

# *NBC Rebuilding Television Layout*

By BRUCE ROBERTSON

WHEN NBC on June 9 shut down its Empire State Bldg. television transmitter for a period of overhauling equipment and studios after the most strenuous session of video broadcasting in the 18 months since its inception, it had chalked up two firsts by televising the first full-length feature motion picture and the first scene from a Broadway play with original cast.

Other firsts, not of NBC's making, were that these broadcasts were witnessed not only by officials and engineers whose homes are equipped with RCA receivers and by guests in the network's reviewing rooms but by thousands of average citizens standing before demonstration video receiving sets in Manhattan department stores. These latter sets, made by Television Corp. of America and by the Allen B. Du Mont Laboratories, were also the first television sets to be offered for sale to the American public, orders being taken for delivery within five or six weeks at prices ranging from \$125 to \$650.

Originally announced in April for a four-week period, NBC extended its television series an additional three weeks to allow groups interested in engineering progress and program technique to witness the broadcasts on 16 receivers installed on the 62d floor of the RCA Bldg. Programs were carried by coaxial cable from the network's television studios, also in the RCA Bldg. to the transmitter in the Empire State Tower, from which they were broadcast. Schedules were also enlarged from two hours weekly to as many as six hours in a single day to accommodate the many groups who wished to see the demonstrations.

## Will Make Changes

The next few weeks will be occupied in incorporating changes in both studio equipment and the transmitter that the experimental period has shown to be desirable, according to O. B. Hanson, NBC vice-president and chief engineer.

Images on the RCA receivers are of a clear black and white and can be watched for a considerable period without any symptoms of eye strain or fatigue. The scene from "Susan and God," starring Gertrude Lawrence, was exceptionally good television entertainment, not only because of the excellence of the acting but also because the cameras and the receivers caught every facial expression or bodily movement of the actors. The motion picture, "The Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel," was less satisfying, at least to this observer, because the figures in the

longer shots were too small to be clearly distinguished on a mirror of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  x 10 inches.