

# Editorial Notes

Wellington, Friday, August 5, 1932.

**JUST** a week before the release of the Coverage Commission's report, a somewhat similar report on Australian conditions was presented to the Institute of Radio Engineers (Australia) by Captain Eckersley. In European broadcast circles there are few engineers so well known as Captain Eckersley, who was at one time chief engineer of the British Broadcasting Corporation. Since relinquishing that position he has acted in an advisory capacity to various interests. It is not surprising then that he is now in Australia at the invitation of Amalgamated Wireless, Ltd., to prepare a report on local conditions. His report and recommendations fill a pamphlet of some 40 pages, and is complete with maps, tables and graphs. But, unlike the report of the New Zealand commission, it is not written for the man in the street, although it is quite definite and concise in its recommendations.

**AUSTRALIAN** broadcasting, according to the Captain, caters for 3 per cent. of the population only. The stations are haphazardly placed, the wavelengths are not arranged to give maximum coverage, and the power generally inadequate. The country listener is not at all well served, but the urban listener is fairly well served. It is his contention that the listener can be properly served only when his programme is clear, uninterrupted and steady, and when he can pick up the programme independent of the day or year. So far Australian authorities have concentrated upon the use of medium waves, but the report recommends the use of long waves (from 1000 to 2000 metres), by

which 90 per cent. of the rural population can be served. His proposal is for eight new long-wave stations, ranging in power from 5 to 50 kilowatts, these to be strictly supplementary to the existing service which is to remain intact except for a slight reshuffling of locations.

**IN** recommending new long-wave stations, the Captain and the New Zealand commissioners are not in agreement, as the latter definitely rule out the suggestion. Their chief objection is that very high power and elaborate systems would need to be installed for two national stations where listeners could be better served by smaller regional stations and relay stations. To give reasonably good coverage, stations would have to be situated in Taumarunui and Banks Peninsula. The proposition is a different one in Australia, where the eight stations are situated near the centres.

**THE** second objection to the proposal is that the long waves are adversely affected by static. The Australian report points out that the difference is small. "In any case the A service of a station on long waves would be nearly twice the C (much poorer) service area of a medium-wave station. The atmospheric level would have to be five or six times greater with long waves to make this objection count seriously." The New Zealand Commission's third objection is cost, particularly in view of the fact that a service from a regional station would be of greater local interest than from a national station. The Captain justifies this by increased revenue.

**THE** final objection of our commissioners was undoubtedly that all the sets would have to be altered. Captain Eckersley contends that it would not make the sets dearer, and that it would effectively block the entry of foreign sets, thus building up the Australian industry. In any case there would be the medium-wave stations to which those with the older type sets could listen.

**LEAVING** cost and receiver out of the question, it seems that the variance in the recommendations

emphasises the difference in New Zealand and Australian conditions. The peculiar topography of our country would absorb a great deal of the energy radiated by the long-wave station, whereas the absorption in Australia would not be nearly so great. It is to be expected that were a national long-wave station erected in Taumarunui, Auckland and Wellington would have fairly poor service, they being in the outer rings of the field. In Australia the major portion of the population is concentrated in the

inner rings. Were the New Zealand stations to be placed to give urban service, the country districts would be poorly served and a great deal of the power wasted. Where population groups are well separated, as in this country, it seems that the recommendations of our Commission for regional and relay stations to serve specific areas a sound one indeed. Should Australia adopt long-wave stations, those New Zealand receivers equipped for their reception should be able to receive at least the more powerful East Coast stations very well indeed.

## In Phase and Out

By "Quadrant"

**BY** the sound of things, 2YA's innards are being vigorously overhauled. The station does enough squealing and groaning off the regular schedule to make one believe it is getting a real rub down.

**THE** Commission's report is a rare document. I feel quite proud about it—for once I can understand what the experts are talking about.

**THERE** are strange voices from 2ZW again. Most people make friends slowly, and we all look upon the wireless people as our friends.

**TED** PRIESTLY is rather game trying to teach listeners to dance properly. I think if he saw some of us trying to follow his evolutions he'd give it up in disgust.

**THE** text of a knitting song sent to the 2YA community leaders was shown me the other day. The chorus goes "Knitting, knit, knit, knitting. It's saved us women since the fall." Their lines hang on a thread—poor women!

**WE** were listening to 2YA on Saturday afternoon when it went off the air. My technical friend thought it was his set, and after frantically jiggling round for some minutes gave it up in disgust, declaring, "When a station goes off the air why don't they say so?" Agreed! It would be an excellent idea, but not always practicable.

**I** HEARD this unique opening of an address come over the air the other day, "Listeners in New Zealand, Aus-

tralian, and perhaps the world. . . ." That is not bad. I have only once before heard its parallel. G. B. Shaw, talking from the British Broadcasting Corporation, opened his address with "Your Majesties, your Royal Highness the Prince of Wales . . . ladies and gentlemen"—apparently inferring that everyone in England was listening. But that is G.B.S.'s little joke.

**IT** is not nearly sufficient to require that only announcers comply with the best standards of pronunciation. All regular broadcast talkers should at least approximate good English. And this applies in no uncertain terms to the children's session. Culture and refinement can be expressed in language only by plain, unadorned pronunciation and unaffected modulation.

**SOME** say that an announcer's wife has a lonely life, but it has its compensations. At least she knows where he is.

**PROFESSOR:** Science has made such progress that we can now send pictures by wireless.  
Old Lady Listener: Really, ready framed?—"Answers."

**LADY** of the House: This pie is absolutely poisonous!

Cook: I made it from a wireless recipe, but there was a chemistry talk coming through from another station at the same time.

**A** FRENCH wine expert says that one should be able to listen to wine's "electric conductivity." I've listened in to its electric verbosity often.

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