

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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INDEX TO ISSUE OF FEBRUARY 21, 1936

BBC Held Unhappy As Advent Of Television Station Nears.....	2
FCC Refuses To Bare Evidence In "Bribery" Inquiry.....	4
Zioncheck Petition Forces Hearings On Copyright Bills.....	6
Radio-Education Committee Sets Up Groups For Studies.....	6
Ultra High Wave Set Seen As Step Towards Television.....	7
Prall and Patterson Delegates To Democratic Meet.....	8
Deen Cites Need For Speedy Passage Of Duffy Bill.....	9
U. S. Government Idle As Germany Tests Television.....	10
Harris Urges Contract Ban On Sale Of News To Radio.....	10
FCC Upheld In Telephone Accounts Order.....	11
NBC Releases High To Democratic Committee.....	11
Industry Notes.....	12

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BBC HELD UNHAPPY AS ADVENT OF TELEVISION STATION NEARS

The British Broadcasting Corporation is not at all happy with the way things have developed as the time for the introduction of public television to Great Britain approaches, according to advice to the U. S. Commerce Department from Henry E. Stebbins, Assistant Trade Commissioner at London.

As summed up by Andrew W. Cruse, Chief of the Electrical Division, Bureau of Foreign and Comestic Commerce:

"The BBC is not all happy with the way things have developed; it is not really ready for television yet; the problems to be solved and the obstacles to be overcome seem to increase as the day when the service will start approaches."

Present indications are that experimental transmissions from the new television station will begin in March and that public broadcasts will follow in May, Stebbins reports. The Baird Television, Ltd., and Electrical and Musical Industries, Ltd., which will do the actual visual broadcasting from Alexandra Palace, are busy putting finishing touches on the equipment.

"The BBC is occupied with more problems than the public realizes", the Commerce Department report states, "and the general public is showing a marked degree of indifference, due largely, no doubt, to the policy of silence on the part of the press." The report continues:

"The BBC has been saddled with the responsibility of operating the new station, of providing programs and of managing the transmission by two widely differing systems. The difficulties are enormous and are enough to tax the imagination and the ability of the experts who have been assigned to the task. In the first place, there is little or no experience to serve as a guide to the program policy. The low definition television transmission which the BBC has been broadcasting during the past few years has little in common with the new high definition service. The complications inherent in operating two widely differing systems side by side are apparent. Each system requires an entirely different studio technique and yet the programs transmitted by both systems must be capable of being received on the same receiver. Another difficulty to be faced is the care with which radio set manufacturers have to be handled. Everybody from the Chief Engineer of the BBC down has been compelled at one time or another to announce publicly that the advent of television does not mean the obsolescence of ordinary radio receivers.

"Test transmissions from the Alexandra Palace will probably begin in February or March and regular transmissions in May,

but these dates are only tentative as it is impossible to foresee all the unexpected difficulties which may arise. The tests will certainly occupy several weeks and possibly several months.

"As far as programs are concerned, it has been tentatively decided at first to broadcast television three hours a day, with each of the two systems on alternate weeks. Believing that the televiewer (the official word of the BBC for those who receive television broadcasts) will tire of programs exceeding an hour in length, the Director of Television proposes to divide the daily three-hour transmission into three periods of one hour each, and each hourly period to be divided up into not less than four separate programs. It is planned to time these broadcasts as follows: one in the afternoon for women viewers primarily, one around 6 or 6:30 for the benefit of the trade and for business men, and one late in the evening for general home entertainment. Owing to the fact that the number of private set owners at first will be very limited because of the cost and the experimental nature of the broadcasts, it is hoped that the two afternoon broadcasts will be available to the general public through trade shows and through a free 'viewing room' which the BBC hopes to establish somewhere in the West End of London. These plans will all have to be approved by the Television Committee.

"It is extremely probable that 'sponsored' programs, already authorized by the Committee in its report, will be used to take care of part of the programs. This does not mean that the BBC will sell the time on the air; it merely means that commercial firms will pay for the programs and the listener will be told that such and such a program is being sponsored by such and such a firm.

"As to the types of programs themselves, it is proposed to broadcast musical recitals, cabarets, film criticisms illustrated by scenes from the films, illustrated descriptions of new developments in automobiles and airplanes (in this case very likely sponsored). 'What's new in the shops' (also likely to be sponsored), fashion and mannequin shows, concerts, etc., etc. Unquestionably, a fair proportion of the first programs will be made from commercial films, but it is at present very doubtful if full length feature films will be broadcast, not only to protect the interests of the cinema industry, but also to protect the eyes of the 'televiewer'. It has been authoritatively stated by the BBC's Director of Television that watching a television receiving set for any length of time will require great concentration, and that there will have to be frequent intervals during which the eyes may rest.

"One feature of the technique to be used may be a large clock face which will occupy the entire television screen and which will announce the time, perhaps with a musical background at 15 minute intervals.

"Few, if any, plans have actually been formulated for the use of television outside the amusement field. Sets will be too costly at first and it must be remembered that broadcasts

from this first station cannot be received much beyond 25 miles from the Alexandra Palace. The first year will be experimental, as the members of the Committee originally advised. Additional uses and applications will be invented and developed as time goes on, and these will doubtless include installations in schools and other institutions for educational purposes. It will be remembered that the Committee estimated the cost of the service for the period (approximately a year) ending December 31, 1936, as £280,000. This includes the actual construction of the station, all running and maintenance costs and, most important of all, program costs. Another possible use in the field outside amusement is what is known as 'noctovision' which can be applied to navigation of ships and airplanes, but this development is still in the future and cannot be considered as a concomitant part of the service to be started next year.

"Other uses of television for aids to navigation are being developed by Electric and Musical Industries, Ltd., but again this is a question for the future and will not become actual fact until at least the first year of public transmission of television has been completed.

"The BBC's primary function is to provide entertainment and instruction in the home. It is not concerned except indirectly with public entertainment for people en mass. Thus the provision of television programs in the cinema theatres is not a problem which the BBC needs to face immediately, although it will doubtless come later. What does concern the BBC in this connection, however, is the attitude of the cinema industry, particularly the exhibitors who are watching developments very carefully. The provision of full length feature pictures on television programs, once the number of televiewers is as large as the present number of radio listeners, would mean the closing of a large number of cinema theatres. However, films must, by the lack of other suitable material, form a considerable proportion of television programs and it is the form which these films will take that is causing anxiety."

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FCC REFUSES TO BARE EVIDENCE IN "BRIBERY" INQUIRY

Despite two official efforts to smother the now-famed "bribery" rumor, the incident appeared far from closed this week as the Federal Communications Commission refused to make public the evidence upon which its report was based as demanded by Commissioner George Henry Payne.

Only a demand from Congress, it appeared, would shake loose the data upon which five members of the FCC found that the charges of "bribery" and "political influence" to which one member was allegedly susceptible were baseless.

Chairman Anning S. Prall, who on his own responsibility ordered the first inquiry by the Justice Department into a conversation which his son, Mortimer Prall, said he overheard in the Willard Hotel, was adamant in rejecting Payne's plea, made from the bed of a Washington hospital.

Prall said that the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which had also aided in the second inquiry after once declaring the rumor without foundation, did not wish to make its records public. The Justice Department's findings, he added, constituted "an important part of the documents supporting the Committee's report."

Payne, in urging that the evidence be revealed, asserted that "without that evidence the report . . . is meaningless, and gives some justification to Congressman Connery's suggestion that our report last week has some of the incongruous quality of an amusing Valentine."

Addressing letters to each of the Commissioners from his bed in Garfield Hospital, February 19, Commissioner Payne said:

"At the special meeting last week, when the Investigating Committee made its report on the so-called 'Willard Hotel incident', I expressed my dissent when it was suggested that the report alone should be given to the public, while the evidence on which it was based be held confidential. While I agreed to sign the report, I had expected the evidence on which it was based to be published with it. Other members of the Committee said this was not their understanding. It certainly was my feeling that the report without the evidence would be meaningless and to some might seem evasive.

"Whatever understanding or misunderstanding there was in the Investigating Committee as to withholding the evidence, criticism of the report since publication and the obvious confusion resulting certainly justify the opinion that the report is inadequate without the support of the clarifying evidence. It would certainly be most unfortunate if the impression should prevail that the report was intended to further confuse the public's mind on the issues involved. Whatever troubles this Commission may face, or is facing, from the various groups that are inclined to criticize it, those troubles are not going to be lessened or removed by an Investigating Committee authorized by the Commission contributing 'la poudre aux yeux' to an extremely difficult and disagreeable situation. If the various groups now insisting on an investigation of this Commission are to be satisfied that there is no need for such an investigation, it will be by more frankness, and not less frankness."

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ZIONCHECK PETITION FORCES HEARINGS ON COPYRIGHT BILLS

The House Patents Committee and its Chairman, Representative Sirovich (D.), of New York, who had been cool to all pleas for hearings on the Duffy Copyright Bill, on February 19 suddenly announced a schedule of hearings on all pending copyright measures.

The petition being circulated by Representative Zioncheck (D.), of Washington, upon the suggestion of the Washington State Broadcasters' Association, was obviously responsible for the change in attitude of the Committee. The petition asked that the Committee be discharged from consideration of the bill, but 218 signatures were needed to make it effective.

Dr. Sirovich announced that three days a week for the next four weeks will be devoted to hearings on copyright legislation.

The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, which opposes the Duffy Bill, will be given the first hearing, beginning February 25 and extending through February 27.

On March 3, 4 and 5 the Authors League, the American Dramatists' Association, newspapers, and others will be heard. On March 10, 11 and 12, and 17, 18 and 19, motion picture exhibitors and producers, distributors, phonograph record manufacturers, and all radio interests, and hotels concerned with their rights to amplify radio programs will be called in the order named.

The Committee will also consider the Daly Bill to protect the recording rights of artists. This measure is sponsored by the National Association of Performing Artists, of which Fred Waring, orchestra leader, is President.

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RADIO-EDUCATION COMMITTEE SETS UP GROUPS FOR STUDIES

The general subject of the place of education in the broadcasting field was broken down into sub-heads early this week at a two-day organization meeting of the Radio-Education Committee appointed last December by the Federal Communications Commission.

Meeting in the offices of the Chairman, John W. Studebaker, U. S. Commissioner of Education, the Committee engaged in much general discussion but reached no specific conclusions regarding the problem at hand.

It was decided to set up sub-committees, as yet unnamed, to make detailed studies of such problems as a definition of education broadcasting, the financing of educational programs, technical supervision of educational broadcasts, studies of possible programs, and the administrative phases of such an undertaking.

These sub-committees, it was said, will be given ample time to prepare reports, and then another general meeting will be called late in the Spring.

Members of the Committee, besides the Chairman, who attended the first meeting are:

Waldo Abbot, University of Michigan; James W. Baldwin, National Association of Broadcasters; Mores A. Cartwright, American Association for Adult Education; W. W. Charters, Ohio State University; H. W. Chase, New York University; A. G. Crane, University of Wyoming; Walter Damrosch, National Broadcasting Co.; M. S. Eisenhower, Department of Agriculture; Willard E. Givens, National Education Association; Tom C. Gooch, Daily Times Herald, Dallas, Texas; Rev. George W. Johnson, Catholic University of America; Lambdin Kay, Station WSB, Atlanta, Georgia; John F. Killeen, Federal Communications Commission; Cline M. Koon, Office of Education; Mrs. B. F. Langworthy, President, National Parent-Teacher Association.

Also, Luella S. Leudin, Women's National Radio Committee; L. R. Lohr, National Broadcasting Company; H. B. McCarty, University of Wisconsin; C. S. Marsh, American Council on Education (for Dr. Zook); Allen Miller, University Broadcasting Council (guest); E. R. Murrow, Columbia Broadcasting System (guest); A. D. Ring, Federal Communications Commission; Morse Salisbury, Department of Agriculture (guest); John Shepard, III, Yankee Network, Boston; Levering Tyson, National Advisory Council; Judith C. Waller, National Broadcasting Co.; Frederick A. Willis, Columbia Broadcasting Co.; William Dow Boutwell, Office of Education (guest); and C. F. Klinefelter, Office of Education.

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ULTRA HIGH WAVE SET SEEN AS STEP TOWARD TELEVISION

Development of a radio receiver for reception on ultra-high frequencies by a radio engineer at the United States Bureau of Standards is hailed by the Bureau as a major step in the slow progress of bringing television into the homes.

The receiver, embodying some distinctly new principles, is the work of Francis W. Dunmore, who came into prominence a few years ago as the co-inventor of the alternating current receiving set, which was an important development in the mass production of radio sets. It also became the center of prolonged litigation over the rights of the government to inventions of its employees when the invention is closely associated with their regular work.

The new set devised by Dunmore is especially adapted to reception of waves of from three-quarters to one-and-three-quarters of a meter in length. This is approximately the range which must be used by television if it ever becomes commercially

feasible. A major difficulty foreseen for the future has been that of combining it with a sound broadcast receiver and synchronizing sound and vision.

Dunmore's device may show the way to do this. While it will not itself receive sound broadcasts over long wave ranges, it can be attached to the ordinary loud speaker, and reproduce the sound impulses.

Compared either to a broadcast receiving set or to a short wave receiver, Dunmore's new set is a radical innovation. The coil and condenser are dispensed with altogether. The reception is controlled by a plunger instead of a dial, the purpose of which is to control at will the length of the tubes. It involves other complex principles of radio engineering, described by Dunmore in the current issue of the Bureau of Standards' Journal of Research.

In its present form, Dunmore said, the new receiving set cannot be considered a television receiver. It is purely a sound receiver, and is valuable chiefly for experimental purposes. It crosses, however, one of the major hurdles with which television has had to contend.

Television, while successful experimentally, still is far from practical on a commercial scale - one major difficulty being that of transmitting a scene from station to station. This probably will involve specially constructed lines between cities, the expense of which would be unreasonable at present.

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PRALL AND PATTERSON DELEGATES TO DEMOCRATIC MEET

Both friends and critics of Anning S. Prall, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, will watch with interest his participation in the Democratic National Convention at Philadelphia as an alternate Tammany delegate. Prall's name appeared as alternate to the second delegate named, William T. Fetherston, whose name in turn followed that of Alfred E. Smith. Richard C. Patterson, Jr., Executive Vice-President of the National Broadcasting Co., was the Tammany selection for delegate from the Thirteenth District.

The FCC Chairman would be in a tough spot if he should become an outright delegate and even as an alternate he will have either to oppose the popular Tammany leader, Al Smith, or President Roosevelt, to whom he is responsible for his appointment on the FCC. It is believed, however, that he will stand by the President for renomination.

Patterson, who was formerly Commissioner of Correction in New York, now, incidentally, appears to be fading out of the NBC setup since Maj. Lenox Lohr was chosen as President to succeed

2/21/36

Merlin H. Aylesworth. At one time he was thought to be in line to replace Aylesworth himself.

A report that Patterson had tendered his resignation to NBC before leaving for a three-week trip to Florida last week was carried in the current Billboard. According to Variety, he will decide upon his return to New York "whether to resign or wait for a bid for settlement." Both amusement organs agree that he has been deprived of practically all his former executive duties by Major Lohr.

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DEEN CITES NEED FOR SPEEDY PASSAGE OF DUFFY BILL

The \$670,000 suit of the Remick Music Corporation, subsidiary of Warner Brothers, against the Columbia Broadcasting System for alleged copyright infringement shows the need for speedy action by Congress on the Duffy Copyright Bill, Representative Deen (D.), of Georgia, said in an address over NBC February 19.

Pointing out that the suit was based on the broadcast of "That Old Fashioned Mother of Mine", Deen said:

"Granting that there was infringement, the amount of damages asked for is absurd, but it impressively illustrates the essential and absolute importance of needed revision and amendment of our existing copyright laws. Since the broadcaster pays for the right to broadcast copyrighted music, it is nothing less than pyramiding of fees to require affiliated stations and consumers by means of receiving sets in their places of business to pay for it again. This is wrong. It would be equally wrong for a manufacturer or owner of a patent on a manikin or model of the human body to undertake to collect additional fees or charges on his product from proprietors of dry-goods stores, after these places of business had purchased the manikins or models on which to display their merchandise. This supercharge in the form of a license or penalty of \$250 will, if continued, destroy the source of consumption of musical and dramatic works.

"Because of this condition, it seems clearly evident to me that the time has come when Congress should speedily and quickly enact legislation to correct this situation.* * * * Provisions of the Duffy Copyright Bill, when enacted into law, will be fair to authors, composers and producers and at the same time will be most beneficial to the consuming public."

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U. S. GOVERNMENT IDLE AS GERMANY TESTS TELEVISION

While no agency in the United States Government is engaged in any research in the field of television, the German Post Office Department has progressed so far in its experiments that the first commercial long-distance visual broadcasting line will be inaugurated at the opening of the Leipzig Fair March 1.

The two stations - at Berlin and Leipzig - will limit service over the new wire for the time being, with accommodations provided in four booths, two at each end. The cable on which the television transmission will be carried is 247 miles long.

The Radio Corporation of America is awaiting a decision by the Federal Communications Commission regarding the use of the coaxial cable proposed by the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. to link New York and Philadelphia before proceeding with its television tests between two cities. Whether the tests on the coaxial cable, which holds possibilities of revolutionizing television transmission, will be limited to RCA or opened to other experimenters has not been decided by the FCC.

Though Germany's military and naval organizations are busily engaged in experimenting with television as an adjunct in the next war, the United States Government is merely standing by and watching developments by commercial organizations such as RCA.

The National Bureau of Standards, while engaged in radio research, is not yet investigating the television field, according to Dr. J. H. Dellinger, Chief of the Radio Division. The FCC Engineering Division keeps abreast of developments in this country and abroad but has no facilities for actual experiments. Neither the War nor Navy Departments, so far as known, has made any invasions into the newest field of communication.

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HARRIS URGES CONTRACT BAN ON SALE OF NEWS TO RADIO

Carrying forward his fight against the sale of news by press associations to broadcasting stations, E. H. Harris, Chairman of the Publishers' National Radio Committee, on February 18 in an address at Chicago urged members of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association to include in contracts with privately owned press associations a provision prohibiting the sale of news to radio stations or advertisers. Such a provision would be aimed obviously at United Press and International News Service, which now sell news to broadcasters. The Associated Press, a mutual organization owned by the newspapers, does not sell its news to radio.

He urged newspaper publishers to unite in "protecting the news . . . and not allow our property to be used for revenue producers for competing mediums."

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2/21/36

FCC UPHELD IN TELEPHONE ACCOUNTS ORDER

The Federal Communications Commission was notified February 19 that a Federal Statutory Court in New York has decided that the Uniform System of Accounts for Telephone Companies having average operating revenues exceeding \$50,000 annually, promulgated by the Commission on May 1, 1935, effective January 1, 1936, is constitutional.

The Court also held that Section 213(a) of the Communications Act, "in specific terms authorizes the Commission to obtain from telephone carriers at any time information concerning the original costs of their properties which may be needed for rate fixing purposes", and added:

"The requirement that original costs be set forth in accounting records of the telephone companies serves to complete the picture of value in revealing the properties' financial background and showing the relationship of a carriers' monetary return to the original, as well as to its own investment. It aids the Commission in its duty to determine from all the pertinent circumstances and factors the just and reasonable rates which the carrier may exact for its services. Original cost is a relevant factor."

The issue was brought before the Court by an injunction suit instituted by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and twenty-eight subsidiaries and affiliates. The Court consisted of Circuit Judges Martin T. Manton and A. N. Hand, and District Judge John C. Knox, and the opinion was written by Judge Manton.

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NBC RELEASES HIGH TO DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

Stanley High of the National Broadcasting Company is going to work with the Democratic National Committee during the campaign. President Roosevelt has asked the broadcasting company to permit High's employment by the Democratic Committee. He is in NBC's Speaking Bureau and it is understood his Committee work will be devoted to organization activities. As Director of Talks in the New York office, High has been with the NBC organization for about four months.

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 ::: INDUSTRY NOTES :::
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The address of David Sarnoff, President of the Radio Corporation of America, on "Communication and Democracy" before the third annual Woman Congress at Chicago February 14 has been published in pamphlet form.

The FCC has issued a list of alterations and corrections to the list of broadcast stations in the United States, the corrections covering up until February 1.

A description of the use of conveyors by the Stewart-Warner Corporation in the manufacture of radio receivers appears in the Link-Belt News, house organ of the Link-Belt Co., Chicago, for February.

An early decision by the Federal Communications Commission in the application of the Mackay Radio and Telegraph Company to open a radio communication circuit between New York and Oslo is expected following the filing of a brief this week by the Radio Corporation of America opposing the granting of the petition on the ground that RCA already furnishes adequate service.

Radio telephone service between continental United States and Puerto Rico was inaugurated February 20 with conversations between officials at Washington and San Juan. The new communication link connects a short-wave channel of the Bell system at Miami with a station of the Puerto Rico Telephone Co., at San Juan.

The first anniversary of the WMCA amateur hour broadcast from the Fabian Fox Brooklyn Theatre was celebrated February 10 with a gala "Winner of Winners" contest, according to Larry Nixon, of WMCA.

A 29-year old draftsman, Andrew Hehonasiades, was arrested February 18 in New York on a charge of writing extortion notes to Morris Sarnoff, brother of David Sarnoff, President of the Radio Corporation of America. The writer, according to police, mistook the former for the president of RCA. The prisoner allegedly admitted the extortion move, explaining that he didn't believe Sarnoff would miss \$500 or \$1,000. The use of a silver nitrate solution to develop fingerprints on the notes helped trap the youth.