

Pacific Service Organiser

"WE receive a good number of letters from shortwave listeners in New Zealand and Australia commenting on programmes transmitted in the Pacific Service," said J. A. Terraine, Programme Organiser for the Pacific and South African Services of the BBC, who was in Wellington recently in the course of a quick visit to the countries his programmes are directed at. "And we're delighted to have these letters, which are of considerable value to us as a guide in programme building, and also as a check on the quality of transmission at a particular time."

Mr. Terraine, who took over his present position from George Looker at the beginning of the year, was here to find out as much as he could about his audience, actual and potential. Although the Pacific Service had a number of direct shortwave listeners, he said, its main object was to transmit programmes which would be rebroadcast by the local broadcasting systems of Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and other Pacific Islands. It was through the Pacific Service that we in New Zealand got Winston McCarthy's All Black summaries and newsletters, he said, and the accounts of English eye-witnesses. Other programmes transmitted in the one hour daily (0600 to 0700 G.M.T.) which was the Pacific Service's total transmission

time, included *Radio Newsreel*, which was regularly rebroadcast by the NZBS in a National Link following the News, and Sam Pollock's weekly letter *News from Home*.

Some material produced by the Pacific Service was not broadcast at all by shortwave, he said. Instead it was recorded and posted out airmail to this part of the world by the Transcription Service, and used by the local networks at their own convenience. Such programmes included *This Is Britain*, which he thought was easily the most popular of the Pacific Service's productions. It was taken regularly by both the ABC and the Macquarie Network in Australia. It was a 15-minute programme narrated by Richard Dimpleby and produced by Noreen Purdon, and contained items about contemporary British life. Programmes of this kind were designed to bridge the gap between the various shortwave services and the Transcription Service, which normally handled programmes from the BBC Home Services.

Programmes with a strong Australian bias which the Pacific Service sent out included *Land and Livestock*, a weekly newsletter about farming in Britain, and other parts of the world, and *London Forum*, a weekly discussion programme on topical subjects, often political. Top-



J. A. TERRAINE

N.P.S. photograph

line speakers were used in *London Forum*, and sometimes the programme was extended into a three-way discussion between speakers in London, Paris and New York. Australia also received a

special *Sporting News* letter every week.

The major Pacific Island programme included in the Service was *Calling the Islands*, which was usually "by or about people from Fiji." Mr. Terraine said he was surprised to discover that this programme was picked up and rebroadcast by Radio New Zealand, which beams its transmissions in the same direction.

Mr. Terraine said that the Pacific Service was only a small part of the BBC's enormous shortwave organisation, which broadcasts daily in over 40 languages, giving a round-the-clock service to listeners in practically every part of the world. The Pacific Service was designed to supplement the General Overseas Service, and often would repeat programmes which the G.O.S. had already broadcast, thus providing "a kind of backing-up operation" to give listeners improved transmission or a chance to hear again programmes of particular importance.



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