

What is Wanted of New Zealand Broadcasting "A" Service for All Districts

LISTENERS are naturally curious about the Government's proposals in respect to broadcasting. It was in October last that the Hon. J. B. Donald, Postmaster-General, announced that it was the Government's intention not to renew the charter granted to the Radio Broadcasting Company, which expires at the end of this year. The Government had then no plans made and, so far as is known, Cabinet has not yet definitely formulated any. Speaking in the House, Mr. Donald stated that it was the intention of the Government to take over the technical side of broadcasting.

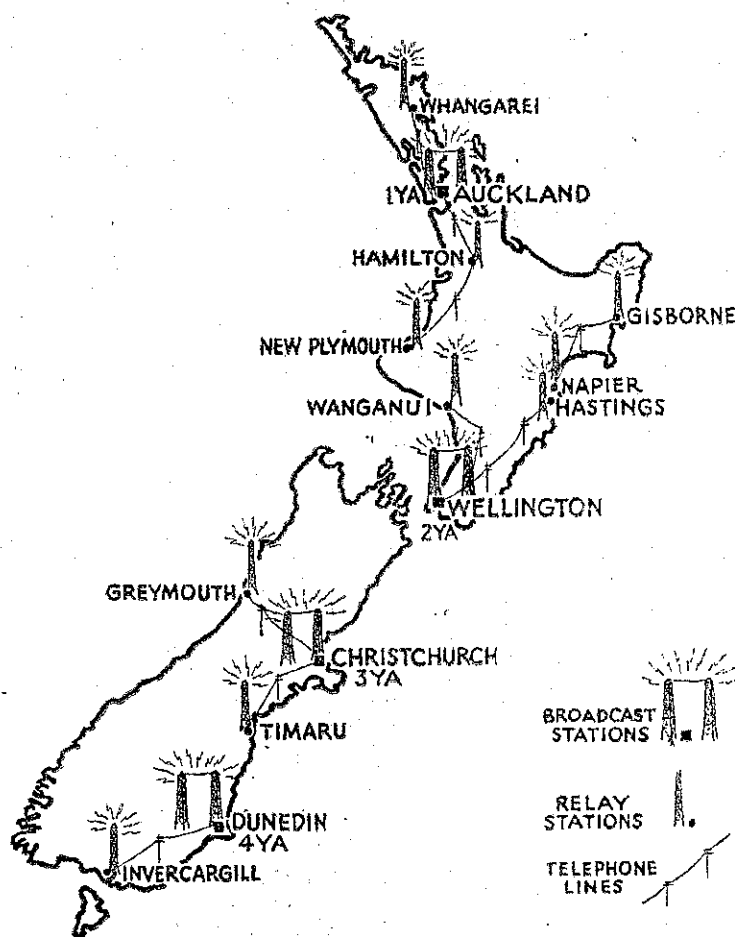
The Minister made it clear that, although the actual form of control of broadcasting had not been settled, it would not be responsible for the supply of programmes. Whether or not the form of control followed in Britain, or that followed in Australia would be adopted had not been decided upon and, as promised by the Minister, the matter will first be referred to Parliament before any action is taken. Parliament is to meet on June 25, and during the ensuing session the fate of broadcasting in New Zealand will be considered.

In outlining the Government's intentions in regard to the technical side, Mr. Donald put forward a scheme for the erection of subsidiary stations in the principal provincial centres. This scheme, it is worth while remarking, is much the same as that placed before the Government some two and a half years ago by the Broadcasting Company and shelved by Mr. Donald.

The scheme proposed by the Broadcasting Company has been elaborated upon, the Government's intentions, as announced by Mr. Donald, being to increase the power of 1YA, 3YA and 4YA and to erect 500-watt rebroadcasting stations at Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, Whangarei, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Hamilton, Timaru, Invercargill and Greymouth.

Since making the above pronouncement, the financial depression, augmented by the Hawke's Bay earthquake disaster, caused the Hon. Donald, in a further statement to say that his previously announced scheme would have to be modified. Listeners will, therefore, be keenly awaiting the proposals which will be finally laid before Parliament.

The Broadcasting Company's scheme submitted to the Government two and a half years ago for a series of relay stations located in the chief provincial towns of New Zealand, showed that the company



was fully alive to the technical requirements of a service. It realised the limitations of the present stations so far as giving A-grade reception outside the four main cities was concerned. Beyond a limited range of the station, perfect reception cannot be guaranteed, because of the effect of atmospheric conditions. The Broadcasting Company, by its network of relay stations, proposed to bring perfect reception within the range of the great majority of the people and thus do all in its power to enable listeners to enjoy radio to the fullest extent.

There are, of course, beyond the control of any broadcasting company, obstacles in the way of faithful reproduction which cannot be ignored. Many factors have to be taken into consideration. Everything does not depend upon the power and proximity of the stations and the quality of the transmission. The efficiency of the receiving sets—and there is a vast variety in use—plays a big part, and there are other sources of interference besides static which have to be taken into account.

Listeners are always prone to blame the broadcasting station for vagaries in reception, particularly if reception from a distant station happens to be good at the time. They do not realise the part that atmospheric conditions play in radio broadcasting. For instance, 2YA is often criticised by listeners who enjoy good reception in the time and bad reception at night. They invariably blame 2YA,

little realising that the transmission is identically the same day and night, and that it is the night atmospheric conditions which affect reception.

Within a certain range of a station, day and night conditions make no difference, and the Broadcasting Company's scheme of relay stations throughout New Zealand was intended to provide the great majority of the public with stations within such range that A-grade reception, day or night, could be guaranteed. There is no doubt that some such scheme is required in New Zealand (Contd. on p. 2).

COMPANY'S PLAN for RELAY STATIONS OUTLINED