

# HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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No. 955

## DON'T GIVE RADIO PUBLIC WHAT IT WANTS - EDUCATORS

Broadcasters were advised this week by the National Committee on Education by Radio not to give the radio public what it wants in the way of entertainment. The inference was that the radio listener hasn't grown up--intellectually--yet.

The Committee proposes that the audience be trained from the elementary schools up through high school so that the next generation will have better taste.

"The vast majority of American listeners are still largely uncritical," the Committee states in its current bulletin. They respond readily to cheap appeals and their program preferences are not of a high order. Radio programs have been directed too frequently at this general level with utter disregard of the significant minorities who do appreciate better things but who fail to register their point of view in fan mail. These more discriminating listeners, by virtue of this very quality, are less likely to respond to contests or to appeals for letters. Their more numerous fellow countrymen, on the other hand, register their approval of programs by both volume of sales and mail response. A growth in discrimination on the part of these average listeners is needed if radio programs are to be continuously improved. Such a growth will come partly through the stimulation of the broadcasters, but most of it will be in response to a concerted effort to develop a critical public.

"Experience in the parallel field of motion pictures indicates that discrimination can be developed among both adults and boys and girls. When schools and adult organizations together tackle this problem, such a development will not be long in making itself felt. The decided improvement in the quality of motion pictures which has taken place in the last two years has been in no small measure a direct effect of the countrywide effort to develop discrimination in this field. A similar result may be expected with regard to radio.

"Radio listening plays such an important part in the lives of modern boys and girls as to demand treatment in the school curriculum. Certainly one important objective of education is that of acquainting pupils with the influences affecting them, and helping them to develop technics for controlling such influences. If for no other reason than this, radio, with its slice of over two hours daily from the waking time of boys and girls, needs

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examination and interpretation. It refuses to be ignored. Educators may deny school time to this new instrument, but the radio will do its educational job--good or bad--to boys and girls outside of school hours. It is only sensible that the school make a place for the development of discriminating listening so that boys and girls may learn to distinguish the good and the bad, to separate the wheat from the chaff.

"To discriminate is, according to Webster's, 'to separate by discerning differences'. One important goal in such work, then, will be the development of skill in separating good programs from bad, honest representations of life from dishonest, factual presentations from propaganda, good artistry from sham. This implies the examination and study of many programs representing a wide range of type and quality.

"To gather in usable form for teachers materials needed in teaching radio program discrimination, the bureau of educational research at the Ohio State University is now developing a book for students which will combine narrative and expository material. This book, prepared under the direction of a committee representing the Ohio State University, the Ohio State Department of Education, the Ohio Radio Education Association, and the Payne Fund, will bring to each pupil interesting data on both the production and consumption side of radio communication. It is being developed in experimental form, and will be tried out and revised several times before being published. Experience indicates that, ordinarily, the most rapid strides are made in introducing new content into the high school curriculum when books and pamphlets for pupils are readily available.

"A united effort to promote the study of radio programs on the part of such organizations as the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the YMCA, the YWCA, the International Council of Religious Education, and Catholic and Jewish organizations, will reach a large share of the adult public. Here, too, materials are needed.

"The next five years will see marked progress in introducing radio program discrimination into the schools, and, through adult organizations, into the public consciousness. That this will have ultimately an important effect upon the kind of programs offered to the listening audience cannot be doubted."

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The total number of broadcast receiving licenses in force in New Zealand at December 31st last was 185,008, representing an increase of more than 35,000 during the year.

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## GADGET INVENTED TO CHOKE OFF CROONERS ET AL

A Washington amateur inventor claims to have developed a gadget that will enable bored listeners to shut off crooners, political speakers, and other unwelcome radio performers merely by pushing one of five buttons on a receiver.

As described by an enthusiastic purchaser at \$7.50, the device patented by Floyd G. Caskey, works somewhat as follows:

"This new deluxe model is about the size of a cigaret box. Its shiny top is decorated with five pearl buttons. Push button No. 1 and the radio remains peaceful for one minute. No. 2 shuts off long-winded announcers for three minutes.

"No. 3 silences givers-of-advice to the lovelorn for five minutes. No. 4 puts a quietus on political orators for fifteen minutes, while No. 5 keeps a crooner outside for a full half hour.

"Caskey contemplated adding a sixth button, but abandoned the plan after considerable thought, on the theory that if five buttons weren't enough, only an ax could achieve results.

"With this apparatus you can sit comfortably and turn off the radio before a crooner can start. It maintains a golden silence during his performance and then you can switch the set on again after he has finished."

Three years ago Caskey was sitting in his parlor listening to an orchestra program when all of a sudden somebody started to tell him he'd better eat wootsie-tootsies or all his hair would fall out, according to his partner, George R. Morrise.

"The longer the loudspeaker lectured about the dangers of dandruff, the madder Caskey got", Morrisey explained. "He didn't have dandruff. Only dander. He said something ought to be done. He did it.

"His first radio turner-offer was a little box on the arm of his chair. It had one button on the outside and an electric clock within. As soon as an aerial salesman started to sell Caskey anything he didn't want, he'd push the button and his radio would remain silent for one minute.

"This model was fine as far as it went, but he soon realized it didn't go far enough. It would interrupt a crooner for a minute, all right, but when the minute was up, all Caskey could do was put his fingers in his ears.



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"What his invention needed was flexibility. He went down into the cellar, out of Mrs. Caskey's way, and there he perfected his invention, slowly, lovingly."

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#### TELEVISION REPORTED FLOP AT OLYMPICS

Television was a flop in connection with the Olympic games in Berlin, according to a German correspondent.

"German post office department undertook to televise all the important athletic contests from stadium and swimming pool," the Berlin dispatch said. "Pictures and accompanying sound were broadcast on two ultra-shortwaves. Definition of 180 lines, 25 frames per second, was very unclear and unsatisfactory. Two intermediate mobile television vans and three electric eyes were used.

"Attendance at first day's demonstration was very meager as government withheld announcement from press and public until the last minute. Those who did come to the Post Museum television station saw pictures on a large screen with shadowy outlines and partly unrecognizable.

"Television under practical, rather than controlled laboratory conditions, produced results below what arranged tests have achieved heretofore.

"This disappointing transmission is deemed to have hampered progress of television here. General feeling is that commercially practical television is still several years off. Public interest in the novelty was extremely tepid.

"Some eighteen new public television receiving rooms were added for the Olympic games. About a dozen already in existence were scattered through Berlin. Large screen cathode ray-type projection equipment was used."

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#### POLITICAL RADIO DRIVE LIKENED TO MERCHANDISING

"Radio influence in the political campaign goes much deeper than the new entertainment technique in actual programs," says Variety. The rest of the tricks developed by commercial broadcasting are also being employed. Candidates are sold in packages like candy. Special selling copy for foreign language groups,

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testimonials from celebrities, appeals to various income groups and the whole rigamarole of radio advertising agencies are being twisted to fit the campaign.

"Men trained in network and advertising agency jobs are prominent this year in the campaign propaganda factories. Such personnel, in fact, tends to rank with the newspapermen who have traditionally been prominent as behind-the-scenes manipulators.

"Political parties are being reduced to merchandise which can be exchanged for votes in accordance with a well-conceived marketing plan taking stock of income levels, race, local problems, exactly as does a commercial sponsor. This differs no whit from the tactics employed by Lifebuoy, Chase & Sanborn, or any other of a thousand consumer commodities.

"Radio is held chiefly responsible for getting both political parties off the old oratorical wind and free cigars standard. Prez F. D. R.'s aptitude with a mike set a competitive standard that others had to follow. Furthermore, since radio audiences are used to better and better grades of ether bait, the politicians now find themselves in the show biz if they want to make any impression on listeners. Once in the radio show biz they necessarily have to adopt all the marketing frippery invented by advertisers and agencies to make the job complete."

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#### CBS LEASES MANHATTAN THEATRE IN N. Y. C.

Leasing and conversion of the Manhattan Theatre, 1697 Broadway, New York, as a radio playhouse, with a seating capacity of 1,300, was announced this week by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Columbia officials said that the move was being made to meet the demand for larger studio facilities, especially to accommodate the amateur-hour broadcast headed by Major Bowes, which will be shifted from the WEAJ network to WABD in September.

The Little Theatre, 244 West Forty-fourth Street, which had been used as a radio playhouse studio of 475 seats, since February, 1935, will be vacated by the Columbia System on October 1, when the lease expires.

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## FARNSWORTH IMPRESSES FCC WITH TELEVISION REQUEST

Philo T. Farnsworth, who several years ago achieved the name of "the boy wonder in television", presented such convincing evidence that he knew what he was talking about at a FCC examiner's hearing on Thursday, August 20, that indications are that he will be given an experimental visual broadcasting permit to erect a station near Philadelphia.

On behalf of the Farnsworth Television Company of Pennsylvania, Mr. Farnsworth applied for a single construction permit for experimental, visual and synchronized sound track of frequencies 60,000 to 80,000 kilocycles and 42,000 to 56,000 kilocycles with 1 kilowatt power. His work, he said, had now progressed to a point beyond which it cannot be carried much further without the privileges conferred by the desired permit.

The system developed by Mr. Farnsworth in the course of researches and experimental work extending over a period of eight years and involving the expenditure of from \$700,000 to \$800,000 is an all electric system of high definition having none of the flying disks or other mechanical devices used in earlier experiments with television.

According to James P. Buchanan, FCC engineer who was the last witness at today's hearing, Mr. Farnsworth's researches "promise substantial contributions to the art of television."

On the basis of observation of two demonstrations conducted by Mr. Farnsworth, one a year and a half ago, and the other last Tuesday, Mr. Buchanan told Rosel Hyde, FCC examiner, before whom the hearing was held, that the results of both were good with "considerable improvement" between the demonstrations.

"The clearness and detail of his pictures in outdoor scenes was really remarkable," Mr. Buchanan said. "The absence of flicker" in Mr. Farnsworth's television picture was another point emphasized by Mr. Buchanan. This likewise was stressed by Donald K. Lippincott of San Francisco, consulting engineer and patent lawyer, who appeared as attorney for the Farnsworth Company. Testifying as an expert familiar with the results achieved at home and abroad, Mr. Lippincott said that Mr. Farnsworth "has progressed much further in production of detail and elimination of flicker than others in this country and than either the Baird Television in England or the Ferenseh Company of Germany.



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In reply to questions designed to establish the financial responsibility of his company Mr. Farnsworth testified that it was wholly owned by a California corporation and financed by its stockholders to whatever extent was required in addition to its earned income. He said he was not authorized to disclose the names of those who had or would put up most of the money for the research and experimental work of his company, but named as three of the stockholders J. B. McCargar, George Everson and Seymour Turner, son of Frank T. Turner, all of San Francisco.

Mr. Farnsworth's testimony in support of his application was developed in answer to questions asked first by his own counsel, Henry Temin of Philadelphia, and afterward by Tyler Berry, counsel for the commission, with occasional direct queries by Mr. Hyde. He was followed on the stand by Mr. Lippincott, and by Mr. Buchanan.

The evidence presented will be examined by Mr. Hyde and reported to the commission for action within four to six weeks.

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#### RCA INSTITUTES NOT GIVING COURSE IN TELEVISION

RCA is not giving courses in television nor does it contemplate putting television receivers on the market early in 1937, Horton Heath, of the RCA department of information, writes to deny a story reprinted by the Neim News Letter last week.

The letter follows in full:

"In your August 14th Communications Letter there appears a news item entitled, 'Television To Be Early 1937 Reality Says RCA Institute'. This article, which seems to be based upon a story which ran in the New York World Telegram of August 10, contains a number of inaccuracies which we feel it would be to your interest and that of your subscribers to correct.

"RCA Institutes is not now conducting, and has never conducted, any course in television. The course referred to is a special sound course for members of the Moving Picture Operators Local 306. No instruction in television is given in the course.

"There is no foundation whatever for the statement that RCA television receiving sets will be put on the market

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'shortly after Christmas', or at any other specified time; or that whenever in the future such receiving sets may be manufactured they will be put on the market for 'less than \$200' or any other specified amount.

"The prospect of the commercial introduction of television is in the same status today that it was last June during hearings before the Federal Communications Commission, at which time the indefinite nature of the prospect was clearly stated and explained by David Sarnoff and others.

"Whatever statement may have been made to some newspaper reporter which formed the basis for the report quoted in your August 14th letter was wholly unauthorized, and was not made by any member of the RCA organization."

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#### ELDER MICHAUX DEVOTES RADIO WEALTH TO RACE MEMORIAL

Elder Lightfoot Solomon Michaux, one-time fish peddler and now Washington's famous evangelist of the air, this week was singing his famed "Happy Am I" anthem with unusual gusto. For his dream had come true.

Also pleased was Harry Butcher, vice president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, who discovered and developed the colored evangelist into one of the most popular non-commercial radio features of WJSV. For several years he also was on CBS.

Some time ago Elder Michaux began digging into history to locate that section which might be called the cradle of Negro slavery in the United States. He decided it was Jamestown, Virginia.

This week he announced he had acquired 1,100 acres of land within sight of historic Jamestown Island, and that thereon would be established "The National Memorial to the Progress of the Colored Race in America."

The dynamic pastor of the Radio Church of God, whose sermons and lively hymns have been heard by millions over the air, outlined ambitious plans for his memorial on the James River.

He said it would become a "Mecca" for thousands who annually will journey there for sports on water and land; for

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educational facilities; for "song fests to equal those held annually in Germany and in Switzerland;" for conferences and conventions. Radio apparatus will be installed, Elder Michaux said, to broadcast the musical, educational and spiritual programs.

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#### BAR GROUP TO CONSIDER CURB ON COURT BROADCASTS

The American Bar Association will consider proposed curbs on newspaper and radio "hippodroming" of American criminal justice when it meets in annual convention at Boston the week of August 24.

A report criticizing the actions of the press and the radio at sensational court trials was released this week by the association's committee on criminal procedure and will be presented at the Boston meeting. The major part of the critical report was aimed at newspapers.

Stressing publicity given the trial of Bruno Hauptmann for the kidnapping of the infant son of Colonel and Mrs. Charles A. Lindbergh, the report proposes enactment of legislation that would strengthen existing contempt of court statutes.

"The most serious criticism of American criminal procedure today," the report said, "is that the judges of the courts permit newspapers to usurp the court's own duties and functions.

"Newspaper interference with criminal justice always appears most flagrantly in celebrated criminal cases. Those judicial proceedings, therefore, in which American criminal justice most needs to be a calm investigation of the truth are, on the contrary, most violently 'hippodromed' and 'panicked' by the press."

Citing proposals advanced in the past for "correcting the present system," the report suggested that a new statute might be enacted to give the courts more broad powers of punishing for contempt as a weapon for controlling publicity in criminal trials.

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## INDIA TO CONSTRUCT CHAIN OF RADIO STATIONS

Immediate construction of a radio chain of nine new transmitting stations, located in various parts of India, was recommended in a recent report to the government made by H. L. Kirke, director of the British Broadcasting Company's research department.

Construction of an elaborate radio system is in keeping with Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's announced policy to make the fullest possible use of radio. This medium will be used extensively in India's new campaign of rural reconstruction.

Kirke has just completed an intensive study of broadcasting problems in this country. He recommended that the first consideration must be distribution.

To carry out this program he reported medium wave re-transmitting stations should be established in various parts of India. These stations should cater in language and program material for the province in which they are located.

Kirke's report indicated India offers a large field to the manufacturer who can produce cheap, simple receiving sets. At present Japanese sets are about the only ones on the market. British firms have, according to the report, scarcely touched this field.

At present virtually all broadcasts are made from Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay. Empire shortwave programs are rebroadcast for English listeners.

Considerable research work is to be undertaken immediately to enable maximum benefit from large sums of money the government plans to spend on radio broadcasting.

Indian universities and three scientific institutes already have started work on various radio and broadcasting problems

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The Swedish Postmaster-General has placed a contract for the erection of a 100-kw. regional broadcasting station at Horby (Scanla) with the Telefunken Company. Preparatory work is already in progress. The new transmitter will be of a similar design to those at Berlin, Hamburg, Breslau, and Langenbert (Cologne).

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## U. S. PROVIDES EQUIPMENT FOR PANAMA STATION

Equipment from the United States has arrived on the Isthmus of Panama for a radio broadcasting station which will be established in the city David, Province of Chiriqui. The station has been licensed by the Panama Government to operate with 200 watts on a wave length of 11.740 kc., and has been assigned the call letters HPSL. The station will be known as ASIUL AIRAM, which is the phrase MARIA LUISA in reverse.

Leo Marchowsky is the manager of the company which is known as Compania Chiricana de Radiodifusion y Television, S. A. It was organized as a stock company in Chiriqui and is said to be principally supported by subscriptions amongst the residents of that region.

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## INDUSTRY NOTES

The Philadelphia Orchestra will begin early in November a series of weekly broadcasts over the nationwide CBS network, under the sponsorship of a group of financial institutions, including the Chase National Bank of New York, the First National Bank of Chicago, the Pennsylvania Company of Philadelphia, and the Marine Midland group.

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The Mutual Broadcasting System, through the facilities of the British Broadcasting Corporation, will present many of the outstanding transatlantic programs this fall. Arrangements are also being made by the BBC with the Canadian Radio Commission to facilitate the relaying of programs picked up by Canadian short wave stations to the Mutual network. These arrangements were negotiated with the BBC by John Steele, Mutual Broadcasting System's London and European representative.

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False claims for the therapeutic value of "Nuga-Tone" are alleged in a complaint issued by the Federal Trade Commission against National Laboratory, 767 Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, a radio advertiser, which sells that product as a treatment for diseases of the stomach, intestinal and other organs.

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