

ELECTION REPORTS

BLUEPRINT FOR E-DAY

LISTENERS who follow the progress of the count on a nationwide scale on election night—November 13—should have final figures from most electorates about half an hour earlier than at past elections. This will be the effect of "E-Day" plans now being completed by the NZBS. The success of the big broadcast will again depend on the close co-operation which the Post Office and the Chief Electoral Officer have always given, but most final counts which in the past have been broadcast only after they have been received by telegram at the Chief Electoral Officer's room will this year be picked up by 10 monitors listening by radio or wide-band telephone line to local radio stations throughout the country. Final results from nine electorates which cannot conveniently be covered by monitoring will go through the Electoral Office.

The nerve centre for this system will be the lines room at 2YA—the sort of place *The Listener* described for readers a few weeks ago—in a story about the wide-band line system. Results will feed into the lines room not only on the wide-band lines from north and south but from the receiving station at Quartz Hill (Makara) and probably also from Mount Victoria, which will be tuned to local stations. All these incoming lines will be "patched" through to 10 special lines terminating at the Chief Post Office, Wellington. There each line will be monitored through headphones by an officer of the Broadcasting Service.

Gilbert Stringer, Administrative Assistant at NZBS Head Office, who with Cooper Marshall, also of Head Office, is organising his fifth election broadcast, explained to *The Listener* that three of the monitors will be listening on the wide-band line, which for that evening will be an ordinary communication line, as distinct from a programme line. "These three monitors will be taking final counts from 1YA, 3YA and 4YA," he said. "Station 1YA will monitor 1ZB (which will be broadcasting results from electorates in and near Auckland as well as from Northern Maori), 1XN (covering Hobson and Marsden), and 1XH (Hamilton, Raglan, Waikato and Waipa). Station 3YA will take results from 3YZ, covering Westland, on the wide-band and will monitor 3XC for Timaru and Waimate results and 3ZB for Selwyn and electorates in and near Christchurch. In the same way 4YA will take Wallace, Invercargill and Awarua counts from 4YZ on wide-band and will monitor 4ZB for results from in and near Dunedin as well as from Oamaru, Central Otago and Clutha."

Turning to the seven lines on which local stations will be monitored in Wellington, Mr. Stringer said that one of

these would, of course, pick up results from in and near Wellington as they were broadcast by 2ZB. This station would also cover Southern and Western Maori. Then, running from north to south, 1YZ would be covering Tauranga. Bay of Plenty and Rotorua, 2YZ would cover Napier, Hastings and Hawke's Bay, and would in turn monitor 2XG for Gisborne and Eastern Maori results, 2XP would cover New Plymouth and Stratford, 2XA would take Patea, Wanganui and Egmont, 2ZA would take in Rangitikei, Manawatu, Palmerston North and Pahiatua, and finally Nelson would be monitored for results from the Nelson electorate. "That leaves only Buller, Ashburton, Hurunui, Otaki, Wairarapa, Marlborough, Hauraki, Rodney and Wai-tomo," said Mr. Stringer, "and these results will come to us as in the past through the Chief Electoral Officer."

All the final results fed into Wellington in this way, and progress results received throughout the evening through the Chief Electoral Officer, will be broadcast by all YA stations, which will link at 7.15 p.m. and remain linked for the rest of the evening. Short summaries of results will be broadcast at 8.0 p.m., 8.30 p.m. and 9.0 p.m., and longer summaries half-hourly from 9.30 p.m. till 11.0 p.m. Speeches of thanks by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition will also be heard. These will be repeated after 12.30 p.m. next day.

Local results will be heard throughout the evening from YZ, X, and ZB stations and 2ZA, which will also broadcast speeches of thanks by local candidates. All these stations will link with YA stations for broadcast of national summaries, and YZ and probably X stations also will remain continuously in the link once they have completed broadcast of local results.

The Commercial stations will also join the link for the speeches of thanks by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. No commercial announcements or sponsored programmes will be broadcast by ZB stations after 7.0 p.m. or by X stations and 2ZA after 7.15 p.m. Ordinary programmes of music and entertainment will be heard from YC and YD stations, and the 9.0 p.m. weather forecast and news will be broadcast from a link of YC stations. Radio New Zealand will broadcast summaries throughout the evening till it goes off the air at the usual time.

On the day after the election, main National and Commercial stations will broadcast election surveys after the 7.15 a.m. weather forecast, at 8.10 a.m. and after the 12.30 p.m. weather forecast. A survey to be heard from main National stations at 9.0 a.m. will be repeated from Commercial stations at 10.30 a.m. The surveys at 8.10 a.m., 9.0 a.m. and 10.30 a.m. will be heard also from X stations.

When *The Listener* asked Cooper Marshall, who is concerned with much of the detail of election night organisation, if he could tell us simply how the big broadcast is run, he produced first a plan of the 1951 election organisation "Things will be more complicated this time with final results coming also from monitors," he said, "but in a

general way this shows you how it works. As you know our whole team is at the Chief Post Office here in Wellington, where we have a couple of rooms next to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer. This year we'll have an additional room a little bit further away for our monitors, and we'll need quite a team of runners to bring us the results from both these sources. The results come to us on little slips—to avoid confusion we'll probably have to use one of a different colour for our monitored finals."

Mr. Marshall explained that in the room where the results are collated the slip was attached to a "master" card which provided for the announcer such information as party affiliation and the number of polling places in an electorate. The return was quickly noted on a results sheet, which provided a safeguard against a progress result being broadcast after a final had already been given—a very important safeguard when two sources of information were being used. If the result was a final it was also noted by the Talks Section team which, under J. H. Hall, Supervisor of Talks, is responsible for compiling the national summaries.

"After that it goes to the announcers in the next room—they're under the control of the 2YA station manager, A. L. Curry," Mr. Marshall said. "And there we take care that it takes its proper place in the queue, and that it's pulled out if a later result turns up before it gets on the air."

★ Order Your Election "Listener" Now! ★



★ FOLLOWING the practice of previous election years, the November 5 issue of "The Listener" will contain an election chart—this year in a special colour supplement—on which listeners can record progress and final results as they come over the air on November 13. To avoid disappointment listeners are urged to reserve their copies early.

Campaign Addresses

ALL YA and YZ stations will broadcast at 8.0 p.m. next Monday and Tuesday—October 18 and 19—the opening speeches in the election campaign. The first, by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. S. G. Holland, will be relayed from Christchurch. The Leader of the Opposition, the Rt. Hon. W. Nash, will speak from Lower Hutt. These will be the only public addresses broadcast next week, but from 6.45 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, YA and YZ stations will broadcast the first of a series of studio addresses by candidates from the National and Labour Parties. The speakers will be:—Thursday, October 21: 6.45 p.m. the Minister of Defence, the Hon. T. L. Macdonald (National, Wallace); 7.0 p.m., Miss M. B. Howard (Labour, Sydenham), Friday, October 22: 6.45 p.m., the Hon. H. G. R. Mason (Labour, Waitakere); 7.0 p.m., the Minister of Health, the Hon. J. R. Marshall (National, Karori), Saturday, October 23: 6.45 p.m., Mr. D. M. Rae (National, Eden); 7.0 p.m., Mr. P. G. Connolly (Labour, Dunedin Central).

In all, eleven public addresses will be broadcast—five by National Party speakers, five by Labour Party speakers, and one by Mr. W. B. Owen, of the Social Credit Political League. Most of these after the first week will be heard only from 2YA and one other station.

(continued on next page)