

Chain Monopoly of Radio Stations

CALEB O'CONNOR

THERE HAS BEEN MUCH AGITATION among the broadcasting stations of the nation's capital.

One of the two octopus tendons of the National Broadcasting Company now comes into Washington thru the local station WRC. This broadcasting station, in the opinion of radio experts, has a very favorable assignment both as to power and wavelength, and operates fulltime. Local advertising is being sold by this station, sometimes taking the place of sustaining programs from New York over the wire, and at other times sandwiched between programs as it is before the Amos 'n' Andy hour. Wonder if Pepsodent knows that a portion of its hour has been given over to local advertising?

The other tendon of the octopus, known at NBC as station WJZ, is about to gain entrance into Washington thru another channel. Should the Federal Radio Commission approve of the lease by NBC of one of the two remaining Washington stations, it will give New York an even greater control of radio programs than it now has. Much dickering has been going on for months, between the trust and the two local Washington stations, which now carry local advertising programs; but until they can boast of New York chain programs, and adequate power, their field will not be equal to WRC, the trust tentacle.

While NBC is taking advantage of the unsettled political upheaval, a *nip and tuck* Congress, and a powerless chief executive, to install its second station in the nation's capital, it does not seem to entirely eliminate CBS. NBC thru its connections must derive a tremendous income from the thousands of miles of wire which CBS must rent from AT&T.

The attention of Congress may later be called to the fact that NBC used this governless condition as a time to bring its second station into the capital. An incoming President without power and an outgoing President without authority makes an ideal time for combinations to perfect their plans for growth and usurpation.

New York once considered why NBC should be permitted two stations, while private owners were confined to one sta-

tion. It all depends upon how Owen D. Young, their democrat, has aligned himself and his combinations with the new Congress. It would not surprise us to find him quite a factor with his fellow democrats. Time only can tell just what his influence will be.



FRANK F. NALDER, director of radio station KWSC, The State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington. Having been graduated from the institution which he now serves as director of the division of general college extension, Dr. Nalder later received an M.A. from Columbia and a Ph.D. from the University of California. KWSC is one of the highest powered of the college stations.

The trust will now begin grooming a republican in their midst, to perform the same offices in 1936, should the other political party assume command. In corporation management, expediency and propaganda are two terms never allowed to fade too far in the background. There seems no limit to which capital will not go to accomplish its end, even in this unsettled, unequal, economic upheaval, and despite the recent decision against the RCA trust in Delaware.

CBS has changed from the Leese station, WMAL, to the Vance station, WJSV, paying some \$20,000 yearly for the station name, but using their own power plant "across the Potomac from Washington" for their power. Was it Al Jolson who said that his race would take over a certain secret organization as soon as it got on a paying basis?

Power is not the only factor, for while the Columbia station in Washington, now WJSV, boasts of ten-thousand-watts power, and can be heard in California and Vermont, there are parts of Washington in which it cannot be heard with clearness. CBS knows this; so does NBC.

So far, WJSV is not taking spot advertising of local origin, but is using the wired programs from New York.

It was a surprise to learn that Harry Butcher, who has worked to carry to completion their power plant "across the Potomac from Washington" and their offices in the heart of Washington in the Shoreham Building, is to be replaced by one of the many vicepresidents from their New York office. It was hoped that CBS would make Butcher a vicepresident, because of his loyalty, business sagacity, and charming personality, but CBS decided otherwise.

We have always felt that the CBS programs eclipsed those of either of the two NBC stations, which in itself is no mean accomplishment. CBS must make money to live. NBC could afford to pay out all it makes to accomplish its purpose of

THE DECISION OF JUDGE JOHN P. NIELDS in the RCA anti-trust proceedings rendered at Wilmington, Delaware, on November 21, 1932, was the "Crack of the Whip" for a new era in "Wired Radio" which is the backbone of education by radio.—Major-General George O. Squier.

securing the wire and air control of this entire nation of ours.

But the intention of NBC is to dominate the situation with two stations to Columbia's one in the nation's capital. No matter what Congress *does*, it *talks*, and talk, musical, and unmusical sounds are what a microphone can reproduce.

So, Mr. Advertiser, if you cannot come into Washington on NBC's choice chain, WRC, you have Columbia's ten-thousand watter, WJSV; and so far, purely local stations of 250 and 100 watts respectively, WMAL and WOL. You may soon have a chance on NBC's other chain. The *Evening Star* of January 14 gave a lengthy front page account of the leasing of WMAL by itself and NBC, yet the short account of the refusal of the Federal Radio Commission to grant an increase of wavelength to our remaining local station, WOL, was in an inconspicuous place on the back page.

Expediency and propaganda are terms not unknown to the trusts, in these ticklish times. Millions are spent with publications in order to maintain control of what they might print in their editorial or reader columns inimical to the trusts.

Will Change Clothes

THE NATIONAL ELECTRIC LIGHT ASSOCIATION, well and not-too-favorably known after the Federal Trade Commission investigation of utility propaganda, is being dissolved and the Edison Electric Institute is being formed to succeed it. The industry announces that it is taking this step "to divest itself of all semblance of propaganda activities." It will "assume an attitude of frankness and ready cooperation in its dealings with the public and with regulatory bodies."

But the same men who were officers of the National Electric Light Association are to be officers of the Edison Electric Institute, and some of the new trustees are men who figured prominently in testimony and exhibits of the Trade Commission probe, in spite of the fact that an attempt is being made to assign to Insull all responsibility for the widely condemned propaganda campaign.

The Trade Commission's official report on this phase of its investigation is due soon. Will the power industry try to dismiss it as a condemnation of an organization which no longer exists? More important still, will the new institute with its protestations of frankness, escape all suspicion of propaganda activities for some years?

The cleansing process within the industry includes reform of certain holding-company practises as well as frankness.

Members promise to limit their service fees so that they shall "be reasonable and commensurate with the value of the services rendered and the fair cost thereof." They promise also to furnish consumers, stockholders, and others with accurate information as to income, operating expenses, and surplus. Both of these are extremely desirable reforms, certain to be

enacted into law unless the public becomes convinced that need for such a law has ceased to exist.

Americans should insist on federal and state regulation in the interest of consumers and the stockholders. The issue will become less plain as claims are made that evil practises have been discontinued, and it may be necessary to conduct another lengthy and expensive investigation to ascertain the truth of these assertions.

For the objects announced by the institute no one can have anything but praise. But these aspirations should be buttressed by protective laws.—Editorial, *Washington Daily News*, January 16, 1933.

Advice from an Advertising Man

THIS IS THE SITUATION. What can we do about it? How are we to pull ourselves out of this slough of chicane and vulgarity into which, with every passing day, we seem to be sinking deeper? For it must be apparent to every thoughtful person that something ought to be done about it. . . . This is what I propose: *Let every person who feels himself concerned in this matter make a resolve not to buy any more goods which are advertised in any unseemly or unethical way.* . . . If enough people would do this—if only a relatively few people would do it—there would be consternation in the enemy's camp. The retailer would complain to the wholesaler. The wholesaler would complain to the manufacturer's salesman. The salesman would pass the word on to the manufacturer, and the manufacturer would clean house.—H. A. Batten in the *Atlantic Monthly* for July 1932, p56.

Coins New Radio Words

MAJOR-GENERAL GEORGE O. SQUIER has coined five new words in his new book, "Telling the World," being prepared for the Century of Progress Series of the Chicago World's Fair.

The new words are: **radovision**, to replace our present word, *television*; **radome**, to replace our present use of *studio*; **radovia**, a street, road, or way where radio is exhibited; and **radiopolis** or **radiopole**, for any radio city such as the present Rockefeller Center in New York.

These words have been submitted to and approved by numerous radio organizations and are a distinct contribution to the terminology of this new science.

BIG BUSINESS fears government ownership and operation, not because government management is inefficient, but for precisely the opposite reason—its very efficiency, which is constantly showing up the graft and corruption in the industrial bureaucracy.

THE SAME OLD OCTOPUS—The National Electric Light Association, mired in its own slime by the revelations of the Federal Trade Commission's power trust investigation—has dissolved to become the Edison Electric Institute. This habit of changing names has been made familiar by the practises of exploiters, lobbyists, high financiers, gangsters, and thieves.

Amateur Radio

LOUIS R. HUBER

Wireless Operator, First Class, United States Coast and Geodetic Survey

AMATEUR RADIO is one of America's own peculiar institutions, working toward a greater economic effectiveness. Perhaps it is not definitely within the classification of education or even definable strictly as education but it is a form of recreation and practical training which is already being sponsored by many schools.

Do you know the typical amateur radio operator? He is the odd and little-known lad who, in his attic, has assembled a strange collection of coils, tubes, and condensers, and who is known to have communicated with Australia. On June 10, 1932, there were 30,640 of these amateurs in the United States, and their average age was approximately seventeen years. These lads first learn the international code and then, after passing an examination, get a license from the Federal Radio Commission. This license authorizes an amateur to use his equipment within any of the seven frequency bands set aside for him in the "short-wave" territory.

Amateur Radio and the radio amateur perform valuable services in three different fields—in industry, safety of life, and national defense. A hobby, and in itself strictly non-commercial, it has a happy relation to economics which makes it unique as a recreation.

Johnny Jones, W7CXL, goes from high school to college and takes electrical engineering. In his senior year, General Electric or Westinghouse sends a man to interview all promising EE students. Among the many questions he asks is one to this effect: "Have you had experience in amateur radio and, if so, to what extent?" Johnny qualifies; he goes with GE or Westinghouse. Thousands of amateurs and ex-amateurs now engaged commercially in radio owe their initial, basic training in the fundamentals of radio operation to their amateur experience. It is no smirch on the record of an amateur if he is also a professional engineer, operator, salesman, or serviceman in commercial radio, so universally is this bond recognized.

There is hardly any major disaster, such as a flood, hurricane, or tornado, in which radio amateurs have not been the first to establish communication from the stricken area with the "outside." When wire communications fail, Johnny Jones gathers up "B" batteries and wire and goes on the air. He can, if necessary, build a transmitter out of your old receiver. His versatility with pliers and wire, and his unflagging sense of duty were proven in the Florida hurricanes of 1926 and 1928, in the Mississippi and New England floods of 1927, and in the Alaska Kennecott landslide last summer.

In time of war Johnny Jones becomes a radio operator for Uncle Sam. During the World War, Amateur Radio, then much smaller, furnished 3500 operators for the U. S. fighting forces. Uncle Sam was so thoroly impressed that now he provides reserve organizations for radio amateurs, in the Navy's Volunteer Communication Reserve and the Army-Amateur Network.

Amateur Radio thrives nowhere as it does in the United States. It is typical of America. Canada is the only country approaching us in the extent to which Amateur Radio has grown. Great Britain, France, Italy—all the others impose strangling restrictions in spite of the fact that the amateur is recognized in international radio law, and is assigned exclusive international frequency bands. But this hobby of youth, assuming as it has the proportions of a great national radio playground, of immense value to the radio health of our country, has already proven its claim to a place in our economic planning.

Radio in the Classroom

The twelve most important objectives in using the radio in the classroom [ranked in order of importance]: ¹

- [1] To broaden the vision of the pupils.
- [2] To create, hold, and utilize interest.
- [3] To inspire the pupil.
- [4] To develop habits of concentration and listening.
- [5] To stimulate desirable, voluntary self activity.
- [6] To supplement classroom teaching.
- [7] To develop further intellectual culture.
- [8] To advance the cause of education.
- [9] To serve as an instrument of progress.
- [10] To stimulate the efforts of the teacher.
- [11] To allow the teacher time to study individual differences.
- [12] To supply certain needed recreational benefits.

Correction

EUGENE S. WILSON, vicepresident of the AT&T, has informed us that in the article entitled, "The Spanish Telephone Contract," page 4 of the January 5, 1933, issue of *Education by Radio*, IT&T should be substituted in the last line for AT&T. We regret the occurrence of this typographical error.

¹ Eibling, Harold H., *The Administration of the Classroom Use of the Radio in a Centralized School System*, Unpublished Master's Thesis at The Ohio State University, 1932, p 17-18.

RADIO BROADCASTING has quite altered the intellectual life of the human race. It has modified the cultural climate. It has changed the background of our tastes and attitudes. It is today more powerful than home, school, and church combined in the formation of human character. If the human race wishes to rear its own children according to the standards furnished by homes, schools, and churches, it must reclaim radio from the hands of the greedy exploiters who now dominate broadcasting in America.—Joy Elmer Morgan.

Wisconsin State Radio Chain

WIRE LINES now connect the two state-owned broadcasting stations in Wisconsin, WHA, the university station at Madison, and WLBL, the station of the Department of Agriculture and Markets at Stevens Point.

This is the culmination of the move started in 1930 to merge the two stations. At that time the state's petition for a single 5000-watt station to be located near the center of the state, was denied. Since then, both of the existing stations have been rebuilt and improved. WHA increased its power from 750 to 1000 watts, acquired new antenna masts and installed a new transmitter. WLBL put in a modern 2000-watt transmitter and built new masts. Both stations now have efficient equipment and together are capable of reaching effectively an estimated ninety percent of the people of the state.

Each station retains its identity and all of the same programs are not heard over both stations. WHA, being located in Madison, the seat of the government and center of education, has available a wealth of talent. Consequently most of the programs used by both stations originate in its studios. Special market reports are heard only over WLBL, "The official agricultural voice of Wisconsin."

These are believed to be the first state-owned linked stations in the country and the move marks another accomplishment for a state long known as a leader in developments in the common interest.

Among the features used by both stations are the Wisconsin school of the air [two daily classroom programs], farm program, Homemakers' Hour, On Wisconsin series, health programs, news, safety club, music appreciation course, Spanish lessons, foreign language programs [German, French, Spanish, and Scandinavian], farm institutes, drama institutes, and some programs in music, drama, and literature which will be entertaining as well as educational in nature.

Among the features to attract the most attention is a daily program broadcast directly from a studio in the dome of the state capitol building. Prominent state officials and departmental workers come before the microphone and tell the people of their activities. Measures which are before the legislature are explained by those who understand the problems involved.

The first program to be presented over the hookup was the inauguration of the new governor and other state officials on January 2. During the primary and regular election campaigns, in the fall of 1932, both WHA and WLBL carried on an impartial program of political education. Wisconsin people seem to be political-minded and hailed the move as a real service.

Each recognized party, regardless of financial backing or power, had an equal opportunity to be heard by the citizens.

In this combination of stations Wisconsin controls the most efficient hookup now existing for covering the state. Listeners report that in certain of the northern areas WLBL is the only Wisconsin station which they can hear satisfactorily. The northwestern tip of the state still will not be covered effectively.

These stations are on regional channels and are authorized to operate during daylight hours only, a handicap which greatly limits adult education. Wisconsin people are looking forward to the day when both stations will have the privilege of using evening hours so as to make possible a more extensive program of adult education.—Harold A. Engel, assistant program director, station WHA.

Canada Reduces Radio Advertising

RADIO STATIONS in the United States would devote, on the average, 19.51 minutes to advertising sales talk during an entire eighteen-hour broadcasting day if the new Canadian radio plan were adopted here. Writing to the National Committee on Education by Radio, Hector Charlesworth, chairman of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, describes the plan as follows:

The intention of the Act of Parliament with regard to radio advertising as I interpret it is that the advertising sales talk must not exceed five percent of the time occupied by the sponsored program. On the programs which our Commission proposes to sponsor on its own account there will be no advertising except in some special instance that might arise, like a government bond issue.

We have, under the Act, the power to increase the allotment of advertising time beyond five percent, but I am adverse to doing this. We cannot put this rule into effect earlier than April next because all Canadian stations are licensed until March 31st.

The figure, 19.51 minutes, was arrived at by taking the average percent of commercial programs given by United States radio stations, to be 36.14, as reported by the Federal Radio Commission, on page 14 of Senate Document No. 137, Seventy-Second Congress, first session.

Canada is extremely anxious to eliminate advertising entirely, but does not feel like doing so at present. With broadcasting stations in the United States, bombarding Canadians with sales talks about American products, it would place Canadian manufacturers at a serious disadvantage.

Would it not be a delightful change, if in this country as a first step toward eliminating advertising completely, the radio advertising talks would be limited to five percent of the commercial programs?

EDUCATION BY RADIO is published 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:

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Arthur G. Crane, president, the University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming, National Association of State Universities.
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