

NATIONALIZATION OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND EMPIRE

Mention was made in last year's report of legislation which was to be brought down in the United Kingdom to provide for the consummation of the scheme envisaged at a conference of representatives of the British Commonwealth and Empire in 1945 for the nationalization of the telecommunication systems of the Commonwealth. This legislation was presented to the United Kingdom Parliament on the 1st February and makes provision for the establishment of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board and for the transfer of the assets of Cable and Wireless, Ltd., in the United Kingdom to the British Post Office on the 1st April, 1950.

In so far as New Zealand is concerned, the present interim arrangements under which the Post Office is managing the activities of Cable and Wireless, Ltd., in this country will continue until the 1st April, 1950. From that date full control, financial and otherwise, will be assumed by the Post Office, and all matters affecting the external Commonwealth telecommunications will be dealt with through governmental channels in conjunction with the Commonwealth Telecommunications Board.

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION CONFERENCES

During the year delegates from New Zealand attended several conferences abroad in connection with various telecommunication matters. The conferences were as follows:—

(1) A conference held at Melbourne of representatives of Australia and New Zealand for the purpose of assigning radio frequencies for use by broadcasting-stations in Australia and New Zealand so that, as far as possible, listeners in each country will receive a service reasonably free from interference from stations in the other country. The New Zealand representatives were Mr. E. H. R. Green, Chief Engineer of the Post Office, and Mr. W. L. Harrison, Chief Engineer of the New Zealand Broadcasting Service.

(2) An International High-frequency Broadcasting Conference at Mexico which devoted itself to the drawing-up of a plan for the allocation of all short-wave broadcasting frequencies throughout the world. The conference, which was held under the agis of the International Telecommunication Union, was attended by representatives of most countries of the Union. Mr. Green and Mr. Harrison again represented New Zealand.

(3) An International Administrative Aeronautical Radio Conference held at Geneva and concerned with the making of a plan for the world-wide allocation of radio frequencies for stations of the aeronautical service. The conference was successful in so far as a plan for frequencies for use by " off-route " and military aircraft is concerned, but for various reasons could not reach agreement on the allocation of frequencies for use by civil aircraft flying defined routes and consequently adjourned in order that the problem could be reconsidered by the Administrations concerned. However, a great deal of useful work was accomplished in connection with the allocation of frequencies for civil aviation. The New Zealand representatives at the conference, which adjourned in September, 1948, and is to reconvene at Geneva in July, 1949, were Mr. G. Searle, Radio Engineer, Post Office, and Squadron-Leader A. F. Partelow, a member of the New Zealand Joint Services Liaison Staff, London. At the same time, Mr. Searle represented New Zealand at the two meetings mentioned in (4) and (5) following.

(4) A meeting at Geneva of a Preparatory Committee for a Region 3 Administrative Radio Conference, which is to commence at that city in May, 1949, to deal with the use of frequencies between 150 and 3,900 kilocycles, which are to be shared between various services.