

GREATEST BROADCAST IN BBC HISTORY

THE Coronation broadcast on June 2 will be the biggest operation in the history of the BBC. In Westminster Abbey and on the processional routes will be nearly 100 commentary positions, from which descriptions will be given in 41 languages. Two hundred microphones will be connected to temporary control rooms, two of them—at Trafalgar Square and on the Colonial Office site opposite Westminster Abbey—larger than any permanent control room within the BBC.

From 9.15 on the morning of June 2 (9.15 p.m. in New Zealand) there will be seven hours of continuous broadcasting. Descriptions will be given of the scene along the route between Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey, the Coronation Service, and the return procession.

The first commentator to be heard will be Wynford Vaughan Thomas, who will survey the scene outside the Palace. Frank Gillard, stationed on the Middlesex Guildhall overlooking the specially built annexe to Westminster Abbey, will then speak of what he sees while the crowds await the Royal processions.

At this point the broadcast is to be taken up inside Buckingham Palace. Jean Metcalfe will speak from a room which looks on to the Inner Quadrangle, where the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh enter the State Coach. Soon after 9.25, Wynford Vaughan Thomas will report the departure of the Royal procession. From Middlesex Guildhall, Frank Gillard will then briefly describe the arrival of the procession of the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret.

The story will be taken up by Raymond Baxter as the Queen's State Coach passes through Trafalgar Square. The procession moves along the Embankment of the Thames, where Rex Alston will take over while 33,000 London school children greet their Queen. The scene then moves to Westminster Abbey. Tom Fleming will be heard at 10.0 a.m. (GMT) as the coach approaches the annexe.

Inside the Abbey, Howard Marshall will be stationed in the Triforium, high up beyond the Altar. From there he will describe the scene below him and will give listeners an outline of the solemn service shortly to be heard. Back at the annexe, Audrey Russell and Ted Briggs will speak of the Regalia, laid out in front of them in the hall. They will also cover the assembly of various processions as they move into the Abbey.

No commentary will be given during the service, but John Snagge—from the Triforium—will guide listeners through its historic phases. The service starts at 10.15 and reaches its climax, the Crowning, at 11.30. It is expected to end at 12.45.

From then onwards the commentators will describe the procession from the Abbey, the waiting crowds along the route, the passing of the Royal coach at different points, and finally the entry of the coach into the forecourt of Buckingham Palace as the Royal Air Force flies over in salute.

(Biographical details of men and women who are to make the Coronation broadcast will be given in our issue of May 29 in *Open Microphone*).

Pre-Coronation Programmes

Westminster Abbey, an hour-long BBC programme which recalls how the spirit of the Abbey has shone over Britain and the British from the far-off days when Christianity first came to the river bank where Westminster now

stands, will be heard from all YA and YZ stations before the end of May.

Also to be heard from main National stations this month is **BBC Festival Concert**, a programme of music connected either with past Coronations or with London. In it Sir Adrian Boult conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Chorus, and Keith Jewell is at the organ. The programme includes two items which will be used at next month's Coronation—Parry's anthem, *I Was Glad*, which was first heard at the Coronation of Edward VII, and the anthem, *Zadok the Priest*, one of four that Handel composed for the Coronation of George II.

Westminster Abbey: 3YZ, May 23; 1YZ, 2YZ, 4YZ, May 24; 1YC, 2YA, 3YC, May 30; 3YA, 4YA, May 31.

Festival Concert: 4YZ, May 19; 3YZ, May 20; 2YZ, May 21; 1YZ, May 22; 1YC, May 27; 2YC, 3YC, May 28; 4YC, May 29.

★ **THESE PLANS**, prepared from material made available by the BBC, show Westminster Abbey as it will be arranged for the Coronation Service. The scene in the Theatre of the Abbey, shown in the general plan below and in greater detail at right, will be described by BBC commentators stationed high in the Triforium, but no commentary will be given during the service. The positions—at the moment of the Crowning—of those directly taking part in the service, and of the symbolic elements of the regalia, are indicated in the plan at right. The key is as follows:

(1) The Queen, (2) Duke of Edinburgh, (3) Duke of Gloucester, (4) Duke of Kent, (5) Archbishop of Canterbury, (6) Archbishop of York and Bishop's Assistant, (7) Bishop of Durham, (8) Bishop of Bath and Wells, (9) Dean of Westminster, (10) Lord Great Chamberlain, (11) Lord Chamberlain, (12) Sword of State, (13) Lord High Constable, (14) Earl Marshal, (15) Lord High Chancellor, (16) Lord Privy Seal, (17) Lords Bearers of the Regalia, (18) Curtana, Sword of Mercy, (19) Sword of Spiritual Justice, (20) Sword of Temporal Justice, (21) Mistress of the Robes, (22) Maids of Honour, (23) Garter King of Arms, (24) Black Rod, (25) Lord Mayor of London, (26) Heralds, (27) Lyon King of Arms (Scotland), (28) Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, (29) Clarenceux King of Arms.

