

WHERE'S OUR DANCE MUSIC?



THE service rendered to the community by the main broadcasting stations throughout the disaster has certainly been most outstanding—indeed, their work has impressed the amazing marvel of radio upon the consciousness of the community in an extraordinary fashion. In thousands of homes people have remained huddled round the loudspeaker almost continuously since the big smash. On the first night of the disaster the main stations remained in operation until midnight, to resume again on Wednesday at 10 o'clock. Since then ordinary hours have been prolonged in order to cover all phases of the disaster.

Probably the most human phase of the radio work has been that relating to the tracing of missing people, enabling husband to resume contact with wife, father with children, and friend with friend. It has proved a perfect means of communication between all interest associated in the relief work. Through receivers in all quarters and telephonic advice to the station of information sought, it became an amazing clearing-house for information—a village green on an immense scale.

Announcements from official bodies were all made immediately from 2YA, and that fact marvellously facilitated all organisation associated with rescue and rehabilitation. The Railways, the Post and Telegraph Department, the Red Cross, the collecting agencies centring upon the Wellington Hall, the Salvation Army, the Transport Department, the Y.M.C.A., all long-distance relief works, the St. John Ambulance, the Automobile Association, and last but not least, the general public, all made use of station 2YA as a common centre for voicing needs of all kinds. The response proved amazingly efficient. Within a few hours of needs being made known, they would be met—not in one field alone, but in substantially all.

One needed to be actually in the station to realise the intimate service rendered in tracing people and re-establishing contacts. An enquiry would be broadcast for news of so-and-so. Had anyone seen them since the earthquake? Where were they? Time after time the response was given by telephone immediately. "Yes, I saw them in the street two hours after the shake. They were all right then." And thus news would be broadcast. Scores and scores of incidents of this nature have been experienced.

The strain of these enquiries heavily taxed telephone facilities of 2YA. The staff remained on duty without question of hours, and credit is definitely due to them for their work in this field. It is impossible to say just how much assistance broadcasting rendered in relieving the distress of ignorance as to the fate of loved ones and friends. Without radio their fate would have become known only at the expense of much time and prolonged agony.

But it is the tradition of radio that not everyone can be pleased. Even in this time that remained true. At 10.30 on Saturday night, while a list of saved and other enquiries was being given, Br-br-r went the telephone. The

Service Rendered by YA Stations Following Earthquake is Criticised

operator responded. "Is that 2YA?" "Yes." "Well, where's our dance music? How much longer have we got to listen to these wretched lists!" A fact! Not an isolated case either. Another enquirer demanded after the fate of the inmates in the Old Men's Home had been recounted, "Can't you cut out this old-age pension stuff, and get on to some music?"

Against that picture put that of a bent old man who hobbled slowly into the studio on the arm of a friend's wife, to thank the station for vital news of his son. Ten days ago he had been hale, hearty and vigorous; now he was infirm and shaking with nerves. No wonder, for slowly he told the fate of friends; one in particular; a well established business man with flourishing shops in both Napier and Hastings on Tuesday morning. After the quake his premises shattered and

ruined. He dashed to his home—to find his wife dead under a concrete wall.

Another case: a young man in a sound business on Tuesday with a capital of £8,000 and a steady income, apparently established for life. On Wednesday still alive, with half a crown in his pocket and nothing else—business and home wrecked and baby dead.

Still the telephone rings. "Where's our band music?"

Trade Support.

IN the early stages of the earthquake disaster the suggestion was made by Messrs. Philips Lamps to the Red Cross Society that they should use the Company's short-wave station for the broadcasting of information to the people in Napier and Hastings. The Red Cross Society adopted this sug-

gestion, but upon investigation it was found that, owing to the electrical power in the towns mentioned being cut off, no sets were in operation there.

In order to put the central points in the affected areas in direct touch with the radio service, the trade immediately donated a number of radio sets and the necessary equipment for installation in prominent places in both Napier and Hastings, so that people in the camps there should derive all the benefit possible from information being broadcast from Wellington in connection with the earthquake disaster. Donations in sets and accessories were made by the following dealers, to whom the thanks of all concerned are due:—

Philips Lamps (N.Z.) Ltd., Hope Gibbons Buildings; Amalgamated Wireless (A'asia) Ltd., Willis Street; L. M. Silver & Co. Ltd., 30-32 Tory Street; Thos. Ballinger & Co. Ltd., 58-62 Victoria Street; John Chambers & Son Ltd., cr. Cable Street and Jervois Quay; J. A. Smyth, Victoria Street; F. J. W. Fear & Co., 63 Willis Street; International Radio Co. Ltd., Blair Street; Cory-Wright & Salmon, 110 Featherston Street; Turnbull & Jones Ltd., Blair Street; T. H. Duncan, cr. Taranaki and Wakefield Streets.

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