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January 19, 1937

CELLER TO SPONSOR BILL FOR U. S. SHORT-WAVE STATION

A Government-owned Pan American short-wave station, which has been in the offing for several years, appeared a step nearer reality this week as Representative Celler (D.), of New York, disclosed that he will introduce a bill to establish it.

Congressman Celler apparently has become interested in the project through George Henry Payne, the Federal Communications Commissioner, who only a fortnight ago reiterated a charge that a "Washington radio lobby" is attempting to take away from the Federal Government the five short-wave frequencies allocated for the station.

In an address at Harvard University, Commissioner Payne recalled that an Executive Order had been issued by the President allocating five short-wave frequencies for the Pan American station, that the Berne Bureau had been notified, and that an engineering survey had been made. There the matter had stopped for more than a year. He further charged that certain commercial interests have been responsible for blocking the project and were now trying to get possession of the frequencies.

The five frequencies which were set aside for the station following the Pan American conference in Montevideo in 1932 are: 6120, 9550, 11730, 15130 and 21500 kc.

Columbia Broadcasting System's W2XE, New York, uses 6120 kc. on a "loan" from the Navy.

Representative Celler's proposal, which is said to have the endorsement of administration officials, calls for the construction of a short-wave transmitter in or near Washington at a cost of approximately \$750,000. Some \$50,000 would be appropriated yearly for the maintenance of the station and the preparation of programs.

Sponsors of the station have indicated they will appeal for support of the project on two grounds: viz., that the broadcasts will seek to improve further the goodwill between the Latin Americas and the United States, just revived by President Roosevelt's South American tour; and that the station will be able to offset foreign propaganda from European short-wave transmitters now directing programs to South and Central America.

The Pan American station project, moreover, is in line with the move of the National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System to transmit programs especially to Latin America.

Only a few months ago the Commerce Department criticized the American short-wave stations for, in effect, ignoring the South American market and permitting European short-wave stations to get the jump on this country.

A report from the U. S. Trade Commissioner at Buenos Aires stated that European short-wave broadcasts were being heard in South America better than American stations. At least five European stations, the report said, were heard regularly by South Americans.

Since then both NBC and CBS have inaugurated new services designed for South and Central America.

Broadcasters are disturbed, however, by the possibility that establishment of a government-owned Pan American station may open the way for additional government-owned stations, possibly in the long waves.

The Office of Education, it is pointed out, is becoming increasingly interested in the educational uses of radio and will be equipped with a modern studio in the new Interior Department Building.

The Educational Radio Project, sponsored by the Office of Education with WPA funds, now has four educational programs going out on commercial stations.

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CULKIN'S DRY BILL INCLUDES WINES AND BEER

Representative Culkin(D.), of New York, introduced a bill this week to bar the radio advertising of not only liquor but beer and wine as well. The bill reads, in part:

"No persons shall broadcast by means of any radio station . . . or permit any advertising or information concerning any alcoholic beverage, whether beer, ale, wine, gin, whiskey, brandy or by any other name."

The penalty provided is a fine of from \$500 to \$1,000 and imprisonment of from three months to a year for each day's offense.

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GENERAL INCREASE IN BROADCASTING POWER IS EXPECTED

A general upward trend in power of broadcasting stations is expected to result from the recommendations of the Engineering Department of the Federal Communications Commission last week. The question of whether more "super-power" outlets with 500 kw., now used only by WLW, Cincinnati, will have to be decided by the Commission on the basis of economic rather than technical factors.

Commander T.A.M. Craven, Chief Engineer, in discussing the power question said:

"In general, the trend of all engineering testimony was toward higher power for all classes of stations. It was clearly indicated that in general the existing empirical standards of the Engineering Department with reference to signal intensities required for good service should be used as a minimum and that in many instances there is needed a higher order of signal intensity to overcome the noise level in cities and the noise level in rural areas, particularly during the Summer and in the southern sections of the country.

"The only way to secure increased signal intensity is by increase in radiated power. However, it should be clearly understood that if the power of all stations were increased generally, the interference which now exists would remain exactly the same insofar as the distance from each station is concerned, and there would be no increase in good service areas free from interference at night unless means were taken to avoid such interference.

"In the opinion of the Engineering Department, and in view of modern technical developments, it would seem desirable that if power were to be increased at various stations, an attempt should be made from the standpoint of interference to secure an additional improvement in service to the public over and above increased signal intensity within existing interference boundaries. This, of course, could not be accomplished in all cases, but in each individual case advantage might be taken of practical opportunities which might exist to secure the service of increased signal intensity which might benefit the local listeners and at the same time create less interference to listeners of a distant station.

"The greatest controversy and difference of opinion existed with respect to power greater than 50 kw. However, with but one exception, all engineers who testified admitted that where side channel interference was not a factor, powers on clear channels in excess of 50 kw. would be a technical advance and would result in an increased signal intensity to remote areas. It is also clear to the Engineering Department that from a technical standpoint any power less than 50 kw. on

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a clear channel is a wasteful use of such frequency on the North American Continent.

"Judging from the testimony, the Engineering Department is of the opinion that social and economic factors involved in powers in excess of 50 kw. are of paramount importance and in our opinion may outweigh engineering considerations in the final determination of this subject by the Commission.

"The Engineering Department is of the opinion that if the Commission accepts the doctrine of clear channel stations, all such stations should employ sufficient power to justify the use of a single channel at night by only one station and that this power should not be less than 50 kw.

"In connection with this question of super power, we are preparing a separate report giving a detailed analysis of the voluminous testimony in the record with respect to the economic phases involving costs, earnings and other facts which may be of assistance to the Commission in its final determination of increases in power. We feel that these facts are important and that the Commission should await its final decision pending the completion of this summary of the evidence."

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SEC INFORMED OF NEGRO NETWORK PROJECT

Construction and operation of a network of stations soliciting Negro listeners is proposed by the Gold Star Radio & Television Corp., 412A, Massachusetts Avenue, Boston. It has notified the Securities & Exchange Commission of its intention to issue stock to finance the project.

The SEC application states that the company is chartered to engage in a general radio and television business. It was incorporated Sept. 28, 1936, in Massachusetts, with Charles Henry Davis, Jr., 538 Tremont St., Boston, President and Director.

Five stations are planned, using directive antenna, in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, New Orleans and Los Angeles, each to cost \$100,000, including \$55,000 reserve for one year's operation, the application states. The stock issue would consist of 99,795 shares of Class A common stock with \$5 par to be offered at \$6.25. Of this \$1.25 per share will cover expenses of the fiscal director, it is stated.

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FINCH UPHELD BY APPEALS BOARD ON FACSIMILE

An attempt by Maurice Artzt to block reissue of a basic patent on radio facsimile to William G. H. Finch, President of Telecommunications, Inc., New York City, has been defeated by a patent office Board of appeals ruling which holds the Finch apparatus involves features not embraced in disclosures previously made and that he is therefore entitled to a patent.

Radio Corporation of America is the party in interest in the interference made against Finch, Artzt having assigned his right to RCA after he applied for a facsimile patent in 1931. Finch was granted his patent in 1934 and later asked reissuance on the basis of amplified claims.

The effect of this decision is to safeguard Finch's patent facsimile patent unless a new appeal is successfully prosecuted before the U. S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals.

If the Patent Office is not reversed, Finch will be placed in a position to collect royalties from all users of the method described in his application. This does not mean, however, that patents cannot be issued for other facsimile apparatus but none can be granted for types which employ any of the more than 47 claims proved by Finch.

Mr. Finch announced this week that he has been granted two important additional patents for improvements on his radio facsimile receiving system. They cover local energization for picture recording controllable by the facsimile signals and also a method whereby a transmitted picture may be etched directly upon a zinc plate by the recording stylus, thus eliminating the photographic steps at the receiving end. From these plates newspaper mats can be made or the plates themselves may be used for newspaper reproduction, the patent states.

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CBS INAUGURATING LATIN-AMERICAN SERVICE

The Columbia Broadcasting System is preparing to inaugurate a series of specially prepared short-wave broadcasts to Central and South America from a new 10 kw directional antenna station W2XE, Wayne, N. J. The time will be from 6 to 10 P.M., EST, on a directional transmission and an additional hour on non-directional.

The CBS Program Department has been instructed to line up all available Latin American talent. Programs will probably consist of news commentaries, musical talent, etc. Several of CBS' sustaining shows have heretofore been short-waved through but there was no set schedule. The policy will be regular in schedule.

The National Broadcasting Company already has started a short-wave program service to Latin-America.

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SCOTT REINTRODUCES BILLS FOR PUBLIC TIME ON RADIO

Bills seeking to compel broadcasting stations to set aside regular periods for "uncensored" public forums and educational purposes and to keep records of requests for time were reintroduced in the House this week by Representative Scott (D.), of California.

The major measure, which would amend Section 315 of the Communications Act, specifies that the time so allocated be "at desirable times of the day and evening" and be used "for uncensored discussion on a non-profit basis of public, social, political, and economic problems, and for educational purposes."

As in political addresses, the station would be required further to grant equal time for speakers who hold contrary views.

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RADIO "DIVINING ROD" DEMONSTRATED IN RADIO CITY

A radio "divining rod", which locates hidden metal objects in the earth and measures the depth of pipes and cables without the use of electrical connections, was demonstrated last week in the outdoor garden of Horticultural Hall, on the eleventh floor of the RCA Building, Rockefeller Center, New York City.

Despite the large number of metal beams and girders inside the walls and floors of the building, a newspaper representative who donned the earphones and carried the "divining rod", easily located a metal chest buried a foot under the surface of the earth in one of the outdoor gardens. It was explained that the proximity of large masses of metal in the building complicated the location of a single smaller metal object.

Notwithstanding the handicap, the newspaper man, who was ignorant of the location of the object, easily found the spot by the maximum sound heard in the earphones. Then the head gardener dug up the chest, which was filled with old coins and metal checks.

The device, known technically as the "M-scope", or "metal-scope" is the invention of Dr. Gerhart R. Fisher, Director of the Fisher Research Laboratories, Palo Alto, Cal.

The "M-scope" consists of two boxes, each about fifteen inches square and three inches thick. In one box is a small radio transmitter generating very short waves. The other box operates as a receiver.

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EDUCATIONAL GROUP CALLS RADIO PARLEY SUCCESSFUL

The first National Conference on Educational Broadcasting, held in Washington, D. C., December 10-12, was definitely successful as an overview of current practises in educational broadcasting", Education by Radio, a bulletin of the National Committee on Education by Radio, declares in its January issue. "It reflected what seems to be a general approbation of the present system of broadcasting, but introduced enough criticism to indicate that room for much improvement still exists. It avoided, in accordance with the wishes of the eighteen sponsoring organizations, any attempt to pass resolutions or to agree upon conclusions. It moved with a smoothness which reflected great credit upon its managers.

"The general sessions, taken as a whole, contributed little towards a solution of the problems which sooner or later must be faced in broadcasting. This suggests that whether another conference is to grow out of the recent one or is called 'de nouveau' at some future time more emphasis might well be placed on analyzing specifically the remaining problems. In this connection it might be suggested that the fruitfulness of such a conference could be enhanced by applying the recognized forum procedure and allowing the immediate and direct questioning of speakers."

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NEW MAGAZINE TO PRINT NEWS THAT CAN'T BE AIRED

A new magazine, The Commentator, will enter the pocket-size edition field with its appearance on the news-stands January 20th. Edited by Lowell Thomas, war correspondent and radio commentator, this new publication will accept no advertising, will sell for twenty-five cents per copy, and is to be published monthly.

Differing from many magazines in the pocket-size field, The Commentator will not reprint excerpts or literary passages from other publications, but with Lowell Thomas' associates in the field of American commentators, it will produce highlights of vital news facts that cannot be divulged over the air.

Editorial associates of Lowell Thomas are: John B. Kennedy, author, editor, and commentator of note, advisory editor.

H. V. Kaltenborn, whose name is known to millions of radio listeners and magazine readers and others.

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RADIO TELETYPES REPLACING WIRES ON AIR LANES

Substitution of radio teletype machines in place of the leased wire system now in effect, seems likely for the Bureau of Commerce's extended communication system in the near future. After nearly two years of successful experiment, a test installation is being made on the new Washington to Nashville airway.

The impending change would mean that weather conditions and probably Department of Agriculture market reports and Weather Bureau detailed reports would be transmitted throughout the country by radio teletype. At present the Bureau of Air Commerce has leased wires covering the continental United States carrying regular aviation weather reports.

Developed by W. E. Jackson, Chief of the Radio Development Section and J. C. Hromada, Bureau radio engineer, the new teletypes have already proved their utility on an experimental basis. Last October the system was demonstrated at Silver Hill, Md., where since the machines have been operating in communication with a station at Baltimore.

The installation of the equipment on the Washington to Nashville airway was decided upon by Bureau officials in October, following the Silver Hill demonstration. Cost of installation will be approximately \$200,000. The project is expected to pay for itself within three years by savings on toll charges for leased wires.

If the experiment proves financially sound, air experts predict it will mean an end to the present system of leased wires, with a considerable saving to the Bureau.

In transmitting a message by radio teletypewriter, the operator types his dispatch on a regular tele-typewriter machine similar to those used for land wire circuits. As he strikes a letter, the machine completes a series of contacts which set up electrical impulses transmitted over the air as code dots and spaces. The radio receiver at the other end of the circuit translates the radio impulses back into letters, the message being printed the same as in wire teletypewriting machines.

The system provides for rapid transmitting, the radio impulses traveling with the speed of light. Moreover, the wavelength used is of such high frequency that ordinary static has no effect on transmitting and receiving. According to Bureau officials, only a bolt of lightning, striking very near a transmitting or receiving station, would interrupt communications. Even then, according to officials, the interruption will only be momentary.

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BROADCASTING FILES ANSWER TO PAYNE LIBEL SUIT

Contending that the statements of fact made in its editorial were true and the expressions of comment were fair and made in good faith, Broadcasting last week filed in the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia, its answer to the \$100,000 libel suit of George H. Payne, Republican member of the Telegraph Division of the Federal Communications Commission. Mr. Payne had charged damage to his "good name, fame and credit" by virtue of the editorial titled "Strange Interlude" published in the October 15th issue of Broadcasting.

The answer was filed by William E. Leahy and Paul M. Segal, Washington attorneys, in behalf of Broadcasting Publications, Inc., Martin Codel, publisher, and Sol Taishoff, editor, who were named as defendants. The plaintiff, in his suit filed December 7th, asked \$50,000 as compensatory damages and \$50,000 as punitive damages through attorney Ellsworth C. Alvord.

The answer categorically denied contentions of injury to the Commissioner. The major contentions were summed up as follows: "The statements of fact contained in the said article complained of in the declaration were true, and the expressions of comment and criticism therein upon the said facts were fair comment on, and criticism of, matters of great public interest, and concern made in good faith and without malice."

The Payne suit recalls a remark attributed to a henchman of the late Senator Penrose, of Pennsylvania, to the effect, "Don't never sue nobody for libel because they might prove it on you."

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FITCH NAMED BUSINESS MANAGER OF NBC PROGRAM DEPARTMENT

C. W. Fitch, Manager of Personnel for the National Broadcasting Company since last September, has been appointed Business Manager of the NBC Program Department. Mr. Fitch already has assumed his new duties, which consist of handling the personnel, budgets and all problems connected with the administration of the Program Department. At present, he is spending several days with each division of the department to acquaint himself with their various activities.

Before joining NBC, Mr. Fitch resigned as Assistant Director of the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration, a post he took in 1935. From 1930 to 1935, he was associated with A Century of Progress in Chicago as Director of Exhibits and assistant to the General Manager, Major Lenox Lohr, now President of NBC.

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RADIO NOTABLES ENJOY ALFALFA FRLOIC

Leaders in the radio industry were among those who enjoyed the Twenty-Fourth Annual Dinner of the Alfalfa Club in Washington, D. C. last Saturday night. As usual, Gene Buck, President of the American Society of Composers, and Vice-President of the Alfalfa Club, was in charge of the vaudeville part of the program and brought with him a number of well-known entertainers from New York.

The radio industry was represented by the following:

Thad H. Brown, Federal Communications Commissioner; Louis G. Caldwell, former General Counsel, Federal Radio Commission; Harry C. Butcher, Vice-President, Columbia Broadcasting System, Washington; Norman S. Case, Federal Communications Commissioner; Lewis M. Crosley, Crosley Radio Corporation, Cincinnati; Walter Damm, Station WTMJ; Ewin L. Davis, Federal Trade Commissioner; Col. Manton Davis, Radio Corporation of America; Charles K. Field, New York City; Donald Flamm, President, WMCA, New York City; John W. Guider, radio counselor, Washington; William S. Hedges, Crosley Radio Corporation, Cincinnati; Thomas P. Littlepage, Sr., radio counselor and former past President of the Alfalfa Club, John M. Littlepage, Thomas P. Littlepage, Jr. and James Littlepage, Washington; Anning S. Prall, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission; John B. Reynolds, Acting Secretary, Federal Communications Commission; Frank M. Russell, Vice-President, National Broadcasting Company, Washington; Kurt Sell, German Broadcasting Company; former Senator James E. Watson, of Indiana; Judge E. O. Sykes, Federal Communications Commissioner; Senator Wallace H. White, of Maine; and Frank Wozencraft, Radio Corporation of America.

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MEDIA RECORDS ENTERS RADIO ADVERTISING FIELD

Media Records, Inc., who measures space used by individual advertisers in the nation's newspapers, started January 1st to expand the service to include complete reports on radio advertising as well as general magazines, farm papers and trade publications.

C. E. Rock, President of Media Records, and formerly with Gillette Safety Razor Co., Boston, before he organized Media Records in 1927, asked stations to submit data on their accounts, stating that the service "will supply a great deal of vital information about radio to the station owners and those charged with the responsibility of the sale of radio advertising."

He said he has received assurance from leaders in the industry that the information will be forthcoming from stations.

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UNION HEAD HELD IN ATTACK ON RADIO OPERATOR

Hoyt S. Haddock, retiring President of the American Radio Telegraphists Association, was arrested last week and taken to Rockland County, N.Y., where the authorities are investigating an attack on Raymond Wolf, 28 years old, radio operator of the Munson liner "Western World", in his home at Spring Valley, N. Y., on Thursday night last. The attack was attributed to striking ship radio operators.

Mr. Haddock was arrested at the Custom House in New York City and a warrant was served on him charging second degree assault. Mr. Haddock was released on \$1,000 bail after pleading not guilty before Judge Finkelstein of Spring Valley. He was held for the action of the grand jury. District Attorney George V. Dorsey said, however, he did not believe Mr. Haddock was involved in the case and that the telegraphists' leader probably was mistaken for someone else.

None of the principals in the assault could identify Mr. Haddock, the prosecutor said. He was held in bail chiefly so his fingerprints might be compared with those found on lamps and furniture in the Wolf home. The police said three men beat Mr. Wolf into insensibility and bound his mother and his sister with electric cords snatched from electric lamps.

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SOUTH AFRICA OFFERS GOOD RADIO MARKET

South Africa offers a very good radio market, although it is highly competitive, according to a U. S. consular report to the Department of Commerce. The European population of the country is very small and only amounts to approximately two million persons. There are a great number of radio receivers already being sold there and the market is more or less flooded with makes. It is estimated, however, that more than three-fourths of the sales are made by a half-dozen American makes and the Dutch Philips, which carry replacement parts and operate service stations in all of the larger towns.

In order to enter this field successfully, it would be necessary to have an outstanding set selling at a very low figure or to do a considerable amount of advertising in order to bring the sets to the attention of the buying public.

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