



THE idea of special programmes for the younger generation is probably as old as radio itself, but where 4YA may set something of a local precedent with its new session *Young Opinion* is in the fact that this is intended to provide interesting spoken material for teen-agers, and to continue the listening habits developed in primary and early secondary school.

The teen-agers, as a group, have in recent years come to be regarded in most countries as something more than children "at that awkward age." Educationists have given them increasing attention, and the provision of outlets for their physical energies and social impulses is a problem that has been tackled by a multitude of organisations all over the world. The international Boy Scout movement, the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., the popular English Youth Hostel Association—organisations such as these are concerned with improving the outlook and developing the capabilities of future citizens. The degree of their effectiveness can perhaps be measured against the harm done by the Hitler Youth Movement and other oppositely directed organisations. But all these movements indicate that the teen-agers have come into their own; their habits, tastes and ideas are being considered seriously by their elders and the Victorian opinion that children "should be seen and not heard" is in the discard.

A Pressure Group in the U.S.

American teen-agers were emancipated from silence largely through their own efforts, and U.S. sociologists and others have pointed out that the second generation of immigrant families often led the way in this respect. These children, brought up as Americans and without the attachment to an "old country" and its customs which older immigrants felt, were looked upon with awe by their parents who could not understand the new ways—and sometimes not even

THE latest addition to 4YA's regular weekly programmes is "*Young Opinion*," a special session for young people between the ages of 14 and 18, and due for its first broadcast at 7.15 p.m. on Monday, May 19. Both outside authorities and teen-agers themselves will take part in this half-hour Monday night programme.

the language—and did not dare to restrict the children in their advance to what was apparently "the American way of life."

The teen-agers, because they had tastes and activities peculiar to themselves, were quickly recognised and cajoled by consumer-conscious big business. Today, U.S. fashion magazines cater to the teen-agers in part, as do engineering and many other special magazines, while a few periodicals are aimed exclusively at this age group. The teen-age co-eds hold a priority in this respect and learn to wear the national pants at an early age. Tin Pan Alley knows which side its discs are silver-plated on and juvenile taste is usually the deciding factor dictating modern popular musical styling. Book publishers, too, have a healthy respect for the teen-agers' likes and dislikes, and even the newspapers know better than to disregard their buying power.

Citizens Rather Than Consumers

In Canada the situation is not so extreme and in England even less noticeable. In New Zealand the general attitude towards these young people is that they are future citizens, rather than prospective buyers. In all the English-speaking countries, however—America included—the most important work for teen-agers is educational in one way or another, and outside of the schools many groups have undertaken the training of young people in an attempt to fit them better for the place in society, and for the responsibilities, which they will assume when they come of age. The British Youth Hostel Association,

copied by many other countries, gives young people the opportunity to travel at home and abroad, to widen their outlook and through meeting young people of other countries, understand their attitudes better. The 4-H Clubs of America bring together young people of the rural areas and give them greater interest in farm life, providing the social entertainments for which the teen-agers would otherwise be attracted to the city, attempting to make better Americans of them, and at the same time to stem the flood of people pouring into the industrial centres.

These, and similar organisations, work with particular groups and more or less regular memberships, but a large part of teen-age training and development is directed at young people in the mass. This requires, of course, communication on a wide front. In the U.S., movies and television have made little attempt to get away from the box-office-

success standard (critics claim that American movies are directed towards teen-age mentality audiences), though radio has been a little more forward in stimulating worthwhile teen-age interests and activities. United States radio stations and networks provide some material for school hours, but little else, perhaps for the simple reason that the American teen-ager rarely uses the radio for anything more than a background effect to other activi-

ties, will rarely be interested in much more than music or comedy shows, and is probably of the opinion that the schooling during the day is time enough for seriousness. The disc-jockeys, then, are the favourite commentators of the twelve-to-twenty Americans.

In Britain, however, the BBC has produced a number of programmes especially designed for listeners in their teens, and now the NZBS has a strong interest in the experimental programme soon to begin at 4YA.

The First Broadcast

The first episode of this weekly half-hour session will be heard at 7.15 p.m. on Monday, May 19, and will consist of three topics—"Chocks Away," a talk on flying by an instructor, "Hams," a discussion on amateur radio operators, and "Films of the Month," to be discussed by two speakers. *Young Opinion* is to be compered by Bob Robertson, Assistant Lecturer in English at the University of Otago. Mr. Robertson has a fairly clear idea of what he hopes *Young Opinion* will develop into—"a place where young people can hear about and discuss the subjects that interest them most." Hobbies, arts, careers and other topics are scheduled for treatment on this programme, some of them as regular features and others as special subjects. Reviews will in general be handled by the young people themselves who will also make up the panels called in to discuss various subjects from time to time. Experts will handle topics like photography, flying, radio work, acting and other spare-time interests. The range of youth's interests being what it is, the material available to those planning *Young Opinion* is practically limitless, and such diverse topics as deer-stalking, astronomy, jazz, etiquette, modelling, cricket, the "art of swotting," and many others are already included in tentative long-range plans for this feature.

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pere the new session for
young people from 4YA

