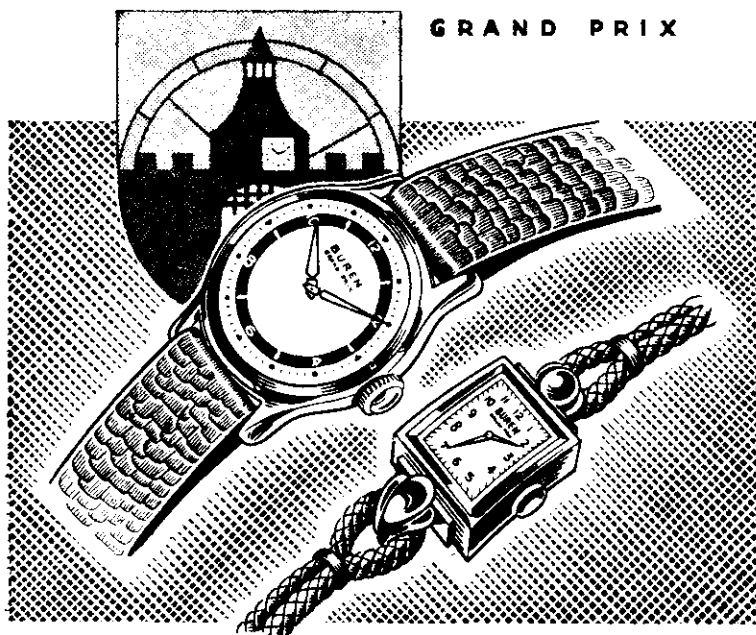


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DIMBLEBY REFUSES £10,000 CONTRACT

THE BBC has offered the largest personal contract in its history, £10,000 a year, to Richard Dimbleby—and the free-lance commentator has turned it down.

"I did not want to be bound down, much as I like the BBC and excellent as our friendship is," he explained. "It might mean I would have to do a programme I disliked. I want to be independent to choose the type of broadcasting I like."

As part of the BBC's bid to keep its biggest names under exclusive contract against the threat of commercial television, the corporation is believed to have offered Dimbleby a minimum of £7000 a year for the next five years and, when he refused this, increased it to £10,000. Of 15 stars similarly approached by the BBC, only three have signed contracts—Gilbert Harding (at £5000), Wilfred Pickles and John Ellison.

There is probably no voice in radio known to so many millions as Dimbleby's, not only throughout the Commonwealth, but also wherever there are listeners to the BBC's many English-language broadcasts. As wartime commentator and as narrator on each of the great occasions that transform the diverse people of the Commonwealth into one family, his voice has made glowing word pictures for millions of listeners.

Although he will continue his free-lance work with the BBC, that is by no

means his only interest. An additional reason for declining the gilt-edged contract was that "with my writing, my film company, and my newspaper business, I would not have the time." Puritan Films, of which he is managing director, is interested in commercial films in Europe and America. His newspaper business, recently reformed under the name of Dimbleby and Sons, runs three local newspapers. Richard Dimbleby and his mother own 99 per cent of the capital of £100,000.

—J. W. GOODWIN (London)



BBC photograph

RICHARD DIMBLEBY

PEACE FROM THE ATOM

THE other weekend members of the United States Joint Congressional Committee for Atomic Energy visited New Zealand. In the course of their Pacific, Asian and European tour the Joint Committee wanted to look at New Zealand's potentialities as a producer of heavy water, important in the production of atomic power.

The NZBS managed to detain the visitors long enough in their whirlwind progress to get them to record a discussion with Professor C. N. Watson-Munro, New Zealand's leading atomic physicist, who is shortly to take up the position of Chief of Research of the Australian Atomic Energy Commission. The peaceful uses of atomic energy was the subject of their discussion, under the chairmanship of Ulric del'H. Williams. Those members of the Joint Committee taking part were Senator John W. Bricker, leader of the party, and Representatives Thomas A. Jenkins, Carl Hinshaw and James E. Van Zandt.

Atomic energy, at this stage of its development, has two main peaceful uses—in radio-active isotopes and as a source of power. In agriculture, where disease-free varieties of crops have already been developed; in medicine, where small doses of radio-active matter

have enabled diseases to be located with almost miraculous precision and then cured; in ordinary medical routine, where doctors could now make use of atomic X-ray machines "the size of a quart can," which did not need to be plugged into a main; in all these ways the atom has been tamed.

The group discusses New Zealand's contribution to the supply of raw materials for manufacturing atomic power in industry and also United States plans for distributing atomic material and for disseminating information about its use.

The Peaceful Uses of Atomic Power will be broadcast by all YA stations at 9.15 p.m. on Monday, December 6.

Return of Johnny April

AFTER a break of a few months, Johnny April is back again. During his absence, he has made an extensive tour of Australia for the ABC.

Arthur E. Jones, author of the series, says the actual writing does not present any great difficulty. He has written so many of the stories now that the style is automatic. It is the plots that are difficult. A new locale and a fresh angle, together with a satisfactory dénouement, are not always so easy to come by. It is simple enough to get Johnny into trouble—it is getting him out again...

William Austin, who plays Johnny April, says he enjoys the character immensely. He has absorbed sufficient of his characteristics to forget he is playing a part. To him, Johnny is a real person. The many who feel they may know Johnny April personally are invited to meet him again at the Commercial stations at 7.45 p.m. on Fridays (first at 12B on December 10), and hear his "You know the way it is..."



Senator Bricker

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