

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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BORDER BAN NOT TO INTERFERE WITH LEGITIMATE BROADCASTS

It is not the intention to jeopardize the international broadcasts between the United States and Canada in the proposed amendment of the Radio Act being considered by Congress which would prevent programs being sent from studios in this country to be broadcast back into the United States. Certain persons, notably Dr. J. R. Brinkley, formerly of Station KFKB, Milford, Kans., and Norman Baker, formerly of KTNT, Muscatine, Ia., who have been forbidden to operate broadcasting stations in the United States have set up stations XER, at Villa Acuna, and XENT, at Neuva Laredo in Mexico and are operating studios on the American side of the line.

The bill, which has been favorably reported by the Senate, will, the Committee report sets forth, "give the Commission power to stop such outlaw broadcasting.

"The bill will not interfere in any way with exchange of programs between the United States and foreign countries because the Commission is authorized to grant permits to those who desire to operate legally and in the interests of the public.

"The committee has recommended adoption of the following amendment:

"'Provided, That nothing in this section shall apply to the use of any studio, place or apparatus in connection with any program which is broadcast simultaneously by a foreign radio station and by any radio broadcasting station licensed by the Federal Radio Commission.'

"The purpose of this amendment is to make unnecessary the granting of permits where a station, licensed by the Commission, broadcasts a program simultaneously with a foreign radio station."

This amendment was suggested to Senator Dill by Henry A. Bellows, Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the National Association of Broadcasters, who feared that the bill as originally written might be construed in such a way as to disturb the exchange of programs between this country and Canada. Mr. Bellows was said to have especially had in mind Station CKLW, at Windsor, Canada, just across the border from Detroit and which has studios in Detroit.

Critics of the Bellows amendment argued that in the case of the Mexican stations having studios in this country, they might get around it by getting a small station licensed by the Radio Commission - some little 100 watt - to broadcast their programs. The answer to this advanced by the proponents of the Bellows

amendment is that the Radio Commission could find a way to deal with this station when it came up for its license renewal.

One of the stations which XER at Villa Acuna interferes with is WSB at Atlanta, Ga., owned by the Atlanta Journal. Former Senator John S. Cohen, President and Editor of the Journal, has written to Representative Robert Ramspeck, of Georgia, as follows:

"The purposes of the bill are manifestly so fair that it seems to me it should meet with no opposition. What its effect will be I cannot foretell.

"We are the innocent victims of this lack of cooperation between Mexico and the United States. We have, as you know, been interested in radio for more than twelve years, and have recently erected our newest transmitter of 50,000 watts, the largest permitted under the radio regulations of this country. We also have a clear channel so far as the United States is concerned, but as Dr. Brinkley operates his border station on a wave length very near ours, it causes us great annoyance and probably great loss. I hope some way can be found to remedy the situation. This is certainly a step in that direction."

WSB, Atlanta, is within 5 kilocycles of the frequency of XER, the Brinkley station which is on 735 kilocycles. It is not the only newspaper station with which XER interferes. Although WGN, owned by the Chicago Tribune, is separated by 15 kilocycles, it is reported as being bothered by the border channel which, as is the case with most Mexican frequencies, "wobbles."

WIBW, Senator Arthur Capper's station at Topeka is but 5 kilocycles removed from XEPN, at Piedros Negros. WFAA-WBAP, operated by the Dallas News and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram is 10 kilocycles from XEBC, at Agua Calientes and 5 from WHAS of the Louisville Courier Journal.

Adding to the complications is the fact that our frequencies end in 10 kilocycles and the Mexican in 5. In the United States, stations are separated by a minimum of 10 kilocycles so these Mexican channels within 5 kilocycles of ours play havoc.

Mexico at the North American Conference first demanded 20 clear channels of us, but said later they would be satisfied with 12. As to their needs in this, they said it was a matter for Mexico to decide and not for the United States to say. They would not divulge their program nor would they tell where they wanted to locate the stations. They looked upon the air just as they did the freedom of the seas. The Mexicans felt that they had just as much right to use the spectrum as the United States.

Judge E. O. Sykes, who headed the American delegation, answered this by saying that the United States was already there and was not going to leave until Mexico could show that it really needed the channels. As to the freedom of the seas argument, he said that if a ship was in one place, another ship couldn't come

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along and push it out and get into that same place until the other ship vacated the position. Just so the United States, Judge Sykes said, already on a frequency, was not going to get off or deprive the people on that frequency of broadcasting until they knew the exact needs of Mexico.

It developed that of the 12 exclusive channels demanded by Mexico, they wanted six for border stations, of which 2 would go to Dr. Brinkley and Baker respectively, despite the fact they had been closed down in the United States.

The move of James W. Baldwin, executive officer of the Broadcasters' Code, requesting the Code Authority to consider whether or not a Code provision could be enacted to operate against the Mexican stations brought the following letter to General Johnson from Herbert Feis, Economic Advisor of the State Department:

"The Department is of the opinion that the reason why such adjuncts of Mexican stations located in the United States for the profit and commercial gain of the station owners should not be subject to the same regulations as similar adjuncts of American stations."

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MADRID TREATY CONSIDERATION AGAIN POSTPONED

Consideration of the Madrid Radio Conference Treaty by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations has once more been set forward. No date for the next meeting has been named.

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GRIGSBY-GRUNOW IN BANKRUPTCY

The Grigsby-Grunow Company, of Chicago, once one of the country's largest manufacturers of radio receiving sets, was placed in bankruptcy this week by Federal Judge Barnes, who named Frank McKey as receiver in bankruptcy, according to a dispatch to the New York Times. The company's book value, according to the bankruptcy petition, is \$14,000,000, while its liabilities are \$6,000,000.

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NEW RADIO COMMISSION APPOINTMENT HAS THEM ALL GUESSING

The appointment of Representative Anning S. Prall, a Democrat, of Staten Island, New York, as a member of the Federal Radio Commission to succeed W. D. L. Starbuck, apparently came as a surprise even to Mr. Prall himself. His name had not been mentioned. John F. Killeen of the Bronx, Farley's campaign assistant was supposed to have had the inside track.

As far as could be learned, Mr. Prall has no radio qualifications excepting, as someone facetiously remarked, "probably he owns a radio set".

NBC and Columbia were reported to have worked for the re-appointment of Starbuck. The naming of Prall by President Roosevelt was said to have been as complete a surprise to the networks as it was to most everyone else.

The appointment was a personal selection of the President. It was said that the two are political friends of long standing. One version was that Mr. Prall was facing a contest in his election next Fall and though the future of the Radio Commission is uncertain, the appointment would at least save his face if a defeat were ahead of him.

If political reasons were not the principal factors in the appointment it seems certain that Mr. Prall would not resign his \$10,000 (minus the pay cut) seat in Congress to accept a Commission position at the same salary if the President had not assured him of its continuance.

Which leads up to the question - "Is Mr. Prall slated for a place on the new Communications Commission?" One report was that Mr. Prall would not resign his seat in Congress until he saw what was going to happen to the Radio Commission.

Prall, a resident of West New Brighton, was born on Staten Island, Sept. 17, 1870. He was educated in the public schools and was Vice-President of Cosgrove & Company, New York. He was appointed a member of the New York City Board of Education January 1, 1918, and was three times elected its President. He was appointed a Commissioner of Taxes and assessment from New York City in 1922. He was elected to Congress in 1924, and has been there ever since.

Someone remarked that Prall having been an educator, it looked as if maybe Armstrong Perry and the Committee on Radio in Education, who have been severe critics of the Radio Commission, might have had something to do with the appointment. Prall's term is for six years.

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BROADCASTING SURVEY FAILS TO GET UNDER WAY

There is apparently some hitch in the survey of the broadcasting industry which was to have been made at the direction of President Roosevelt by a committee headed by Secretary of Commerce Roper. Secretary Roper said it was felt by some in Congress that the survey should not be made until after the Communications Commission had been created. The original idea was to make the survey for the information of those who had the task of drafting the Communications Commission bill.

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TIP THAT CANADA IS AFTER OUR COMMUNICATIONS BUSINESS

In the confidential section (not for publication) of the National Whirligig, James McMullin, of the McClure Newspaper Syndicate writes:

"The Canadian government is carefully laying its lines to take over the Canadian Marconi Company and with it a large slice of American transatlantic business. Developments already predicted in this column are working to a neatly-planned conclusion.

"The Canadian Pacific and Canadian National railways will shortly announce a merger of their communication facilities - corresponding to Western Union and Postal. These communication lines have a 99-year contract with American companies providing that all their cable business must be transmitted through the United States. The Canadian government thinks this contract can be broken. Vigorous and inspired protests against the arrangement will appear regularly in the Canadian press from now on.

"Meanwhile American cable users - including several large New York banks - are prepared to guarantee Canada an annual gross business of two million dollars from the United States in order to obtain cheaper rates for themselves.

"Western Union, Postal and RCA are likely to counter by threatening to withdraw their accounts from the American banks involved. But New York insiders believe the plan will go through. The only factor that worries its sponsors is possible interference by the U. S. State Department."

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McCOSKER MAKES FEW CHANGES IN NAB COMMITTEES

There will be few changes made in National Association of Broadcasters committees by A. J. "Hollywood" McCosker, who is serving his second term as president of the organization. Arthur B. Church, of KMBC, Kansas City, will become Chairman of the Commercial Committee, and H. K. Carpenter, of WPTF, Raleigh, N. C., will assume the chairmanship of the Cost Accounting Committee. This Committee will be especially important this year because the Code requires a cost accounting system.

Walter J. Damm, of WMTJ, Milwaukee, will be Chairman of the Television Committee.

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NEWSPAPER EXECUTIVE HAILS RADIO NEWS AGREEMENT

Addressing the Inland Press Association at Chicago, E. H. Harris, Chairman of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association termed the news broadcasting agreement effective March 1st among press associations and radio networks, the "starting point of a constructively mutual relationship between these two important industries."

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BROADCASTERS WILL ATTEND PURE FOOD HEARING

Representatives of the National Association of Broadcasters will be present at the public hearing on the new Copeland Food and Drug Bill Tuesday, February 27th. The Copeland measure discards many of the advertising features found in the Tugwell bill.

John W. Darr, secretary of the Joint Committee for Sound and Democratic Consumer Legislation, in connection with the food and drug legislation, raised the question of radio censorship by announcing that the National Broadcasting Company had refused to permit broadcast advertisers to use part of their time for a statement in regard to the Tugwell Bill. He made public a letter from E. R. Hitz of the NBC Sales Department to J. A. Carter of Benton & Bowles, Inc., agency for important food and drug advertisers, which said:

"Our legal department has ruled that this is a matter of such controversial nature that it is too dangerous to use. As a matter of fact, almost any discussion of the Tugwell Bill at this time is dangerous."

Mr. Darr said that other broadcasters had made oral refusal of similar requests. He made public this statement:

"The refusal of the broadcasting companies to transmit this announcement over the air illustrates the exact point we are trying to make in our own activities. We cannot blame the National Broadcasting Company for trying to protect itself against possible bureaucratic reprisal. On the other hand we must face the fact that it indicates the invisible hand of bureaucracy reaching out for power and control, even before legislation is on the statute books. This incident will dramatize for the American public the broad fight we are making for them in their interests - the maintenance of the American system of freedom and individual liberty versus bureaucratic compulsion and control.

"We believe it will further point out the dangerous trend toward the unduly hasty type of legislation under the guise of emergency legislation which has become the style of the day in contradistinction to legislation in which all parties affected are properly considered."

While broadcasters made no formal reply, it was said on their behalf that the radio interests provide quantities of free time for discussion of public topics, but that they make it a policy to keep controversial matters out of commercial programs, despite numerous requests of all kinds. Weakening of this rule, it was said, would result in continual pressure on sponsors to give up part of their time, and would fill the air with talk of doubtful interest to the public, beside putting an obligation upon the networks to furnish equal time in each case for presentation of the other side of the controversy.

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DILL PUTS RADIO TELEGRAPH SAVING AT \$100,000,000

It was the competition of radio that brought the only reduction in rates across the North Atlantic in the last fifty years, Senator Dill, of Washington, declared. "The general reduction in rates has saved \$100,000,000 in communication costs between this country and Europe alone. From New York to Germany this reduction amounted to 11 cents per word and from this country to Liberia, 26 cents per word", the Senator said.

"Across the Pacific the reductions are even more striking. The press rate from San Francisco to Manila in 1922 was 27½ cents per word. Radio reduced the press rate to 8 cents and the Navy radio is only 6 cents. From San Francisco to Tokio in 1922 the press rate was 32 cents per word. Radio reduced it to 18 cents with a deferred rate of 8 cents per word. From San Francisco to Shanghai radio reduced the press rate from 31 cents to 12 cents per word. From San Francisco to Tokio radio reduced the commercial rate from \$1.20 per word to 66 cents per word.

"Some of the most striking reductions in commercial rates for communication service from the United States to foreign stations as reported in 1930 are as follows:

"To Porto Rico - 10 cents per word; to Russia - 13 cents per word; to China - 15 cents per word; to the Philippines - 19 cents per word; to Liberia - 26 cents per word; to French Indo China - 34 cents per word; to Japan, 54 cents per word; to Venezuela - 58 cents per word; to Dutch West Indies - 92 cents per word.

"Since that time there may be still further reductions. If the present competition continues there undoubtedly will be still further reductions made. It is generally agreed that for distances of 1,000 miles or more, radio communication already is cheaper than wire or cable can possibly be. An international monopoly would destroy this competition and substitute the slow formal exchange of diplomatic notes to bring agreement with various foreign governments as to lower rates."

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WEATHER BROADCASTS AID MOTORISTS

Weather information disseminated for airmen by the Department of Commerce also aids automobile drivers in planning trips, according to information received by the Department from agencies which furnish route information for travelers on the highways.

Comments upon this use of weather broadcasts have been received by Rex Martin, Assistant Director of Aeronautics in charge of the air navigation division, as a result of his suggestion that radio manufacturers offer automobile receiving sets capable of receiving the frequencies upon which these reports are broadcast.

The Beacon National Tourist Bureaus reported that since it had arranged, in 1930, to obtain the airways reports, it has supplied meteorological information to more than 20,000 motorists, and added, "Your suggested plan, in actual practice, will no doubt be one of the most outstanding measures ever offered the motoring public that would effect an economic saving in property damage and aid very materially in the reduction of loss of life and limb."

A letter from the Nashville Automobile Club said, "Accurate weather and precipitation conditions influence many routings and the public is growing more and more to demand weather facts. We are grateful that we have you on whom we may call for changing conditions. The government has done a great thing for the automobile as well as the air traveler in establishing radio stations. More than once to our certain knowledge discomfort or even hardship and suffering have been averted by accurate information given by you."

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For the entertainment of the family in the new "Home of Tomorrow", an 8 room model house erected by the Westinghouse Company at Mansfield, Ohio, there are seven radio sets, one being an all-wave receiver said to be capable of providing programs from all over the world. Another radio set, installed on the dashboard of the home-owner's car, throws the garage doors wide open upon the car's approach. The driver simply touches a switch.

Thomas P. Littlepage, radio counsel, has now recovered from a recent siege of pneumonia and has gone to Florida for a brief period before resuming his work.

A complete apparatus for the purpose of protecting his baby from kidnappers has been assembled by Marcus W. Hinson, vice president of the Institute of Radio Service Men, for exhibition at the organization's convention, beginning Friday in Chicago, according to the Associated Press.

A small cell which emits a thin ray of invisible light is concealed beneath a false bottom in a baby's crib.

This beam, shuttled between mirrors at the head and foot of the crib, focuses on a photo-electric cell and any interruption which shuts off light from the "eye" starts a loud alarm. An alarm is also set off if the current is disconnected.

George McClelland told Los Angeles reporters that his new network is no myth and that it would be in operation next Fall. He said that L.A. would be on the network and while there conferred with Earle Anthony of KFI.

A financial report of the Sangamo Electric Co. and subsidiaries for 1933 shows: Net loss after interest, depreciation, minority interest, taxes, subsidiary preferred dividends and other charges, \$63,655, against \$263,931 less in 1932.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt will be heard throughout the United States over combined coast-to-coast networks on Monday, morning March 5, when he addresses a conference of NRA code authorities in Washington, among which will be those of the radio industry.

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PROBES CHARGE AGAINST COMPOSERS

Investigating complaints against the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, Charles B. Brewer, Special Assistant to the Attorney-General left Washington and spent most of Wednesday in the offices of Simon E. Sobeloff, United States District Attorney.

Mr. Brewer, who conferred with James K. Cullen, Mr. Sobeloff's chief assistant, declined to be interviewed.

It was learned, however, that he went through the District Attorney's files on cases bearing on the prosecution of copyright law violations and took up with Mr. Cullen various complaints which have been made there against the Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

Among the cases looked up by Mr. Brewer was that of William Kim, 18, of Philadelphia, who on December 23, 1931, was sentenced to a year and a half at a Federal prison camp by Judge William C. Coleman in the United States District Court.

Kim pleaded guilty to violating the copyright laws by selling "pirated" song sheets on the streets. The prosecution of Kim was instigated by agents of the Society.

Charges of violating the anti-trust laws, of unfair methods and competition in business and of racketeering were laid against the Society by representatives of the Music Users' Protective Association of America, Inc., with headquarters in Baltimore. The charges were made before the Federal Trade Commission at Washington recently.

The local association filed a petition with the Federal trade group, listing a series of complaints, including alleged monopolistic acts of the composers' organization and dealing particularly with a campaign which the latter group started recently in Maryland to compel owners of radio sets in small business establishments to take out licenses at a minimum annual rate of \$60 for receiving copyright music through their radios.

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EUROPEAN AIR MESS GETS WORSE

Rebel stations which refuse to conform to the Lucerne agreement on wave lengths continue to gum up the ether in Europe, and drastic action is planned to stop them, a dispatch from Paris relates.

Biggest offender is Luxembourg station, which not only refused to change to 240 meters, as arranged by the Lucerne plan

chose on the day of European changing over to switch from 1192 meters to 1304 meters, which interferes seriously with Warsaw's broadcasting under the new plan.

Listeners who dial in that wave-band now get combination of Polish and Luxembourg dialect out of their loudspeakers, which sounds like Esperanto but is harder to understand.

Luxembourg has had an ultimatum demanding that it be good. If it won't play, International Broadcasting Union plans to put another station on the same wave length as Luxembourg and drown it out so that it can't be heard outside its own country.

Already some station on the Continent is deliberately sending Morse on the same frequency during Luxembourg's pet broadcasts, just to add to the pleasure of the public.

French are playing their little part in the confusion. Eiffel Tower was supposed to shut down on the night of the change-over, but it is still going merrily on. French say they will keep it going until they get a clear waveband for Radio Paris, their other station, which they say is being jammed, on the 1796 meter band, by other Continental stations.

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CLAIMS TELEVISION'S GREATER DETAIL MAKES PICTURE INVISIBLE

Present television methods will defeat their own purpose, and with greater and greater refinement of detail, toward which every television experimenter is today striving, the televised picture will actually disappear from human vision altogether, Dr. Orestes H. Caldwell, former Federal Radio Commissioner, declared, speaking before the Quill Club of New York City at a dinner held in the Yale Club last Tuesday night.

"To get finer and finer detail by present methods of television scanning, more and more lines per picture are being attempted", said Dr. Caldwell. "This follows the principle by which increasing the number of lines in a half-tone -- getting finer dots, -- gives greater detail.

"But in present television systems, this process of increasing lines in the television picture cannot be kept up indefinitely. It involves sharpening, to smaller and smaller dimensions, the single flying spot of illumination, until, if high detail is to be obtained, the flying spot will finally reach a point where it must become so small, and must cover a proportionately larger area and travel, many frames per second, that the intensity of illumination of the picture will begin to suffer. A threshold minimum of necessary retinal stimulus will be reached, also a rapidity beyond the ability of the optic nerve to respond, so that the 'perfected television picture' of ultimate fineness may totally disappear from human vision."

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