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Court airing of radio pirates

By DAVID PALLISTER

IT MAY have been the cheeky item about the abdication of Betty Windsor of Buck House or perhaps the interview with the British Army deserter from Northern Ireland, but after four years of illegal transmissions, Radio Concord has suddenly got the undivided attention of the Post Office investigation squad.

In the past month the squad, acting for the Home Office and aided by more than a dozen police, have raided Concord on two successive weekends. Tapes, transmitting equipment, and records have been confiscated and once the Home Office has studied the Post Office reports, prosecutions under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts will doubtless follow.

Concord, however is determined to carry on with its broadcasts on 225 metres medium wave from any hide-out in North London high enough to take the 150ft. aerial. Within a week of the last raid—on a flat in Camden Town—the hard core of about 10 people who run the station had rebuilt the transmitter for about £50 and were back on the air.

As heirs to the sea pirate stations which were sunk by the Marine Offences Act, Concord's bunch of ether freaks began broadcasting minority rock, blues, and folk music that Radio One's programmers refused to consider. They claim to be the first station to use live phones; yet even with this blatant identification, the Post Office detection vans moved in on only two other occasions until this year. South of the Thames, Radio Kaleidoscope also continues to thrive with a claimed listening audience of 30,000.

Concord's recent excursions into public affairs are not, however, particularly subversive though they would make most BBC executives blanch with horror. There is a squat bulletin for the homeless, a run-down on the latest dope prices, and some good humoured, occasionally savage, satire on current events. We are promised shortly an interview with Christine Keeler on Life Under the Tories.

"Don't submit transmit" is currently the front-runner for Concord's choice of station slogan. "We accept there has got to be some sort of control," one of the founders says. "But we want to see the laws changed so that every community can have its own station. Britain could have up to 1,000 local stations. There's plenty of room on the wavebands—just look at how much space the police use on VHF. We choose our frequency very carefully. The only other users are Italian stations."

American owners of the
PWA are unlikely to
revive Lenny in London
"They've got Al Pac
in and they're working
on in America. Who can