

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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October 20, 1936

VANDENBERG INCIDENT PRESENTS NEW PROBLEM TO FCC

The attempt of Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R.), of Michigan, to use the recorded words of President Roosevelt in an imaginary interview over the Columbia Broadcasting System network last Saturday night has not only proved a sensation of the presidential campaign but has raised a new problem for the Federal Communications Commission.

Inclined at first to dismiss the incident as something to be decided by Columbia and the Republican National Committee, the FCC was compelled by the pressure of public interest, fanned by newspapers, to agree to an investigation. It is expected to discuss the matter at a regular meeting Wednesday, October 21st.

The crux of the issue appears to FCC officials to be whether CBS has the right to bar recorded programs on a political broadcast providing the sponsors comply with FCC rules requiring a previous announcement that a certain portion of the broadcast is produced by electrical transcription.

Under FCC rules, it was explained, Senator Vandenberg was conforming to the Commission's requirements providing he made it clear that President Roosevelt's words were reproduced by records. However, there is some doubt on this point not cleared up to this time.

After deciding whether FCC rules were adhered to, the Commission must determine whether the CBS policy of barring recorded speeches is in the public interest and may be invoked against political speakers.

This is the second time this year that the Columbia Broadcasting System has become embroiled in a political controversy. Last Spring it brought down the wrath of the red baiters upon its head by permitting Earl Browder, later to be named Communist candidate for President, to speak over its network.

Until the Vandenberg incident focused the attention of the nation upon the CBS policy, the FCC apparently had never questioned the right of the broadcaster to bar recorded addresses.

In fact, as Harry C. Butcher, Vice-President of CBS, in charge of WJSV, Washington, recalled, Anning S. Prall, Chairman of the Commission, was kept off the air within the past fortnight when he tried to have a recorded address broadcast from KTSA, San Antonio, Texas, after finding he was unable to fulfill an engagement.

Pointing out that Chairman Prall made no complaint, Mr. Butcher said:

"The fact that Columbia barred a recording by the Democratic Chairman of the FCC would hardly seem to support published inferences that our action in the case of Senator Vandenberg was dictated by fear of either the Democratic Administration or the FCC."

The Vandenberg stunt, which caught CBS officials unawares and led to general confusion in the broadcast was some stations tuned out the Michigan Senator, oddly enough was advertised in advance, though not in detail, by G.O.P. press agents.

An example of the press agency, consisting of a telegram to the Heinl News Service from Ben Pratt, G.O.P. publicity man at Chicago, was carried in the Heinl News Service of October 16th.

The Republican National Committee could not have devised a stunt that would bring about more publicity while at the same time placing the Administration on the defensive.

The only Federal Communications Commissioner who would comment on the incident prior to the meeting scheduled for Wednesday was George Henry Payne (Republican) of New York, who some weeks ago publicly denounced the action of two Los Angeles stations who refused to carry President Roosevelt's "fireside chat" as a sustaining feature.

On the Monday following the broadcast he was quoted in the N. Y. Times as saying that Senator Vandenberg's stunt was unethical and disrespectful.

The Michigan Senator, while stating that the incident was closed, telegraphed a personal protest to Commissioner Payne, defying him to "identify a single disrespectful word, unless you call it disrespectful to prove a broken pledge."

As for ethics, he said, "I suggest that fair play cannot be more scrupulous in quoting a candidate for President than to use his own voice and his own words."

Commissioner Payne in an answer to Senator Vandenberg, after stating that the protest would be brought to the attention of the full FCC, said:

"When I stated that the broadcast was unethical, I was basing my opinion upon the reprint in the New York Herald-Tribune which fails to show that any endeavor was made to clarify what was going on in the studio until 400 to 500 words had been spoken. In view of your protest I am sending for an official transcription of the broadcast."

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Although statements were issued right and left by leading Republicans and Democrats, the FCC issued only one statement prior to its meeting. It consisted of a mimeographed copy of a letter received by Commissioner Payne from his friend, Ralph Beaver Strassburger, publisher of the Norristown (Pa.) Times-Herald.

"As a member of the public in whose interest personally the radio is operated", he said in part, "I protest against the chicanery and deception bordering on fraud on which Senator Vandenberg's interview was based."

Mr. Strassburger stated that he was wiring the Commissioner because of his "vigorous attitude" in the WLW, Cincinnati, case and that of the two Los Angeles stations which barred the President's address.

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NBC'S SEPTEMBER SALES 33% OVER LAST YEAR

According to figures released by Publishers Information Bureau for "National Advertising Records", NBC's September, 1936, gross network time sales gave it the biggest September in its history and rang up the fifth largest monthly total ever accounted for by the National Broadcasting Company.

Total for the NBC Red Network in September, 1936, was \$1,993,371; for the NBC Blue Network, \$893,266; total - \$2,886,637, or 33.4% higher than the corresponding month last year. September's total was 19.2% above August, 1936.

September, 1936, network time sales have been topped by only four other months in NBC's history; January, March and December, 1935, and March, 1936.

In September of last year, NBC weekday daytime revenue amounted to \$313,653. In September, 1936, the figure rose to \$767,028 - an increase of 144.5%. The first nine months of 1936 showed a weekday daytime revenue for NBC networks of \$4,863,970, representing an increase of 23.6% over the same period last year.

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50 MILLIVOLTS URGED AS MINIMUM FOR CITY STATIONS

Fifty millivolts was proposed as the minimum signal of broadcasting stations in metropolitan areas by Charles W. Horn, noted radio engineer, as witness for the National Broadcasting Company at the broadcast band hearing before the Federal Communications Commission.

"In the more built-up sections and particularly the larger cities", he said, "we experience a considerable amount of so-called man-made static which is due to electrical devices. Most man-made static is due to either defective electrical equipment or such apparatus as the older style X-Ray machines which are inherently noise producing and which must be installed with proper shielding.

"Trackless trolleys, using the two-wire overhead system and equipped with pneumatic tires, present a problem that needs serious attention.

"In radio reception the governing factor is always the ratio of the strength of the desired signal as against the intensity of the interfering signal or static.

"Because antennas in metropolitan districts pick up a greater amount of electrical noise, it is necessary that the desired signal strength be greater in order to maintain the proper signal-to-noise ratio.

"However, in these areas an additional obstacle is encountered because of the shielding effects of steel structures which causes a reduction in the amount of radio signal energy which arrives at the average antenna. While there may be 10 millivolts of signal intensity in the atmosphere above such a city, the antenna may receive but a fraction of the energy because of such shielding.

"The only solution possible is a higher signal strength over such territories, and our observations and measurements indicate that in metropolitan areas the signal intensity must not be less than 50 millivolts in order to render acceptable service.

"Even with this signal strength there will be spots that will not obtain adequate service due to exceptionally deep shadows cast by steel structures, but these may be classed as extreme cases."

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BOOK ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS WRITTEN BY HERRING, GROSS

The economic and regulatory aspects of telecommunications are covered thoroughly in a book, "Telecommunications", just published by McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York (\$5). The authors are Dr. James M. Herring, Assistant Professor at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce University of Pennsylvania, and Gerald C. Gross, Chief of the International Section, Federal Communications Commission.

The book, containing 544 pages, first presents a factual background dealing with the development of the communication industries, the source of revenues, and the factors affecting costs, rate-making, and consolidation.

Then follows a description and analysis of Federal regulation of communications prior to 1934, a detailed analysis of the Communications Act of 1934, and a final summing up of what has been done and what has been left undone in the matter of regulation from the viewpoint of sound national policy.

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HEARST WOULD ALLOCATE RADIO ON ABILITY TO PAY

The ability of a community to support one or more broadcasting stations was proposed as the key to the allocation problem by a spokesman for Hearst Radio, Inc., at the broadcast hearing before the Federal Communications Commission.

E. J. Gough, Vice-President of the Hearst subsidiary which now operates ten radio stations, outlined a formula of sound business policy as the standard for station operation to be considered by the Commission along with the technical and financial ability of an applicant.

"When once it is established by careful economic analysis that a community possesses as many stations of proper class and kind as the community can reasonably be expected to support, then the potentiality of advertising of these stations should be safe-guarded by protection from unreasonable further increases in facilities and consequent ruinous competition."

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COMMUNICATIONS HELD BLOCK TO RADIO

The Communications Act of 1934 has prevented rather than aided the progress of radio, E. H. Harris, Chairman of the ANPA Radio Committee, told the Inland Press Association last week.

At the same time he read letters from small town publishers who reported successful operation of broadcasting stations.

"The uncertainty as to the extent of the powers delegated by Congress to this Commission under this Act and the fear of reprisals on the part of the Federal government have killed the initiative of telephone, telegraph and radio systems", he said.

He also charged that through the FCC "the mailed fist of the Federal government" has been held over telephone, telegraph and radio.

The question most frequently asked by newspaper publishers is whether it is advisable for newspapers in small communities to own and operate a radio station, Mr. Harris said. He then read from several letters from publishers who have installed stations.

An Inland member who set up a plant in 1930 said, in part: "During the early years we had plenty of grief and losses, but we made good use of the station in the usual way and tied our community more closely to the newspaper. Over the six years we have been able to make an excellent showing on the right side of the books. The sub-chains are coming into importance and State by State affiliations are being made. The larger chains are loaded with more business than they can handle and there is a sluff off to the smaller chains, and greater demand all the time for the use of transcriptions on spot stations. Finally, radio stations should be controlled by newspapers. They belong to them in that they can be better served that way."

Another publisher said: "Our broadcast experience has been quite satisfactory from every angle. We believed when we purchased and installed new equipment throughout that broadcasting was a natural for the newspaper. After six years' experience we are still of that opinion."

Other replies were in the same tenor.

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EXTENSIVE TELEVISION RESEARCH PLANNED BY JAPAN

Continued and exhaustive research in connection with the development of television is to be carried on in Japan by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation, a report to the Commerce Department from its Tokyo office states.

The television experiments will be directed by Dr. K. Takayanagi, of the Hamamatsu Engineering College who has been released from his duties at that institution following overtures by the Government, it was stated.

The actual work in connection with the television experiments will not start until next Spring when the new 200,000-yen (\$60,000) laboratory is added to the radio research institute in Kinuta, a suburb of Tokyo.

The Japan Broadcasting Corporation, according to the report, is planning to make direct television views of the 1940 Olympic games to be held in Tokyo available to homes throughout Japan or at least within the limits of Greater Tokyo.

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EAST COAST STATIONS RETURNED TO COAST GUARD

An agreement has been reached between the Coast Guard and the Navy Department wherein the radio stations at Winthrop, Mass., New London, Conn., and New York City, experimentally transferred about two years ago to the Navy, were returned to the Coast Guard.

The agreement will bring the services closer together from a communications' viewpoint. Such subjects as Coast Guard liaison, naval district - Coast Guard division communication, more concentrated use of existing facilities, more efficient use of wire, radio and visual signals and closer connection between Coast Guard communication and the naval communication system were discussed.

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CBS SEPTEMBER BILLINGS 69.2% OVER LAST YEAR

Time sales on the Columbia Broadcasting System network for September, 1936, totalled \$1,838,932, a gain of 69.2% over September, 1935. Cumulative total for the first nine months of 1936 is \$15,550,070, 28.5% ahead of the same period last year.

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AMATEURS, S-W SETS BARRED IN KOREA

Short-wave receiving sets, amateur transmitting equipment, and radio advertising are barred in Chosen (Korea), according to the U. S. Department of Commerce.

Radio Broadcasting in Chosen is conducted solely by the Chosen Broadcasting Association, under special license from the Government General of Chosen, from which it receives an annual subsidy.

One central and two smaller stations are maintained. The central station at Keijo (Seoul), station JODK broadcasts in Japanese (309 meters) and Korean (710 meters). The programs are of a general nature and widely varied.

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PAPER AND RIVAL STATIONS EFFECT AGREEMENT

An unusual working agreement between the Tulsa Tribune and independently owned (and competing) radio stations KTUL and KVOO now has the Tribune on the air with 20 minutes of programs and a dozen spot announcements daily, and the programs of both stations in the Tribune as paid advertising, according to Editor & Publisher.

The radio stations, owned by Tulsa Broadcasting Co. (KTUL) and Southwest Sales Corp. (KVOO) are using between 30 and 40 inches of newspaper space daily for their programs.

Prior to the agreement, the Tribune had been printing the programs on Sunday as a news feature.

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U. S. BUREAU STUDIES RADIO HIGH FREQUENCIES

The U. S. Bureau of Standards has made a study to determine the characteristics of radio propagation at high frequencies, i.e., higher than the broadcast frequencies, Dr. J. H. Dellinger, Chief of the Radio Section, discloses in his annual report. This was done largely through continuous automatic recording of received intensities of distant high-frequency stations. In addition, some progress was made in correlating with such records the data resulting from the study of the ionosphere.

The intensities of two stations were recorded regularly and additional ones part of the time. One of the two regular was Station W1XK, Millis, Mass., 9570 kc., about 600 kilometers distant, operating about 18 hours per day; it was particularly desirable for the study of the critical frequencies of the F2 region and sporadic E. The second regular recorder was set up for the frequency 6060 kc., the time on which was shared by W8XAL, Mason, Ohio, and W3XAU, Philadelphia, Pa. Together the two stations operated about 18 hours per day.

"Upon studying the reports from many sources throughout the world, it was ascertained that the fadeouts occurred simultaneously on the side of the earth illuminated by the sun and not on the dark side", the report states. "The fadeouts which were very widespread, destroying all high-frequency communication throughout the illuminated hemisphere, had a tendency to occur in periods separated about 54 days. A number of these widespread general fadeouts were simultaneous with visible solar eruptions.

"A fadeout is characterized by abrupt disappearance of the radio field, becoming complete within a few seconds from the beginning. The zero field intensity may continue from a few minutes to two hours. The return to normal is usually gradual. Higher frequency stations return before those of lower frequency. Thus, the W8XAL transmissions on 6060 kc. always remained out for a longer period than the W1XK transmissions on 9570 kc., although the time of beginning was the same not only for these two transmissions but for all transmissions affected. Ionosphere measurements by the pulse method from 2500 kcs. up indicated the complete absence of reflections from the ionosphere during a fadeout. When reflections returned, those at the higher frequencies were returned first."

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The belief in the Hebrides Islands that seals will croon to the accompaniment of a harp has inspired a plan to broadcast seal music at Glasgow, Scotland.

Andrew Stewart, a radio official, said seals crooned in a recognizable harmony when some friends sang while passing them in a boat.

"I then cautiously approached within earshot of some seals near Argyll and crooned a simple lilt", Mr. Stewart continued. "The seals responded with a low chorus which distinctly followed the rhythm of my song. Their note is something similar to that of a clarinet."

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NBC TO PLAY HOST TO EUROPEAN RADIO OFFICIALS

The largest and most distinguished group of European radio officials ever to visit the United States, including a member of the French Cabinet and high representatives of almost every major country, will arrive in New York early in November to study American broadcasting methods and facilities, according to an announcement from the International Broadcasting Union, with offices in Geneva, Switzerland.

Heading the group of noted foreigners will be French Minister of Communications, Robert Jardillier, and Maurice Rambert, President of the I.B.U. M. Rambert, one of the world's earliest radio pioneers, is known to broadcasting officials throughout the globe.

On arrival in New York, the party will be greeted by Maj. Lenox R. Lohr, President of the National Broadcasting Company, and Max Jordan and Fred Bate, NBC European representatives. Major Lohr issued the invitation to the I.B.U. on behalf of American broadcasting, and both Mr. Jordan and Bate will be in New York to serve as joint host with Major Lohr during the party's visit.

The first members of the delegation, which will number about 25, will arrive from Sweden on the "S.S. Gripsholm" on October 25, with the party to be completed when the "S.S. Europa" docks on November 5. M. Jardillier and President Rambert will arrive on the "S.S. Champlain" on November 4.

The visit of the foreign officials will last for two weeks, during which time the group is expected to inspect radio facilities in New York, Washington, Chicago, Buffalo and possibly other cities.

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CBS DEFENDS INSURANCE DEAL WITH JAMES ROOSEVELT

The Columbia Broadcasting System said October 19th in reply to a telegram from Senator Daniel O. Hastings, Delaware Republican, that it had purchased insurance for its employees from James Roosevelt, son of the President.

Senator Hastings had telegraphed to Edward Klauber, Executive Vice-President of Columbia, asking him if it were true that young Roosevelt sold insurance to the broadcasting company. Mr. Klauber replied:

"Two years ago the Columbia Broadcasting System decided to take out group insurance. * * * This business was placed with the Travelers Life Insurance Company and was solicited by that

company as well as through their accredited agents, Roosevelt and Sargent. The plan, jointly submitted by these men, appealed to us as more satisfactory than any other proposition we received. James Roosevelt participated in this solicitation. * * *

"We must point out to you that sons of the President of the United States are entitled to engage in private business as well as any other private citizens. * * *"

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CBS NAMES BOARD TO HONOR "HAM" OPERATORS

Five noted men are to serve on a Board of Award which has been formed to select each year the individual who, through amateur radio, has contributed most to the American people, either in research, technical development or operating achievement, according to announcement by William S. Paley, President of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

The members of the Board are Rear Admiral Cary T. Grayson, Chairman of the American Red Cross; C. P. Edwards, Director of Radio for the Canadian Department of Marine; Anning S. Prall, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission; J. H. Dellinger, Chief of the Radio Section of the United States Department of Commerce's National Bureau of Standards, and A. E. Kennelly, Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering at Harvard University.

All members of the Board are experienced authorities on amateur radio activities and their recommendations will be followed by Columbia in presenting an annual award of merit to the nation's most outstanding amateur operator.

Columbia's decision to pay tribute to outstanding amateurs was announced on September 6, at the National Amateur Radio Show held in conjunction with the American Radio Relay League's Central Division Convention at Chicago.

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Paul B. Klugh, formerly of the Zenith Radio Corporation, as National Chairman of the Radio and Music Division of the Republican National Committee, has just sent out pamphlets entitled "A Non-Partisan Appeal to Business Men."

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