

Commercialized Radio to be Investigated

THE ACTIONS of the radio trust in its effort to monopolize air channels and to subordinate education to commercial management have grown so serious that a resolution has been passed by the Senate calling for an investigation of the situation. The Senate Resolution 129, introduced on January 7 by Senator James Couzens of Michigan, provides:

Whereas there is growing dissatisfaction with the present use of radio facilities for purposes of commercial advertising: Be it

Resolved, That the Federal Radio Commission is hereby authorized and instructed to make a survey and to report to the Senate on the following questions:

[1] What information there is available on the feasibility of Government ownership and operation of broadcasting facilities.

[2] To what extent the facilities of a representative group of broadcasting stations are used for commercial advertising purposes.

[3] To what extent the use of radio facilities for purposes of commercial advertising varies as between stations having power of one hundred watts, five hundred watts, one thousand watts, five thousand watts, and all in excess of five thousand watts.

[4] What plans might be adopted to reduce, to limit, to control, and, perhaps, to eliminate the use of radio facilities for commercial advertising purposes.

[5] What rules or regulations have been adopted by other countries to control or to eliminate the use of radio facilities for commercial advertising purposes.

[6] Whether it would be practicable and satisfactory to permit only the announcement of sponsorship of programs by persons or corporations.

[7] Any information available concerning the investments and the net income of a number of representative broadcasting companies or stations.

The resolution as passed included the following amendment proposed by Senator Clarence C. Dill of Washington state:

[8] Since education is a public service paid for by the taxes of the people, and therefore the people have a right to have complete control of all the facilities of public education, what recognition has the Commission given to the applica-

tion of public educational institutions? Give name of stations, power used, and frequency.

[9] What applications by public educational institutions for increased power and more effective frequencies have been granted since the Commission's organization? What refused?

[10] What educational stations have been granted cleared channels? What cleared channels are not used by chain broadcasting systems?

[11] How many quota units are assigned to the National Broadcasting Company and the other stations it uses? To the Columbia Broadcasting System and other stations it uses? To stations under control of educational institutions?

[12] In what cases has the Commission given licenses to commercial stations for facilities applied for by educational institutions?

[13] Has the Commission granted any applications by educational stations for radio facilities previously used by commercial stations? If so, in what cases? In what cases have such applications been refused? Why refused?

[14] To what extent are commercial stations allowing free use of their facilities for broadcasting programs for use in schools and public institutions? To what extent are such programs sponsored by commercial interests? By chain systems?

[15] Does the Commission believe that educational programs can be safely left to the voluntary gift of the use of facilities by commercial stations?

In the face of these specific questions it will be rather difficult for the Federal Radio Commission to whitewash itself of the favoritism it has shown commercial radio interests and the radio trust.

Meanwhile, the radio situation was receiving attention on the House side of Capitol Hill. Representative Ralph A.

Horror of Washington state suggested a congressional investigation of the Federal Radio Commission which he called "one of the most extravagant and arbitrary of the government agencies."

Representative Horror cited a Bureau of Efficiency report which recommended an annual budget of \$284,060 for the Commission. His statement read in part as follows:

In striking contrast to this recommendation Congress, under strong lobby pressure, appropriated \$450,000 for the fiscal year 1931, almost double the amount found necessary. . . .

This extravagance is overshadowed by other abuses in the Commission. Both in regard to its own personnel and in the allocation of its favors, the Commission has been guilty of high-handedness scarcely preceded. Civil Service rules have been violated with flimsy subterfuge. Instead of promoting its trained personnel, it has asked Congress for permission to hire experts at large salaries. Often the "experts" turn out to be inexperienced youngsters, or men who received low salaries elsewhere.

Attitude on monopoly—Favor of monopolistic control is the most vicious tendency of the Commission. This is evidenced by the hold the NBC and RCA have upon the Commission. Incidents of unfairness which almost amount to tyranny are numerous. Stations have been given increased time and power without even formal petition, when smaller stations whose facilities have been attacked have had to spend large sums of money to retain high-priced counsel and prove convenience and necessity at a hearing.

Senator Dill's amendment to the Couzens resolution is worth re-reading.

Its questions are to the point and inescapable. If the questions are answered completely, they will do much to substantiate the contentions of educators who have held that the Federal Radio Commission has been indifferent to the point of contemptuousness to the rights of educational broadcasting. Such indifference is utterly indefensible in a governmental agency supported by taxes on the people.



THIS PHOTOGRAPH from the Washington Evening Star of December 13, 1931, shows the chairman of the Federal Radio Commission sitting between David Sarnoff, president of the Radio Corporation of America [left], and Merlin H. Aylesworth, president of the National Broadcasting Company. Aylesworth was formerly managing director of the National Electric Light Association whose effort to use the schools for power trust propaganda was exposed by the Federal Trade Commission.

Wisconsin Gives Communication Course

THERE HAS BEEN a long felt want in the radio field for a school of recognized standing to give a complete, comprehensive, wellbalanced course in radio communication, to be complete within itself and capable of being finished within a reasonable time. Realizing this need the University of Wisconsin extension division in Milwaukee is giving such a course to fit students for advanced places in radio activities. This is a new type of college training of a semi-professional nature with the object of training young men for positions existing in a field between the skilled craftsman and the trained professional engineer.

All trades and professions are now demanding that the men participating in them shall be thoroly trained in the theory and fundamentals of the trade or profession in question. The ever-expanding science of radio is possibly more exacting in this than any other because of the extremely technical nature of the subject and of the enormous responsibilities upon the shoulders of an operator. A few years ago a man could be a fairly good operator or technician without any particular training, but today, if a man expects to succeed in this field he must be thoroly grounded in the theory and practical applications of the fundamental principles of radio communication. The question has been to the serious-minded person, "Where can I secure such an education without taking a regular degree in engineering?"

The course given in Milwaukee is not an experiment for it has grown out of auxiliary courses given during the past six years and is planned as a definite preparation for the actual problems met in practise. The work given is substan-

tially of collegiate grade, requiring only a high school education or the equivalent for entrance. The training is very intensive, requiring the entire time of a stu-

Radio's Functions

GLENN FRANK

President, the University of Wisconsin

TO SERVE the agricultural interests of the state by furnishing technical and market information.

[2] To serve the households of the state by furnishing technical counsel on the construction, care, and conduct of the efficient home.

[3] To serve the adult citizenry of the state by furnishing continuous educational opportunities beyond the campus of the university.

[4] To serve public interest and public enterprise by providing them with as good radio facilities as the commercial stations have placed at the disposal of private interests and private enterprise.

[5] To serve the rural schools of the state by supplementing their educational methods and materials.

[6] To serve the interests of an informed public opinion by providing a state-wide forum for the pro and con discussion of the problems of public policy.

dent for two semesters. The entire day is occupied from eight until four-thirty with lectures, class work, laboratory experiments, special problems, and assignments to be completed after class hours. This same course may be taken in evening classes over a period of two years or by correspondence.

The principal course of a complete training in radio communication is strengthened by supplementary subjects

which assure a thoro understanding of the various phases of the theory and practical applications of receiving and transmitting circuits. These correlated subjects include elementary electricity, high-frequency currents, thermionic vacuum tubes, and laboratory work which is divided into three parts:

- [1] actual experiments,
- [2] design of apparatus and circuits,
- [3] adequate drill in international Morse code.

The entire list of studies is completed more easily because of a study of technical mathematics as applied to electricity and technical English, which pertains to the writing of reports and experiments. The satisfactory completion of the course qualifies a student for the government examination for a second-class commercial operator's license or he may enter an allied branch of the radio industry.

The University of Wisconsin is one of the great state universities of America. It has long been noted for its progressive and pioneer attitudes. It has always been a champion of free speech and the interests of the people. It is one of the first universities to see possibilities in education by radio, and to cooperate with other educational interests and departments to develop this service for the citizens of the state. Just as those states which first developed efficient schools became the leading states in America, so those states that use radio to elevate the intelligence of their people will occupy first place in the America of tomorrow.

The communication course offered by the University of Wisconsin may have its counterparts in other states. Reports of such pioneering work will be published in the bulletin, space permitting.

WE COMMEND the splendid work of the Ohio School of the Air. We believe that "the radio broadcasting channels belong to the public and should never be alienated into private hands." We appreciate the fact that in Ohio certain channels are assigned exclusively to educational and civic purposes. We indorse the work of the National Committee on Education by Radio and the Ohio School of the Air in their efforts to protect the rights of educational broadcasting and to utilize certain definite means for educational purposes only. ¶We most emphatically voice our objection to the continuous exploitation of our schools by various agencies that claim they are assisting in the education of our youth, but in reality they are using the schools mainly for the purpose of advertising. We urge superintendents and teachers to exercise their best judgment in permitting all such agencies to interfere with school work, particularly in this time of stress when all educational units are hard pressed, to maintain proper educational standards.—Resolutions adopted by the Southeastern Ohio Education Association, Athens, Ohio, October 30, 1931.

Pivotal Questions in Radio

SERVICE OR PROFITS?—Are you interested in curing disease or preventing it? The college of medicine of the Ohio State University under the supervision of Dean John J. Upham, is conducting an informative campaign on disease prevention over WEO, the university radio station. The talks given furnish practical means of preserving health.

Allotted but 750 watts and one-third time by the Federal Radio Commission, this educational station is doing its bit in giving the public dependable information to combat the vicious drug advertising carried by chain broadcasters and commercial stations.

The demands of various departments of the university to be given broadcasting time, which under the present arrangement was impossible, led officials of the university to apply to the Federal Radio Commission for additional hours. On November 24, 1931, representatives of the institution, at considerable expense, presented their case before a commission examiner in Washington. They were of course opposed by representatives of the commercial station with which the university shared time. As was expected, the Federal Radio Commission's examiner decided against the educational station.

Other January programs from the forty departments of instruction in the university include such series as business conditions, economics, French, Spanish, Italian, debating, drama, international problems, art, and various agricultural topics. Thru the radio, the services of the one thousand faculty members and the facilities of a twenty million dollar plant are made available to its listeners.

ORGANIZED TO PROTECT—It was the request of land-grant institutions for help in protecting their broadcasting

stations against the alleged injustice of commercial broadcasters and the Federal Radio Commission that led to the organization of the National Committee on Education by Radio.

The Committee proposed the reservation of a small proportion of the radio channels, primarily for the existing state-owned and state-authorized stations.

The proposal was immediately attacked by commercial broadcasters. The attack was supported by members of the Federal Radio Commission. The Commission, as one of its first official acts, had summarily ordered some state-owned stations off the air during hours wanted by commercial broadcasters, according to statements from officials at these stations. These acts appear to reveal strategy for placing all broadcasting channels in the hands of a commercial group dominated by a corporation which has been finally adjudged guilty of violation of national laws. Another element in the strategy, apparently, is the Federal Radio Commission's continuance and extension of the privileges of a lawbreaking corporation, in spite of the radio law which two members of the Commission interpret as prohibiting violators from using radio channels.

The states will make it clear to the Federal Radio Commission that they will continue to meet their responsibility for public education, even when that involves the use of radio. No other agency of the federal government ever has been permitted to interfere with the educational functions of the states and the sovereign states will not submit to the dictation of a little official group which some critics claim is disregarding the law itself and submitting to the domination of a corporation whose conviction for illegal practices has been confirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

TAXING RADIOS—The radio industry has done its best to make it appear that a tax on radio receivers would be impossible. In South Carolina commercial radio interests secured a decision from a federal court preventing the state from taxing radio receivers as instruments used in interstate commerce. On the other hand the industry dodges all responsibilities as a common carrier.

Now there is a proposition before Congress to tax all receivers and, in the opinion of one writer, "it seems definitely settled that purchasers of radio receiving sets will have to pay some tax and the only question remaining is how much."

Apparently the strategy of the industry is to break down the rights of the states in radio and, if there is to be any income from radio taxes, to have it go to the federal government.

In the meantime, European governments, by charging very moderate license fees for the use of radio receivers, are raising substantial sums which are used to assist in financing the governments on the one hand and, on the other hand, to provide radio programs such as the public wants, free from the advertising nuisance.

ENGLAND SPEAKS—The whole system of American broadcasting, where it appears to us strange, is merely a reflection of American life still outside our comprehension; the public consciousness which, on the one hand, submits to what we in this country could only describe as the tyranny of commercial competition, and, on the other hand, solemnly declares that "the American sense of freedom would not permit of applying set licenses and license fees," clearly springs from a specifically American conception of democracy.—British Broadcasting Corporation year-book, 1932, p47.

EDUCATION BY RADIO is published weekly by the National Committee on Education by Radio at 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C. The members of this Committee and the national groups with which they are associated are as follows:

Arthur G. Crane, president, the University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming, National Association of State Universities.
R. C. Higgy, director, radio station WEO of Ohio State Univ., Columbus, O., Association of College and Univ. Broadcasting Stations.
J. O. Keller, head of engineering extension, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa., National University Extension Association.
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James N. Rule, state superintendent of public instruction, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, National Council of State Superintendents.
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Joy Elmer Morgan, chairman, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C., National Education Association.

Everyone who receives a copy of this bulletin is invited to send in suggestions and comments. Save the bulletins for reference or pass them on to your local library or to a friend. Education by radio is a pioneering movement. These bulletins are, therefore, valuable. Earlier numbers will be supplied free on request while the supply lasts. Radio is an extension of the home. Let's keep it clean and free.

Business is Good in The Schools

BUSINESS IS GOOD when there is a steady demand for products which serve genuine and important needs and when that demand is being fairly met. Measured by this standard the business of education has never been so good as in the United States at this moment.

There are more young people in school than ever before. They are in charge of the most alert and best trained teachers that have ever blessed the nation. These teachers are presenting the strongest curriculum so far perfected and are seeking to make it better. They are working in the best buildings that ever housed the nation's millions of young students. They are supported to a remarkable degree by an intelligent, informed, and sympathetic public.

These teachers are working at their problems. During the summer of 1931 more than 270,000 of them took special courses to improve their service. Over 700,000 in the State Education Associations and 200,000 in the National Education Association are cooperating to improve education. More than 5,000 are life members of their great professional body. Tens of thousands of school faculties are holding regular meetings to study their problems.

These facts are of the utmost significance for men and women in every other line of business. They mean that better times lie ahead. The first wealth is human wealth. Upon that all other wealth is built. These thirty million students are getting the best education ever given to the masses of people. They are learning to live on a higher plane of life. They are building up health and vitality. They are being taught to value a fine home life and to plan for it. They are learning how to learn and to keep on learning as a life-long enterprise. They are learning citizenship by practising it in the schools. They are being trained in essential vocational skills. The higher uses of leisure are opened up to them in the fine arts and in the recreational and social life of the school. Above all, they are seeking to develop fine character—to quicken ambition, aspiration, courage; to cultivate industry and thrift; to establish all the virtues that underlie excellence and happiness of life.

These products of the schools are the pride of America. They are the basis of all other production and the promise of a quality of consumption such as the world has not yet seen. The business man who is prepared to serve the improved product of the schools will reap a rich reward. Dishonest business must grow less and less. The saloon is gone. Gambling has few defenders. Speculation has had a hard blow. Poverty can be wiped out. Graft can be abolished. Efficiency can take the place of weakness. Honest, intelligent, courageous industry and business can lift America. They can achieve the only goal worthy of an intelligent system—economic security for all from the cradle to the grave. *Today* business is good in the schools. *Tomorrow* business will be good in the factories, the shops, the stores. By living up to the motto *Children First* America is laying the foundation for a new revival.—From the *Journal of the National Education Association*.