

SIR JOHN REITH told the Government plainly that, unless extra finance was forthcoming, the BBC would be forced to emulate the amazingly popular advertising stations, Radio Luxembourg and Radio Normandie, and "go commercial."

He pointed out, too, that radio propaganda to the Empire was as much a part of the rearmament programme as the building of battleships and the training of soldiers.

IN its struggle to maintain its radio service on the same high plane as the BBC, South Africa is discovering that—in broadcasting, anyway—you can't make one pound do the work of two. Until quite recently the African service was privately owned. Sir John Reith was invited to pay a visit and report on a suitable national service for the Union. He drew up a 20,000-word report suggesting a broadcasting system modelled on the lines of the BBC.

But the South African National Broadcasting Service has no dictatorial Reith to guide it. It has all the lofty ideals and proud

tralia can give its listeners a better programme than is broadcast on an average day from Capetown or Durban.

South Africans, with the exception of the wouser element that one finds anywhere, are as jolly and good-hearted as Australians and New Zealanders, but their radio programmes reflect none of the spontaneity of their splendid country.

HOW much better, in my opinion, if they had left Sir John Reith in his sanctum at Broadcasting House, London,

by
Trevor Lane

and worked out a radio service for themselves, a service suited to the temperament and environment of the people.

Another tremendous problem in South African radio is the use of both English and Afri-

most of them do—he can pick up the majority of the European broadcasts perfectly.

WHEN I was in South Africa a few months ago there was a young American there whose arrival was breaking as much space in the newspapers as a Royal visit.

His name?

Larry Adler, wizard of the mouth-organ!

He played his little instrument in every big town in the Union and was a tremendous success everywhere.

AND then, lured by something fat in the way of contracts from the Australian entrepreneur, Frank Neil, and the Australian Broadcasting Commission, Larry Adler journeyed on to Sydney and is now something of a minor riot there.

Said Sir Benjamin Fuller, "Even on the night of the big storm last week the Sydney Tivoli was packed, thanks to the drawing power of Larry Adler."

maxims of the British corporation, but it has not the money, the inspiration or the talent to advance them.

DURING my stay in Africa I listened in daily to the radio stations in Capetown, Durban and Johannesburg and I came to the conclusion that South African broadcasting today is where Australian broadcasting was eight or nine years ago. I could not get rid of the impression that I was listening to programmes that had been hurriedly improvised because the big stars of the evening had failed to turn up.

There is a lack of cohesion and finish about the programmes. Interesting items are often buried under a mass of junk.

Broadcasting in Africa is like a newspaper which has international news, social gossip, gardening notes and letters to the editor heaped willy-nilly on one page.

THE announcers take themselves as seriously as important BBC officials, which might be forgiven if the programmes came within coo-ee of the London broadcasts. But they don't—in fact, any little country station in Aus-

kaans. Every station in the Union makes its announcements in both languages, and a good deal of time is necessarily taken up in the process. In Capetown there are two broadcasting stations, both transmitting the same programme



★ Amazing young American who got bigger headlines in South African newspapers than visiting Royalty... Larry Adler. He may come to New Zealand soon.

except that the announcements from one are in English and from the other in Afrikaans.

But the South African listener, fully aware that his country's programmes are not world-beaters, has one consolation. If he owns a shortwave set—and

NOW the suggestion is that Adler should come on to New Zealand provided broadcasts as well as stage appearances can be arranged. Personally mouth-organ experts leave me rather cold, but music dealers say that Larry Adler's records sell like hot cakes.

It would be interesting to have him here in the flesh—we all know his broadcast records well. Perhaps Frank Neil and the broadcasting people here will be able to come to some arrangement?

IT IS possible—you'll be sorry to hear—that the wonderful Covent Garden Russian Ballet Company, now playing to colossal business at the Sydney Theatre Royal, may not come to New Zealand after all. The cost of maintaining this company is terrific and there have to be thousands of one-guinea seats sold every week to cover the expenses.

THE much-discussed American play, "The Women," which was condemned by an Australian paper as "degrading, immoral, salacious," is now in its tenth week in Melbourne and is continuing to prove the most popular attraction in the Victorian



★ There was one thing attractive Lady Louis Mountbatten, one of the world's richest women, liked about New Zealand.

★ you, on behalf of common sense and humanity, draw attention to a book circulating in New Zealand called 'Insanity Fair'? "To my mind this is the best exposure of how wars, simplicity (of English politicians) and sacrifice of human lives are juggled. I consider that if everybody in the present-day crazy world were allowed to read this classic, wars would not occur. If you have read this book, what do you think?"

capital. There are forty women in the east and not one man!

The other American show in Melbourne, "I Married an Angel," isn't attracting as much business as "The Women," but it is doing quite nicely.

A LETTER the other day from a man in Nelson asking if I would make a mention of Douglas Read's book, "Insanity Fair." He writes: "Could

YES, I have read Douglas Read's book—I read it on the long sea voyage from England to the Cape—and I, too, consider it a fine piece of anti-war propaganda. Read knows his Europe and he knows the peccadilloes of dictators and their kind.

If you have a chance get hold of "Insanity Fair"—it's a yarn to make you think... depressing, maybe, but we've got to cease being afraid of the truth.

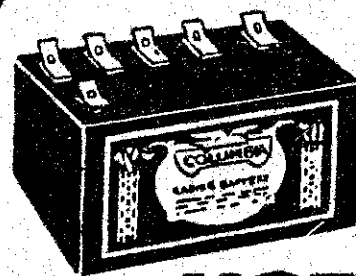
Which brings to mind a paragraph in a letter from an English friend lying on my desk this morning. It was written during the height of the Jewish pogroms: "Well, I hope Chamberlain feels proud of his friend Hitler now! What brutality and robbery! What on earth can be done?"

I think you'll agree that there is a steady awakening of the people themselves to the dangers of leaving world affairs to a handful of poli-

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DEPENDABILITY

and

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DRY BATTERIES