

# What's Happening in TV Around the World



By Elliott H. McCleary

WITH THE POMP of ages, the procession from Buckingham Palace wends its way along the streets of London to Westminster Abbey. There a new sovereign of the British Empire receives her crown—as millions watch.

And countless others, scattered all over the earth, also watch the coronation within a few hours, for TV at last is spreading 'round the world.

In a Paris cafe, a businessman watching a live telecast sees an ermined peer step forward. Outside a Brussels television shop, Belgian school children shout as prancing horses draw a gilded coach past their eyes.

Across England, Scotland and Ireland the microwaves flash their pictures.

Within hours, films of the coronation appear on the picture tubes of 23,000 receivers in Rio de Janeiro. Tokyo citizens watch the rites on their American-made sets, and a station in West Berlin hurls microwaves through the Iron Curtain to give a handful of East Berliners a view of the most widely televised event in history.

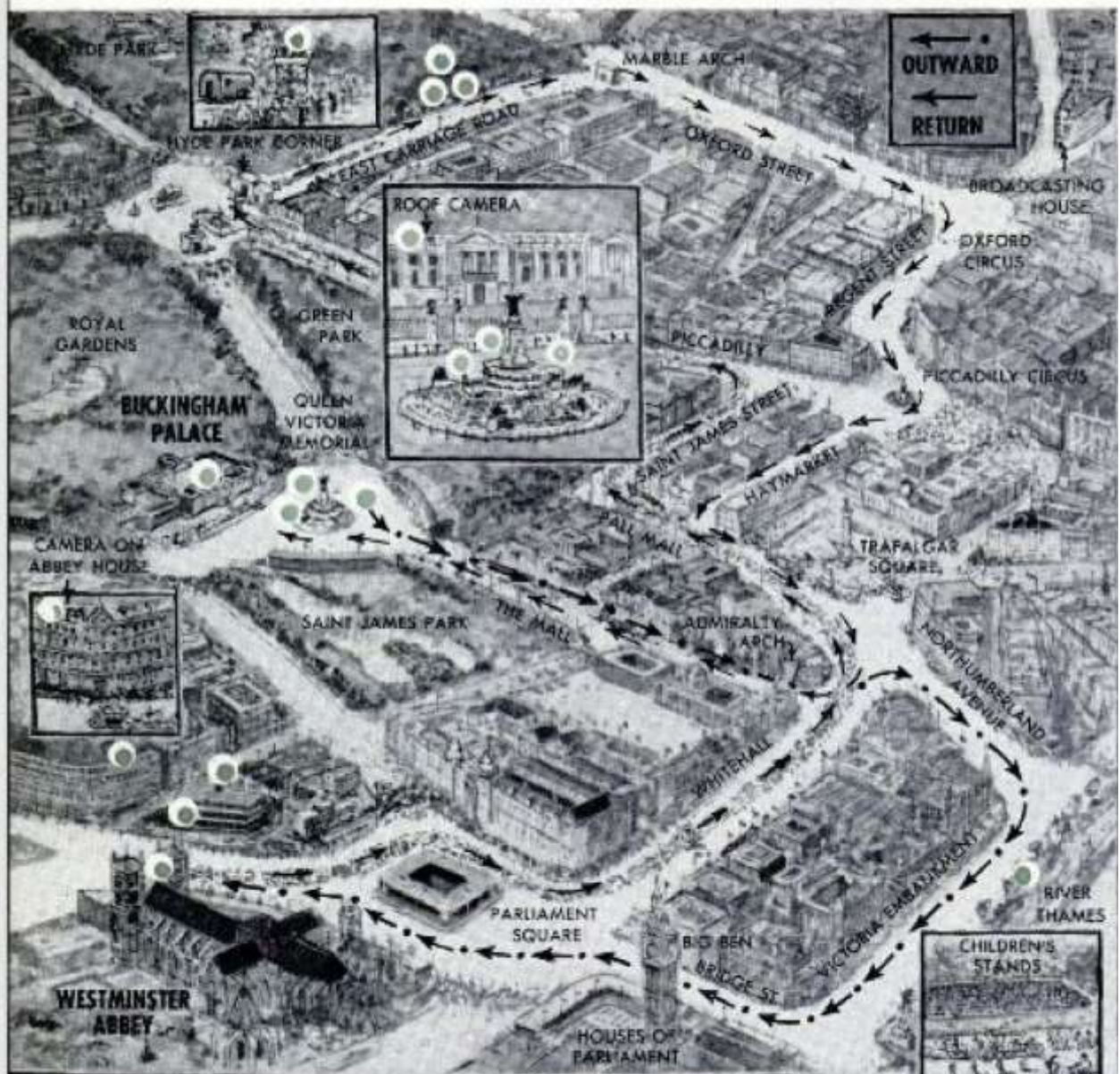
In Moscow, Milan and Mexico City, the television age has begun. TV abroad is still

Another national sport goes on TV as camera picks up bullfight in Mexico. Below, Berlin TV "on location"

SCA 10100







**MICROWAVE RELAY TO CONTINENT**

LONDON  
DOVER  
CALAIS  
ENGLISH CHANNEL  
BRUSSELS  
TO HOLLAND AND GERMANY  
PARIS

TV cameras spotted along the coronation route and inside Westminster Abbey will record the spectacle. Linked by coaxial cable to Broadcasting House and Alexandra Palace, their output will be monitored in mobile vans and control huts located beside Westminster Abbey and at the base of Queen Victoria Memorial. As the two-mile-long procession winds through the streets of London, cameras will peer from the roof of Buckingham Palace, from high stands erected along the route and from the windows of buildings facing the abbey. Microwaves will relay the scenes to north and west Britain and over a planned hookup to Europe. Planes will rush film to America

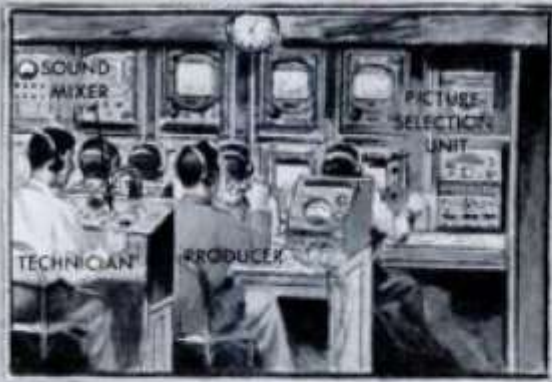
ALEXANDRA PALACE TELEVISION STATION  
TRANSMITTER IN NORTHERN ENGLAND

NEWSREELS OF CORONATION RUSHED TO NORTH AMERICA BY SPECIAL PLANES

TELEVISION CAMERAS



CONTROL-HUT INTERIOR

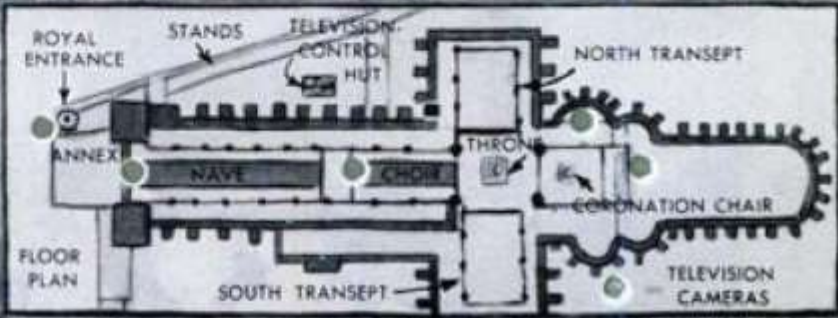
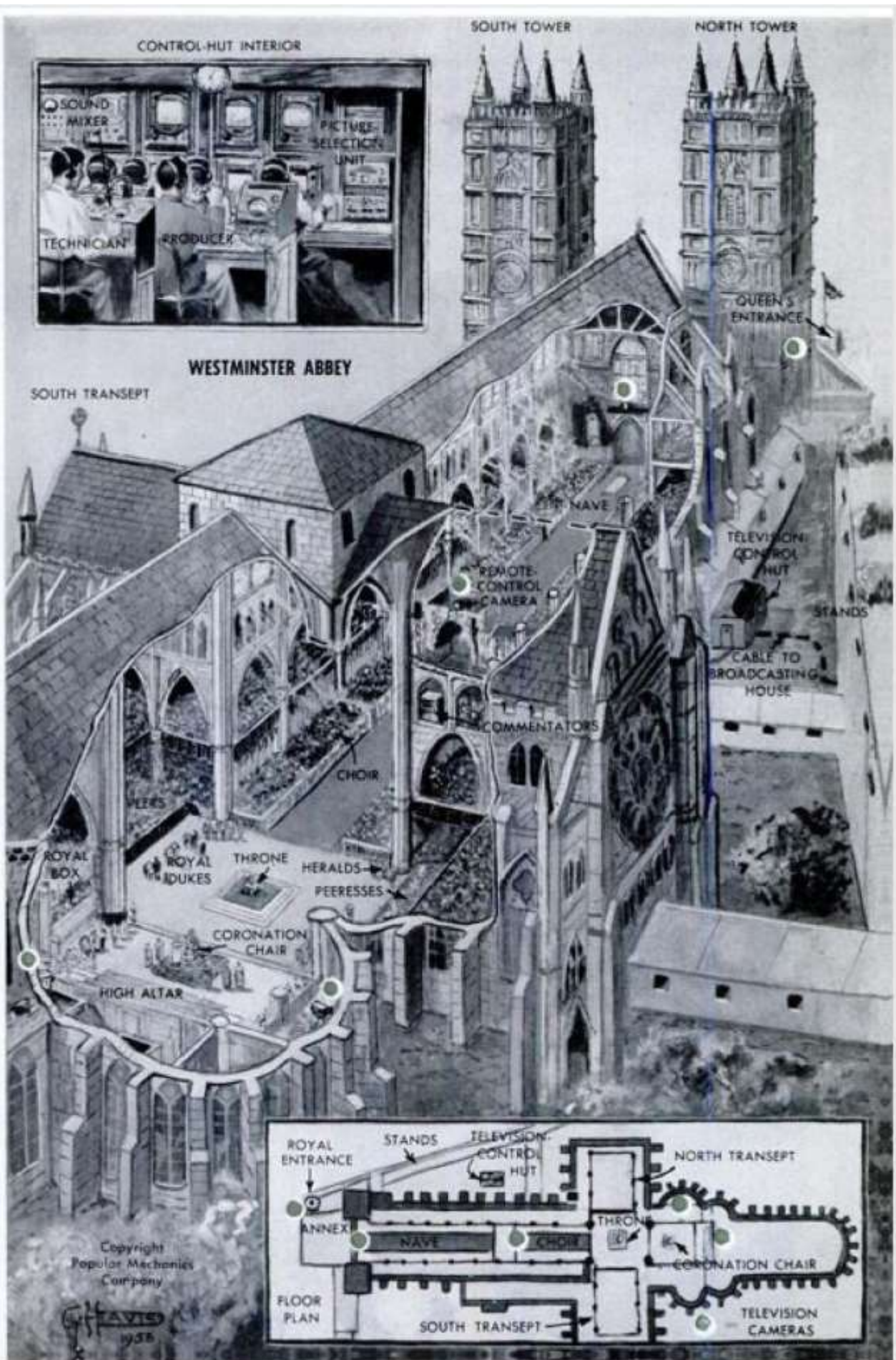


SOUTH TOWER

NORTH TOWER

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

SOUTH TRANSEPT



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in its infancy by United States standards: In all the rest of the world there are about 2,350,000 receivers compared to around 21,000,000 here. But the "baby" is growing fast.

At last count, eight countries in the Western Hemisphere and eight in the Eastern Hemisphere enjoyed television regularly. A dozen other lands have experimental stations. And at least 30 more nations are currently making plans for video.

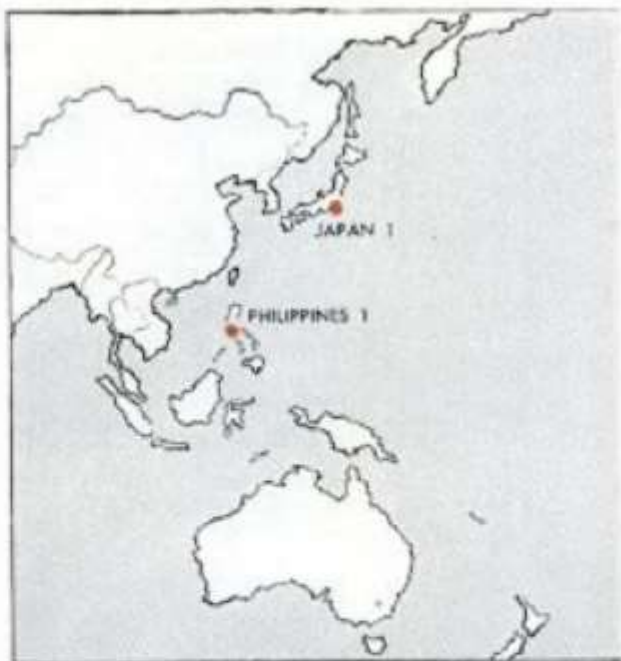
Great Britain has more television sets—1,700,000 of them—than all other foreign countries put together. Microwaves and coaxial cable carry London programs to viewers all over England, to Wales, Scotland and across the Irish Sea to Belfast, the new Irish station scheduled to open in time for the coronation.

England is abuzz with plans for greatly increased television service. Although at present 70 percent of the population is within range of TV, there's only one channel to watch. Like almost all television and radio systems outside the Americas, Britain's video is state-controlled. Each set owner must pay a license fee equivalent to \$5.60 yearly. Detection vans, staffed by government personnel, track down unreported sets.

But commercial TV has been proposed in England. Up to 50 stations backed by major advertising agencies may be in the wind, each to have a radius of from 10 to 15 miles.

Zenith Corporation's Phonevision, a plan to telecast movies to paying watchers, is also under scrutiny.

English television equipment ranks with the world's best. Practically all foreign TV stations are built by either American or British firms. Britain is also a leader in



industrial and educational TV—in one London bank you may examine your balance sheet on a TV screen, though the files are kept 12 miles away. The army, navy and universities teach classes by TV.

First in the world to inaugurate regular television service, the British Broadcasting Company started telecasting a short program daily in 1936 from its Alexandra Palace studios.

Today, as then, the BBC telecasts a 405-line picture at the rate of 25 frames per second, using AM sound. Americans who have seen English TV say it compares favorably with our system, which uses a 525-line picture at the rate of 30 frames per second, with FM sound.

When special television programs are



Operas aren't the only fare on Italian TV. Slopstick dancers in Milan stumble through their routine before the camera  
International General Electric photo



beamed across the English Channel to France, they must be rescanned by a special converter to change the picture to an 819-line standard. For transmission to other European countries, with the exception of French-speaking Belgium, the image has to be changed once more, this time to 625 lines. By this time, it may, understandably, be a little fuzzy.

BBC officials are talking hopefully of a hookup linking Brussels, Berlin, Rome, Paris and London by the end of 1954.

The largest number of receivers on the continent of Western Europe is in France,

where 55,000 sets operate, some of them for the benefit of community viewing groups sponsored by the French League for Education. Two stations transmit from the Eiffel tower in Paris. Another is at Lille, linked to Paris by relay. Six more are proposed or under construction.

Italy expects to have five modern stations by the end of 1953, and expects the number of receivers to jump from 5000 to 60,000 during the year. A Vatican City station, one in Milan and one in Turin are telecasting now. An elaborate network stretching the length of the boot and jogging over

Tokyo citizens jam department-store exhibit of television receivers. Regular telecasts began there in February







Closed-circuit television in Melbourne enabled over 500 Australian doctors to witness unusual surgery at close range during a recent medical convention. Below, TV transmitter and antenna atop Eiffel tower



to Sicily will probably cover the country by 1954 or 1955.

Germany is beginning to hit its stride in TV, although few programs are being telecast now. Hamburg and West Berlin stations are operating, and Hamburg and Cologne were linked last December by microwave. Frankfurt is scheduled to join the hookup by mid-1953. Four other stations are planned, one of which would connect with Zurich, Switzerland.

Switzerland, like many another small European country, is beset with problems caused by small population and the high cost of TV-station installation and operation. Sets cost far more than the average European can afford. Revenue must come from license fees, not advertising budgets, since most Europeans are horrified by the thought of United States type commercial programs. (Italy, which started out with privately owned television, recently took control of the stations away from the owners and put them under government supervision.) An added Swiss difficulty is the nation's three languages—French, German and Italian.

Belgium has the same problem, with French and Flemish the two official languages. The newly opened Brussels station is bilingual, and the proposed station at Liege will be Flemish. A peculiar problem in Belgium—the fact that some receivers use the French standard to pick up French telecasts, others use a 625-line standard—has been solved by two stations under construction which will operate on either the 819 or 625-line system.

Television was almost booted out of Denmark last year, after experimental telecasts

(Continued to page 254)



## What's Happening in TV Around the World

(Continued from page 98)

failed to stimulate more than a few hundred people to buy television sets (at \$560 each) and pay license fees.

The Netherlands, with 7000 receivers, has a station operating near Amsterdam.

Belgrade, Yugoslavia, is said to have an operating TV station, and two more stations are planned.

All other stations in Western Europe are either experimental or proposed. The Saar has an experimental station. So do Oslo, Madrid and Stockholm. Two more are proposed in Sweden (which now has only about 100 receivers), three more in Spain.

Istanbul has an experimental station, and one is under construction at Casablanca, French Morocco.

But what's happening behind the Iron Curtain? Russia, with limited equipment, is getting into the act. The first programs from the Reds' East Berlin station were telecast Dec. 21, 1952. According to recent report, the studio has only one television camera and broadcasts only from 8 to 10 p.m. The only receiving set on the East German market costs a year's income for an average workman. As a result, practically all are in public places and meeting halls. Like the Prague station scheduled to begin operation this year and an experimental Warsaw station operating intermittently, entertainment consists chiefly of propaganda films.

Russia itself has a station in Moscow, where 60,000 sets are reported; one at Leningrad, with 15,000 receivers; and one at Kiev, with 2000 sets. The Russian stations operate on a 625-line standard, like most of Europe. Most receivers have a nine-inch picture tube, although new 12-inch receivers are appearing. Color sets for experimental programs may be available this summer.

Japan's government-owned television system envisions a 30-station hookup blanketing the islands within five years. Soon, seven relay stations will link Tokyo transmitters with sets 300 miles away. One Tokyo station began telecasts in February, featuring sports coverage, Voice of America films, newsreels, variety shows, lectures, cooking courses, dramas and puppets.

American-installed and using the American 525-line standard, the Japanese stations are presently being picked up by only a few thousand receivers, most of them American. But Japanese manufacturers will soon start turning out low-cost receivers aimed for a potential mass market.

(Continued to page 256)

A privately owned station is planned for Bangkok, Thailand. Due in April was Manila's first station, owned by Juan Quirino, brother of the Philippines president.

In Australia, the fight between commercial and state TV has stalled operations.

The only other TV stations operating in the Pacific area are in Hawaii, where regular programs began last December on two stations in Honolulu.

Far more active than any country in Asia or continental Europe, however, is little Cuba, where a five-station network covers the entire island, and the most remote hamlet can enjoy regular TV. There, where TV sets are in demand and tariffs exceptionally high, smugglers last year engaged in a roaring video trade. Fast cutters loaded up at Miami or Key West with American TV receivers and swiftly transported them to isolated coves along the Cuban coast. A few months ago, planes flying around the clock dumped as many as 600 sets a day in Cuba, where smuggled receivers are estimated to number one fourth of the island's total of 125,000 sets.

The Dominican Republic boasts a television station, located in Ciudad Trujillo and completed last August.

Brazil, with three television stations, two of them in the Sao Paulo area and one in Rio de Janeiro, has big plans—six more stations are under construction and 45,000 sets are in use. Brazil, according to Edmund A. LaPorte, RCA Chief Engineer, may be the first country outside the United States to use UHF channels.

Venezuela has two stations in operation. Another will open by the end of the year.

President Peron of Argentina recently opened a powerful million-dollar station in Buenos Aires. Uruguay has postponed work on its TV station. Guatemala is expecting developments in Guatemala City in the near future.

Mexico, which is just finishing a \$3,000,000 "television city" and a 500-foot transmitting tower in the capital, already has five stations and has issued construction permits for 27 more. At least 35,000 sets are in use. The new studios in Mexico City would make any television producer happy: One of the four large studios is big enough for a circus or a basketball game, and the potential audience of one Mexico City station is 3,000,000. Possibly a relay will be established on the side of near-by Popocatepetl to transmit TV to large population centers within range.

Possibly microwave relay will connect Mexico City, Monterey and San Antonio, so that Mexicans can get American network programs and Americans can receive

(Continued to page 258)

Mexican shows. Meanwhile, a television station is operating opposite Brownsville, Tex., beaming English-language programs to American audiences. The station has the commercial advantage of broadcasting to a United States audience without having to abide by FCC regulations.

On the other hand, American border stations under construction in upper New York and Vermont will beam to the Canadian market. As of now, no private Canadian stations can be built except in areas where the Canadian Broadcasting Company prefers not to build. The CBC differs from American and European television in that programs are produced by the state-owned system and then sold to advertisers. Montreal and Toronto opened TV stations last September. Ottawa may be the site of the first private TV station.

CBC stations are also planned for Vancouver, Windsor, Halifax and possibly Quebec City. A microwave-relay system to link Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Buffalo will be completed some time in 1953.

Canadian receivers are expensive, partly because of a sales tax which helps to pay for the government-owned CBC. Imported American receivers suffer from heavy duties. But apparently, Canadians, like millions of people all over the world, believe that television is worth its cost. ★ ★ ★

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Courtesy of John Pinckney