



SEEN here at 3XC's audio racks are the Senior Technician, H. A. Craig (left), and the Station Manager, G. C. Wastney

aware of the expressions of intense concentration worn by the busy survivors on the other side of the microphone.

Improvisation is also a necessary skill for technicians. H. A. Craig, Senior Technician at 3XC, gesturing towards the present equipment and spares with the air of a man who knows the tools are sufficient for the job, recalled the first year of operation, when they had a transmitter but much of the studio equipment was improvised, when they slung wire between two seventy-five-foot wooden poles and called it a transmitting mast, and when they did a good twelve months' broadcasting without breakdown on only one power supply. "When the spares arrived we started to have the usual amount of trouble," Mr. Craig remarked. Talking of coverage, Mr. Craig, who was brought up at Makikihi, spoke of the days when the Californian stations KFI and KNX were received during daylight hours in his area.

"That doesn't happen now," he said, "because modern transmitting knowledge enables us to concentrate coverage on the areas to which we owe loyalty as a local station. It wouldn't do us much good if 3XC was received in California but not in Fairlie."

The country listener, and from further back than Fairlie, seemed to be a favourite at 3XC. Mr. Craig talked of them, Doris Kay, of the Women's Hour, said that Timaru was a country town in the true sense of the word, being dependent on farm produce, and that

isolated families could feel their part in things if they were catered for properly by a radio station, and Pat O'Dwyer, 3XC's advertising salesman, said he'd noticed not only advertisers but also rural schools take a great interest in the station. Mr. O'Dwyer, who came to 3XC from Wellington, found that in Timaru he was dealing directly with business men, rather than through advertising agencies. "They know their background," he said. "Timaru is solid, in a financial way. No high-pressure sales wanted. A quiet approach and the assurance of quality is needed. If they're satisfied, they'll come back and stay loyal." Yet Mr. O'Dwyer has found that his dealings with advertising agencies are increasing. "Companies who advertise nationally are realising that they must use the local station to complete their coverage," he said. "Their representatives, when they visit us, see the sort of two-way loyalty the station and the district share. They can see how we support local organisations like the Red Cross, the women's organisations, the A. and P. Shows, and the sports clubs of all kinds. Then they talk with local business people and find the support is returned. People keep us tuned." Mr. O'Dwyer smiled, looked out of the window at the town, and summed up in a sentence 3XC's worthy part in the local community. "People say 'our station,'" he said.

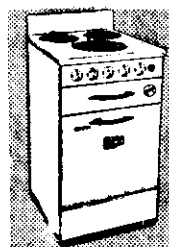
(An article on Station 2XN Nelson will appear in "The Listener" of May 18).

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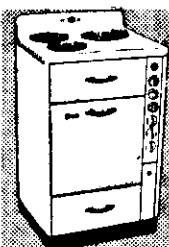
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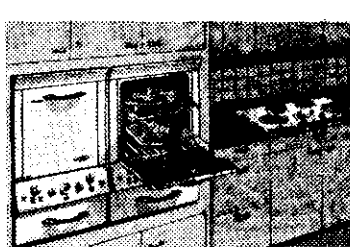
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