

THE NEW ZEALAND LISTENER

The *New Zealand Listener* had a difficult, but again successful, year in all departments. Circulation continued to grow in spite of the check on sales imposed by paper shortage, and the advertising revenue was maintained.

Though the paper shortage gave deep anxiety throughout the whole year it was decided to expand the space devoted to programmes, and this policy is still in force. It is, however, being maintained at the cost of advertising space.

The journal continued to form a valuable link between licence-holders and the Service, and featured supplementary information which has contributed to the success of broadcast programmes. One of the special services given by the editorial department was progressive publicity for the National Orchestra. Another development during the year was the devotion of more space to country topics. Except during the winter months, a member of the literary staff visited the country nearly every week, and there is evidence that the articles covering these journeys were appreciated by other than country readers.

The circulation of the *Listener* is very buoyant, and further developments depend on better paper-supplies. The future supply is a little indefinite, but the *Listener* continues to be one of the most closely read journals in the Dominion.

COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

The year 1947 marks the tenth anniversary of the Commercial Division. During this period the ZB stations went through the preliminary stages of growth, but further development was interrupted by the war. For six of these ten years the resources of the network were unstintingly devoted to the New Zealand war effort. During this period radio played a prominent part in furthering this cause, and the facilities of the ZB Stations were devoted accordingly. During the year the country was in the throes of a rehabilitation period, and much of the best broadcasting time was set aside to further the causes associated with the nation's post-war readjustment.

PROGRAMMES

Policy.—The programmes of the Commercial stations are designed to provide popular entertainment of a type readily acceptable to a large section of the audience. Unlike the YA stations, the ZB network has no marked responsibility towards small minority groups as its existence as a sales medium depends upon its ability to attract large listening audiences. Emphasis, therefore, is placed on variety, the lighter forms of music, popular drama, sports' coverage, and what can be termed "general service sessions." These programmes are presented at all times with a due sense of responsibility to the listening public. There are no horror programmes that might have an adverse effect on some juveniles, and certain types of drama programmes are not broadcast before 8 p.m. Judging by comments made by overseas radio executives and producers the commercial programme standards are considerably stricter than those existing in many countries.

Non-sponsored Programmes.—Due to the popularity of the ZB stations as an advertising medium, practically all available time between 6 a.m. and very late at night has been allocated to advertisers, so that Sunday is the only day on which the Commercial Division can present "sustaining" programmes. These are as broad as the range of human interest, and comprise sessions of an educational nature, drama, sport news, choirs, and a balanced fare for listeners of all ages.

Women's Sessions.—As in previous years, special emphasis has been placed on the sessions devoted mainly to women's interests. In normal times no less than twenty-four of these sessions are broadcast each week, but these have been somewhat curtailed