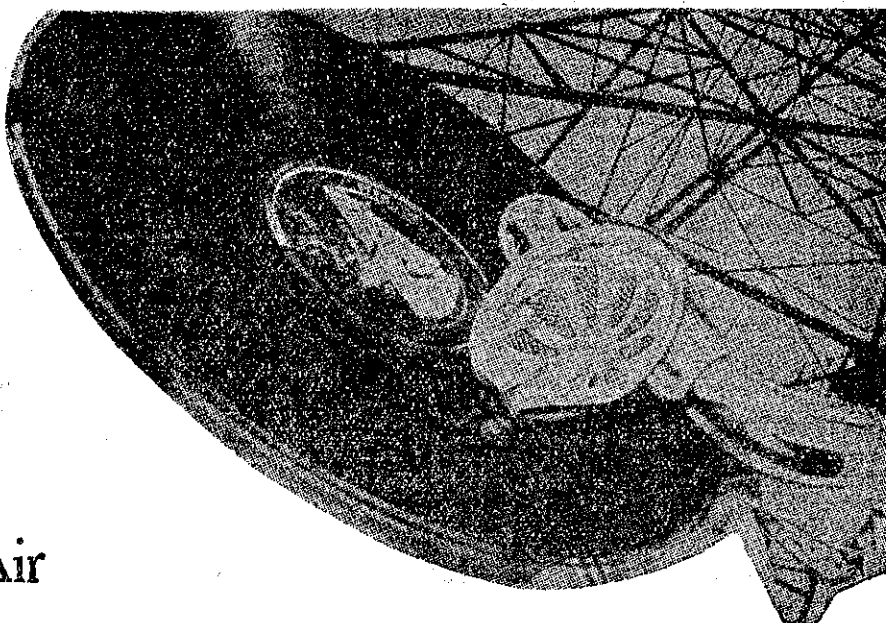


A Bolt from the Blue

Gramophone Records Banned from the Air



THE text of the intimation conveyed under registered cover to dealers in records in New Zealand is as follows:—

With a view to exercising control over the use of our records for the purpose of broadcasting and public performance, we are notifying all broadcasting stations that they may no longer broadcast our records without our written permission.

As from this date, all — records now and hereafter to be manufactured and issue from the factory will bear a label on which it is stated the record may not be used for radio broadcasting—nor publicly performed, and we desire you to take note of this as being a definite condition under which we will from this date supply you with records, and a definite condition under which you may sell those records to any person.

In connection with the supply of records to broadcasting stations, please note that if you have in the past done any business with the broadcasting stations, that this is to be discontinued, and no records are to be supplied by you to any broadcasting station without our written permission.

These various restrictions are being enforced in your interests and in the interests of the record industry generally, and as it is of great importance that they be strictly adhered to, I am sure I have only to put the matter before you to be assured of your complete and whole-hearted co-operation.

Contact with the YA stations reveals that the Radio Broadcasting Company is in the meantime carrying on as usual, although negotiations have been opened up with the gramophone companies concerned. The Radio Broadcasting Company, it may be said, has always endeavoured to work harmoniously with the gramophone companies, and has closely observed any bans or requests made by them relative to the use or otherwise of certain records.

IN the past the main dealings in connection with copyright and the use of musical matter (recorded and otherwise) have been with the Australian Performing Right Association. A royalty amounting to 5 per cent. of the total receipts of the Radio Broadcasting Company is paid to the Australian Performing Right Association for the copyrights claimed to be held by it. When broadcasting was first instituted in New Zea-

A BOLT from the blue has descended upon radio broadcasting stations throughout New Zealand. Both "A" and "B" class stations are equally affected. The shock arrived in the form of a registered communication from the Gramophone Record Companies trading in the Dominion to the effect that all broadcasting stations should forthwith cease to use gramophone records unless they had the written permission of the gramophone companies to do so; failing which an injunction would be immediately applied for and damages claimed.

In the meantime the YA stations and most of the "B" stations are carrying on as before, although negotiations have been opened up with the gramophone companies concerned.

THE same situation obtains in Australia.

Cabled information was published a week ago to the effect that the Australian companies had received the same ultimatum as that given New Zealand stations. A conference, it was reported, had been arranged between the gramophone companies and the main stations. This was held in Sydney last week, but the outcome has not been made public up to the time of writing.

land the gramophone companies in the main first gladly and freely afforded facilities for the use of gramophone records. At a later date when the number of "B" class stations showed an increase, and consequently the use made of records expanded considerably, the free supply of records was withdrawn, and the Radio Broadcasting Company (and others) were compelled to purchase such records as were required for use. In consequence, the Radio Broadcasting Company has built up a very fine and comprehensive library of records, from which all main stations draw supplies as required. Now it is apparent an effort is being made by the gramophone companies to prevent the use of any records save with the prior consent of the manufacturers thereof.

THIS action inevitably precipitates a major crisis in broadcasting circles. It may be asked why the gramophone companies, which are world-wide organisations supplying records to all the markets of the world, have instituted this action first in Australia and New Zealand, and not in America or the Continent of Europe, where the number of broadcasting stations is much greater than in the Antipodes. The answer to that query is that Australia and New Zealand suffer from a paucity of first-class artists, and need to place much greater reliance upon recorded music than do the stations of either Europe or America. With the notable increase in the number of broadcast stations in both

Australia and New Zealand that has taken place in the last two or three years, heavy demands have been made upon gramophone records. As listeners will be aware, broadly speaking, most "B" class stations rely entirely upon gramophone records for their musical fare.

The outcome has been that popular numbers, largely in request by listeners, have been in some cases worn to death, with the result that inevitably the sale of individual records to the public has been restricted. This development must be recognised, and consequently a certain amount of sympathy felt by unbiassed persons for the gramophone companies who, after incurring the risk of producing popular "hits" and paying recording fees to high-class artists, may have been deprived of the reward of their enterprise by undue use of such popular records by broadcasting stations.

As against that angle, it can, of course, be claimed that the judicious use of high-class records by broadcasting (*Concluded on page 2.*)