

the taxpayers' burden. Citizens generally will therefore demur at any proposal that the State should enter the radio field, concluding quite justly that the Government has more than enough problems on hand without adding to them gratuitously.

So far as the listeners have expressed themselves, they also appear to dislike any proposal for Government management. They are especially apprehensive of the effect of officialdom's dead hand on a department calling for initiative, variety and freshness of outlook. Also departmental conservatism and red tape would be repressive partners in a business that must constantly be adjusting itself to the new developments and inventions of a rapidly advancing and expanding science. The difficulty is to keep in step so far as limited means will allow, and that calls for management that is at once enlightened and economical.

The new scheme should also remove the two main complaints directed by listeners against the present system. The first, dissatisfaction with programmes, is common to all broadcasting—even to that under the aegis of the superlative British Broadcasting Corporation. The fact is it is hard to please everybody. It takes all kinds of people to make a world and tastes in entertainment are just as various. In a small country like New Zealand the difficulty is accentuated by the necessarily limited supply of talent. However, anything is capable of improvement and under the new scheme listeners will have the opportunity through their representatives to make innovations or to better existing features. Experience may also convince them of the difficulties of reaching the ideal and demonstrate that, after all, a great deal has been accomplished in the past with the available material.

Another grievance pertains to receivers located outside the effective service range of broadcasting stations and hence subjected to interference. A number of populous centres suffer under this handicap, involving a large part of the Dominion. Here again the new scheme would provide the remedy by completing a relay system involving the immediate provision of stations in eleven subsidiary centres. Thus the two chief causes of complaint should be removed.

Listeners should also appreciate the fact that they would be invited under the scheme to enter as shareholders an established concern, now past the risky pioneering stage. It is proposed that the company should have power to buy in the shares of listeners who allow their licenses to lapse and there may be some objection that the representatives of the present company might thus secure control. This could be met by licensees who do not hold their quota of shares being granted the right to purchase such resumed shares. To eliminate the present company altogether, as some have suggested, would be to throw away hard-won managerial and administrative experience and would also be unfair to those who staked their fortunes when others were chary of making the venture. The proposed scheme therefore seems to offer a happy medium, a combination of business ability with democratic representations to the common end of better broadcasting service.

"New Zealand Herald"

COMMON justice demands the admission that the company has bridged the great pioneering period of radio development in this country. The position existing at the expiry of its present contract differs profoundly from that which it faced at the outset. The future then was uncertain, the possibilities of this new social amenity could not be definitely forecasted. All doubt has disappeared. The public demand for a broadcasting service is permanently established, the readiness of the public to support one by paying license fees has been put beyond question. It remains to be decided by what agency the demand is to be met in future. The present company proposes the formation of a new organisation in which its management shall hold one-half of the ordinary shares, the balance being subscribed by license-holders, with the control equally divided between the two. That is the core of the scheme. . . The plan the company has produced offers a good basis for discussion, in that it is practical and constructive. Whatever the outcome, the appearance of such an alternative should help to dispose of any possibility that the Government should take over the stations, operate them and remain responsible for their output. A New Zealand broadcasting service, owned, organised, and operated in New Zealand, is essential.

That can be achieved without it being a State enterprise, operated by the State, and every care should be taken to see that it does not become one.

"Star," Auckland

THE future control of broadcasting in the Dominion has been discussed for some time past, and the scheme that the Broadcasting Company has now put forward in detail gives the public something definite to consider. The company pioneered this popular form of entertainment, and it deserves the thanks of the community for what it has done. Much of the criticism directed against it has arisen from a failure to realise the difficulty of supplying first-class programmes in so small a community. The company's balance-sheet shows that its enterprise has brought it no fortune, but if it had been reader with such information in the past there would have been less criticism. It now proposes that the service should be owned and controlled on a "customer-ownership" plan, the capital to be divided between the present management and the holders of licenses. It is proposed to improve the service in various ways, and to extend the system of consultation with the public.

After referring to the British scheme involving State backing, the "Star" says: "One may doubt whether the State should incur this expenditure in a time of depression, if the work can be done equally well by private effort under proper safeguards. Much depends upon these safeguards. The first thing to do in the examination of the company's scheme is to ascertain whether the proposed capitalisation is reasonable—whether, for one thing, the company is asking too much for its property, and an independent valuation may be suggested. The scheme should be examined carefully by the Government and by a committee representing the holders of licenses."

Auckland Notes

(By "Call Up.")

THE "Two in One" Band which is to make its debut over the air on September 2 is a most interesting combination. The nine players, under Bert Kingsland, who is already well known to listeners for his saxophone quartet, all "double" on different instruments, so that virtually two completely different bands can be made from the same players. It is reported by those who have already heard this new combination that it is a remarkably "peppy" band, and listeners who like this type of music may look forward to something good.

MISS MERLE MILLER, the versatile studio pianiste from station 3YA, is to visit Auckland early in September and will sing from the studio on September 3 and 4. She will also appear at the Municipal Band concert to be relayed from the Town Hall on September 5. Miss Miller was in Auckland and sang from 1YA several times earlier in the year, when she was a very welcome visitor to the ranks of the local artists.

AMONG new artistes to be heard for the first time from 1YA in the near future are Mrs. J. J. Smith, soprano, and Mr. H. Harvey, bass, both of whom will sing on September 9; Mr. E. B. Waters, baritone, September 4; and the Waikiki Hawaiian Trio, September 18.

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