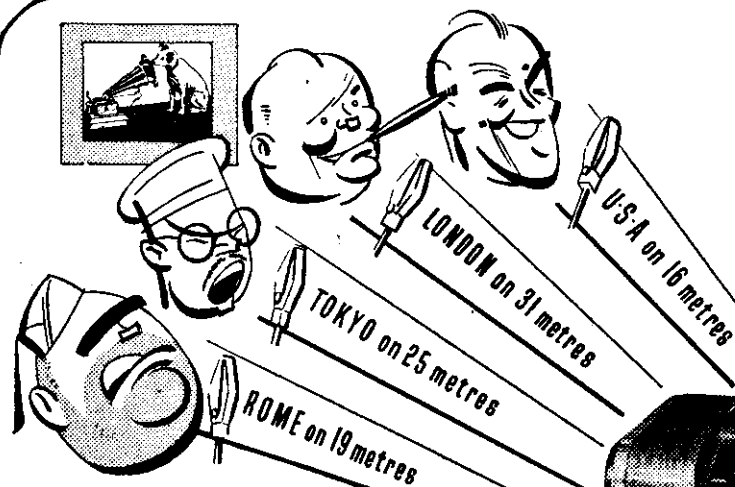
In order to give you a fair illustration of the numerous duties of the civil defence services I thought it would be a good thing to try and draw a little thumbnail sketch of the way the whole machine works during a raid. I'll assume that an air raid warning has been received and that the wardens are on patrol and all the services are at their depots and everything is ready to go into action. Presently, as the warden hears the fall of a bomb, he realises that it's probably in his district. He hears the explosion, and he at once goes as quickly as he can to the scene of the damage. He makes a quick survey, and decides that there are people trapped in buildings. He quickly writes out what we call an "express message," stating the situation briefly. This message is sent by the quickest possible means to the nearest fire brigade station. Another message is sent straight to the control depot. The messages are usually sent from the Warden's Post, and if two wardens have been patrolling together, while one is getting off the message the other is making a more detailed survey of the position and also seeing what immediate help he can give. As soon as the message is sent off, the other warden comes back and helps on the spot. One of the wardens must be on the look-out for the arrival of the services so that he can give them the information about the accident and warn them of any special danger. If the incident is hard to find, he should try and meet the services and guide them to it. As soon as the controller gets the message, he will know first of all that the fire service has been told, and he will then decide to send out at once a rescue party and a first-aid party. He will consult with the officers in charge of these two services, and they'll then decide from which depot or depots help should be sent, and the message is immediately telephoned stating the number of parties to be sent out and the location of the incident. As soon as the depot receives this message, the appropriate services are at once ordered out.

Having arrived on the scene, accompanied if possible, by an officer, they will themselves make a quick reconnaissance. This is most important, especially if rescue work is to be carried on. Time spent in short preliminary reconnaissance is never wasted. It often enables work to be carried out far quicker than just a blind rush at the job without any thought. If the officer in charge considers that further help still is required, he'll get a warden or the "incident officer" to send a message to control, and he'll then start his own teams to work in accordance with the plan he has formed.

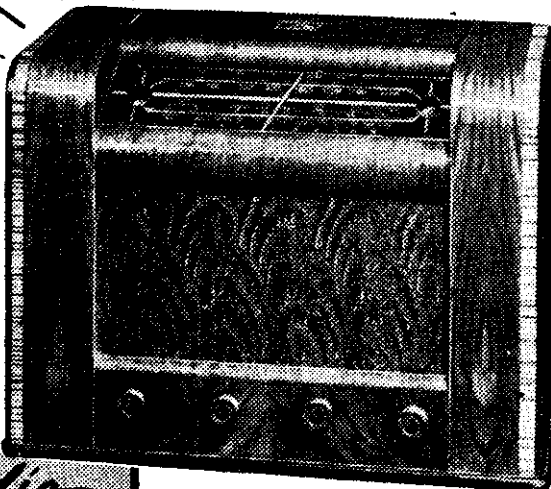
### The "Incident Officer"

I mentioned the "incident officer." At all big incidents we have a man whose particular job it is to co-ordinate the work of the various services. He is not attached to any of them, but he acts as a link with the control service. He sees that the site of the incident is kept clear, that vehicles are parked out of the way, that the various services don't get in each other's way, and that the necessary priority is given to that service whose work is most urgent. If there is a fire, the fire service will have to do their work before any other action

(Continued on next page)



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