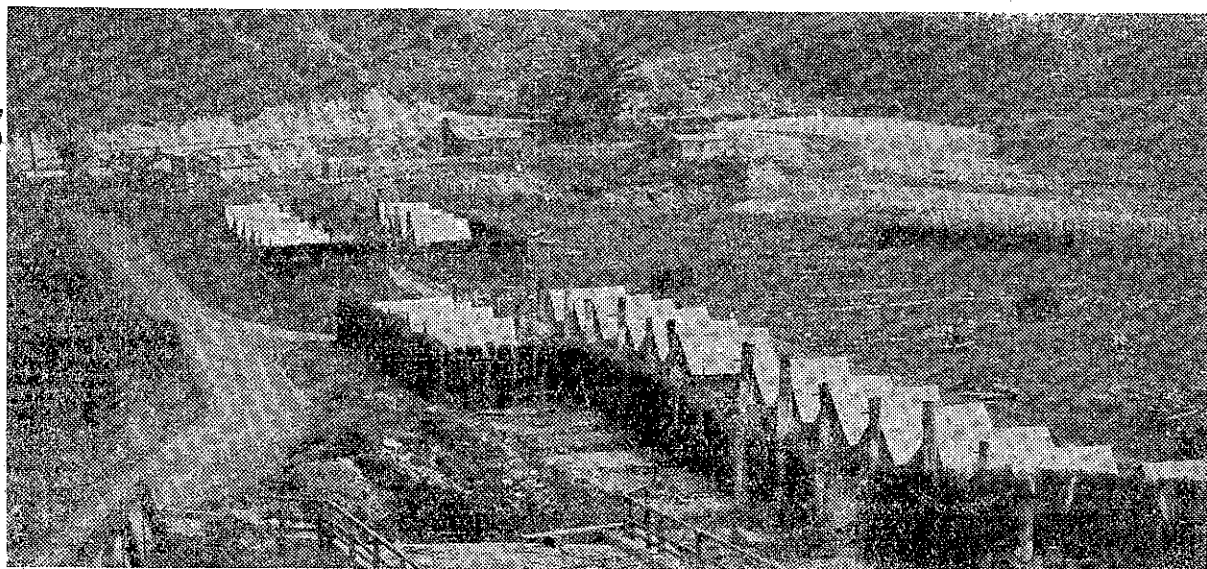


WHAT BROADCASTING MEANS TO US

Gordon Hutter Gets the Palm From Relief Camp Listeners



From a relief camp similar to the one pictured above comes this short article on what broadcasting means to workers in an isolated camp. "The Radio Record" is gathering opinions on broadcasting from people in all walks of life—doctors, lawyers, relief workers, teachers, tradesmen—and these are now being published regularly.

WHAT broadcasting means to us? Well, it's a big question when it comes to ascertaining the opinions of 45 men in a relief camp such as this one. But the general opinion in the camp is that radio means a lessening of the isolation which is natural in the circumstances; more so in view of the lack of amusements in the surrounding districts. The nearest town is 27 miles away. When we have to fall back on our own efforts to amuse ourselves radio naturally helps relieve the tedium considerably.

Sporting broadcasts draw a full house. By general acclaim Gordon Hutter gets the palm for his snappy commentaries on racing and wrestling. The football commentation and his racing

notes from 2YA run a close second. Richard Tauber, Richard Crooks, Gladys Moncrieff and Gracie Fields have the biggest appeal when it comes to vocal numbers. Their repertoires cater for everyone's taste. Except for John McCormack and the more hackneyed classical airs, no one cares for high-brow music.

Men who have to be ready at 7.15 for work (which includes travelling $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles each way) prefer to come home and hear music with an obvious melody to it. They are too tired to appreciate chromatic subtleties. The younger element prefer the latest hits. That is why we always tune-in when the stations are testing, you hear numbers that you might not hear in the regular programmes until much later.

ON the main charge, that "to-day little or no discussion of controversial subjects is heard over the British air," that under the British system "radio becomes one of two things, an instrument of Government propaganda or an utterly colourless and wasteful means of mass communication," compressed into Mr. Winston Churchill's not being allowed to talk on India, the B.B.C. brings forward its past discussions of Karl Marx, Fascism, and Imperialism, debates on drink, betting, blood-sports, the press, and public school education, and congratulates itself that it allowed the Japanese and Chinese representatives

to talk at the height of the controversy over the Manchurian question; also Government and Opposition speakers had been allowed to select their own subjects and say what they pleased during 1933. Censorship "is concerned solely with ensuring fair play by the elimination of personal prejudice and offence or misrepresentation of opposed points of view in talks put forward as impartial." On this point it would be interesting to hear the views of the English working man, who quite recently managed to blurt out, before the B.B.C. cut him off, that his talk had been so cut about that he was sending a complete script to the papers.

THE B.B.C. has been putting on a series of talks by unemployed men; how they make a few shillings a day, and what it's like in unemployed shelters, and how it feels to be a beggar, and the merits of pavement-art against street singing as a means of livelihood. It is now disclosed that the talks are not prepared by the men themselves: but the men are interviewed by a B.B.C. official, just as though he were talking to them casually. There is a live microphone in the room and the conversation is taken down by stenographers in another room. This is done so that the men may not become self-conscious.