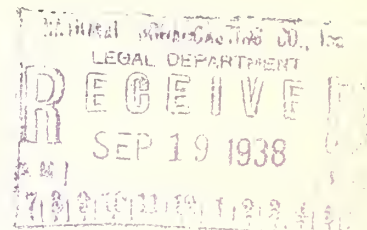


HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

2400 CALIFORNIA STREET

WASHINGTON, D. C.

CONFIDENTIAL — Not for Publication



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No. 1158

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September 16, 1938

EXAMINER O.K.'S G. E. TELEVISION SYSTEM PLAN

Bringing the advent of television as a medium of public entertainment a little closer, General Electric Company this week cleared the first hurdle in its plan to set up an extensive television system embracing three cities.

Examiner R. H. Hyde recommended to the Federal Communications Commission that it grant permits for television stations in Albany, New York, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Schenectady, New York.

While General Electric has been experimenting with visual broadcasting in its laboratories for some time, it has operated no television stations.

General Electric's proposal, as outlined by C. A. Priest, design engineer, is to develop a complete television broadcasting system, suitable for taking visual and sound programs from any desired source and broadcasting them in a manner suitable for entertainment in homes over a considerable area.

The proposed main station at Albany is intended to provide a high signal level to the entire New York state capital district, i.e., Albany, Troy, and Schenectady. The site selected for the transmitter, which is a 10 kw visual transmitter with a 3 kw aural unit, to operate between 66 and 72 megacycles, is in the Helderberg Hills about 12 miles west of Albany. The proposed location was selected as being the highest suitable point near applicant's Schenectady works.

The second application is for a relay visual station to transmit programs from the studio to the main transmitter site. It is to use a sharply directive beam and, in applicant's opinion, will constitute an essential link in a complete television system. The site of this transmitter is in General Electric's Schenectady works.

The third application is for a station to be located at Bridgeport to provide a locally controlled source of signal for receiver manufacturing activities. This location is a sufficient distance from the station proposed to be located in Albany to permit a study of the effect of simultaneous operation of two transmitters on the same frequency.

The fourth application is for a low-powered station for preliminary testing prior to actual testing of the proposed higher-powered station and thereafter for advanced developmental work.

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The location proposed for this transmitter is in applicant's Schenectady plant. This site is convenient to General Electric's engineering and research laboratories, where its program of advanced television development is to be carried out, and is a suitable site for propagation of signals over a limited area as contemplated in this particular application.

The television system which General Electric proposes to complete is similar in general plan to television systems of Radio Corporation of America and National Broadcasting Company, but contemplates a number of detail variations, different, according to applicant's witnesses, from any other system known to them. It is an all electric system and is designed to produce a picture having a definition of 441 lines interlaced, 30 frames per second, 60 fields per second, aspect ratio 4 to 3. Equipment which the applicant is now using for laboratory experiments employs positive modulation, so-called "wave-shaped" separation and synchronizing signals as contrasted to amplitude separation.

"The applicant expects to overcome some of the difficulties encountered through developmental work and field tests," Examiner Hyde stated. "Construction of vacuum tubes which would exhibit more favorable characteristics would make the transmitter problem simpler and easier of solution. Development of wide-band output coupling circuits whereby the required band-width might be obtained without sacrificing plate efficiency, as at present, would be very desirable. The applicant's engineers believe that improvement in transmission fidelity may be obtained by extending the visual frequency range up to approximately 4 megacycles and transmitting this band with the required fidelity so that complete utilization may be made of a 441 line picture. Transmission of modulation will be attempted in a 6-megacycle channel by means of single side-band transmission.

"Two principal research objectives were set up by applicant's witness for accomplishment through operation of similar stations at Schenectady and Bridgeport. The first is investigation of probable diurnal and seasonal signal strength variations, both toward and away from the ocean. The second is investigation of services areas of two stations operating on the same channel. This study is to include determination of the amount of interference permissible, necessary geographical separation to prevent interference, and use of directive antennas to restrict interference. Adequate equipment is to be provided for tests of results of operations, and data obtained is to be made available to the Commission."

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A further increase in the number of radio licenses in Sweden was recorded during the second quarter of 1938, when 21,453 new licenses were issued. On June 30, the total number of licenses thus stood at 1,156,781, or 184.1 per thousand inhabitants. For the capital of Stockholm the corresponding figure was 247.2 licenses per thousand.

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FCC BAR GROUP PROPOSES CHANGES IN RULES

Drastic changes in the proposed FCC rules of practice and procedure were proposed this week by the committee on practice and procedure of the Federal Communications Bar Association.

Subject to criticism of members and final approval by the executive committee, the report seeks, on the whole, to make FCC rules of practice conform to those of the Federal courts. One of the main objectives is to center responsibility on the FCC rather than on subordinates.

The lawyers proposed that the Commission itself designate the examiner or commissioner, as well as the subject matter, for each hearing. Under the present system the examiners take cases in routine fashion.

Repeal of the "two-year rule", which bars FCC legal employees from practicing before the Commission for two years after their retirement, was urged by the committee. The FCC's own committee on rules already has proposed this amendment.

A proposal that the FCC by formal order seal certain documents from public inspection was included in the lengthy recommendations.

A hearing before a commissioner, sometime after the Bar Association's rules are submitted about mid-October, was asked by the committee.

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HEARST SELLS THREE MORE STATIONS FOR \$400,000

Approval of the Federal Communications Commission of the reported sales of three more of its radio stations by Hearst Radio, Inc., is expected to be asked shortly.

E. M. Stoer, comptroller of the Hearst properties, this week confirmed reports that KTSA, San Antonio, KNOW, Austin, and WACO, Waco, all of Texas, has been sold for approximately \$400,000.

Negotiations also were reported under way by the Hearst organization to sell KOMA, Oklahoma City, and KYA, San Francisco. Elliott Roosevelt, son of the President, will remain as head of Hearst Radio despite the partial liquidation, it was said.

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RADIO SET SALES GAIN FOR AUGUST

Retail sales of radio sets during August not only held the four-point gain made in July but climbed slightly further--to within a fraction of 92 per cent--the highest point reached this year in comparison with last year's sales for the same month, which always are represented by the 100 per cent level in Radio Retailing's barometer.

This sales performance must be considered as most encouraging in view of the fact that August is one of the most doubtful radio months of the year. In that month weather, and particularly vacations, have a decided influence on consumer buying, and it is an established fact that during August selling on the part of many dealers is at lowest ebb.

"Careful study of retailers' sales reports from individual States reveals that a general leveling off of highly contrasting sales curves is in progress," says Radio Retailing. "It will be recalled that during the early months of the year set sales held up surprisingly well in some States, here and there even staying above the 1937 unit sales. In other States sales dropped drastically and down to rather hopeless levels. Those apparent inconsistencies in sales performance now have disappeared almost entirely."

Instances of sales curves coming down to meet the average for the entire country are Pacific Coast States, a few of the States below the Mason and Dixon line and one or two of the Northwestern granary States.

Among the States that appear to be pulling up nicely out of a deep set sales depression Ohio and Michigan very definitely lead the procession. Although reports from those States still show spotty conditions, there are enough dealers equalling last year's sales or even topping them to indicate that improving conditions in the steel, automobile and allied industries are having a favorable effect on set sales.

That some reflection of increased industrial activity appears in sales reports of dealers who are operating in factory cities of Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey, while sales in the rural areas of those same States are not yet up to the national average.

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The FCC accounting department plans to propose that a conference of broadcasting executives be held next month to discuss plans for setting up a permanent system of collecting data on operations of stations and networks.

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PIONEER RADIO OPERATOR DIES IN BOSTON

Harry R. Chetham of Somerville, chief radio operator of the Boston Police and Fire Departments and a pioneer radio operator, died Wednesday in Chelsea Naval Hospital.

He was born forty-eight years ago in Central Falls, R. I., and became interested in radio as a boy when he built a crude coherer set and spark-coil transmitter. This equipment including other things which he built while radio was in its infancy, is in the National Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

Twenty-five years ago, Mr. Chetham installed a radio communicating apparatus on Penikese Island in Boston harbor, then inhabited by a leper colony. For this work, he received a gold tablet from the Veteran Wireless Operators Association of New York. Among his other accomplishments was his other work in receiving messages from the sinking Titanic. Later he received the world famous message from the rescue ship Carpathia, "Major Archie Butts not among the survivors."

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GROUP CALLED FOR SESSION ON COPYRIGHT

Neville Miller, President of the National Association of Broadcasters, has called a meeting of the NAB executive committee for September 26 to discuss the troublesome problem of music copyrights.

Members of the executive committee are Mark Ethridge, AHAS, Louisville, former NAB president, and Edwin W. Craig, WSM, Nashville, clear-channel representatives; Walter J. Damm, WTMJ, Milwaukee, and Frank M. Russell, NBC vice-president representing WRC, Washington, regional representatives; John Elmer, WCBM, Baltimore, and Herb Hollister, KANS, Wichita, local representatives.

In addition to copyright the committee is expected to discuss NAB's participation in the chain-monopoly investigation of the FCC, national and state legislation, and numerous other subjects accumulated since Mr. Miller assumed office last July 1. It will be his first meeting with the committee as NAB head.

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The FCC this week issued a statement announcing that certain equipment of a score of radio manufacturers had been approved for use by regular broadcast stations.

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FCC GETS READY FOR MID-OCTOBER HEARING

The Federal Communications Commission this week was putting finishing touches on its formal notice of a chain-monopoly hearing that is expected to start either October 17 or 24. An Announcement was expected momentarily.

Several meetings have been held on the matter, it is understood, and William Dempsey, special counsel for the inquiry, has completed his preliminary investigation. The notice will schedule the hearing not less than 30 days from the time of its / insurance.

Chairman Frank R. McNinch, who is taking personal control of the inquiry, hopes to have legislation, or at least a partial report, ready for submission to Congress when it convenes January 3.

The hearing probably will be limited to networks, but affiliated stations doubtless will be included in the scope of the inquiry due to their economic interests in the chains. The independent Radio Network Affiliates already have made pland to participate.

The networks, while not viewing the probe with particular alarm, are anxiously awaiting the bill of particulars, which may not be released before next week, so that they may know the scope of the hearing.

CBS has retained John J. Burns, former general counsel of the Securities & Exchange Commission, as its chief counsel. He will assisted by Duke M. Patrick, former Radio Commission general counsel and regular Washington attorney for CBS. Burns and Patrick will be assisted by Joseph H. Ream, general attorney of CBS in New York, and Paul A. Porter, Washington staff counsel.

NBC's case is being handled under the supervision of A. L. Ashby, vice-president and general counsel of New York, and Philip J. Hennessey Jr., Washington attorney, formerly on Mr. Ashby's staff.

Preparations for MBS are being handled by Louis G. Caldwell, Washington attorney and former Radio Commission general counsel, and his associate, Reed T. Rollo.

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Charles E. Saltzman, son of General Saltzman, former chairman of the Federal Radio Commission, has been promoted to secretary of the New York Stock Exchange.

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NBC FLATLY FOR SUPER-POWER; AFFILIATES PROTEST

The National Broadcasting Company and some of its affiliated stations are not in accord on the question of whether or not the Federal Communications Commission should rescind its present limitation of station power to 50 kw. and authorize the operation of super-power stations.

NBC last week filed a brief with the FCC stating flatly that it favored super-power station operations despite warnings at the summer hearings that such stations might endanger the business of networks.

After copies of the brief had been sent to all NBC affiliated stations by Keith Kiggins, station relations manager, Samuel Rosenbaum, president of WFIL, Philadelphia, and chairman of the Independent Radio Network Affiliates, said that some of the NBC affiliates had complained.

The stations, he said, took exception to the "excess enthusiasm" of NBC for super-power although it recognized that the network was speaking only for itself.

A decision on the super-power issue and the WLW experimental permit case are expected from the FCC three-man committee this fall. A final determination by the commission, however, is not expected before early next year.

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FCC AGAIN EXTENDS RULE ON MONITORS

The Federal Communications Commission this week further extended the working date of Rule 981 for a period of six months from September 15. This rule requires all relay, international, television, facsimile, high frequency and experimental broadcast stations to have a frequency monitor in operation. It was originally effective September 15, 1936. However, the working date has been extended from time to time for the reason that monitors meeting the requirements are not commercially available. The monitors required by this rule do not have to be approved by the Commission but shall have an accuracy of at least one-half the tolerance allowed for the class of station with which used.

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Dr. William Bierman of New York of the American Congress of Physical Therapy this week in Chicago sponsored a resolution asking the Federal Communications Commission for a separate medical hearing on allotment of short-wave lengths for medical use.

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APPEALS COURT TO RULE ON FCC CONTROL OF ADS

The United States Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia this fall will rule on the question of whether or not the Federal Communications Commission has authority to control indirectly the advertising policies of a broadcasting station.

The issue has been placed squarely before the court by attorneys for Stations WLTH and WARD, of Brooklyn, which were ordered off the air last year following several years of controversy.

Attorneys Paul M. Segal, George S. Smith and Harry P. Warner contended the FCC order terminating the licenses of WLTH and WARD and giving their facilities to WBBC, a third Brooklyn time-sharing station, "is a flat abuse of the power given the Commission by the law and directly flaunts the caution" imposed by the Court upon the Commission in the so-called WCFL case of several years ago.

The deletions were ordered, it was argued, by such a "juggling of orders, corrected orders, referenda and meetings as to require detailed analysis to reveal the essential nullity of the Commission's action." It was added that the Commission made no adequate findings that the stations had failed in their duties or that the successful station is better equipped to perform them "but the Commission attempted to dispose of the appellants through something bordering closely on invective."

In support of its contention that the Commission is without authority to regulate the Broadcasting of advertising of proprietary medicines, the brief stated the jurisdiction of the FCC in the administration of broadcasting is limited to its licensing activities and regulations incident to them. "The statute gives the Commission no authority whatsoever to regulate advertising," it was contended. "This is confirmed by the legislative history of the act and the several provisions within the statute."

Pointing out that the law specifically prohibits the exercise of any power of censorship by the Commission, the brief contended that the broadcast of commercial medical programs cannot by any stretch of the imagination be construed as "obscene, indecent or amount to profane language." Stating that the jurisdiction of the Commission to safeguard the "public health and safety" was doubted, the attorneys sought to show that such a protection is afforded by the Federal Trade Commission.

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With old favorites returning after Summer vacations and numerous new programs making their network debuts, October will find the National Broadcasting Company presenting the most comprehensive series of commercial broadcasts in its history, according to an NBC statement.

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SARNOFF RAPS "PROGRESS" OF BBC TELEVISION

Before sailing for home, David Sarnoff, president of the Radio Corporation of America, in an interview with a correspondent of the New York Times in London commented that television in Great Britain, though available to the public for some time, has only a comparatively small number of patrons.

The loudly heralded progress of British television, he said was more apparent than real, for although there are regular subsidized programs here, there are only about five thousand sets in use in the entire country after two years' service.

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PUBLIC UTILITY DENIED CP FOR SECOND TIME

For the second time the Federal Communications Commission this week denied a construction permit for a new broadcasting station to the Food Terminal Broadcasting Co., of Cleveland, Ohio. The applicant had obtained a rehearing following the first denial.

Reviewing the factors in the case, the FCC held that the station would render no new service and that Cleveland already is adequately served. In a statement of policy the commission said:

"The frequencies available for assignment to broadcast stations being limited, public interest would be best served by an allocation of facilities to those who will, where need exists, render a broad, general public service. No need exists for an additional station in the area which would be served upon the basis of program service intended to be rendered by the applicant."

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The heart beats of an unborn infant who will not see the light of day for at least another month were broadcasts to a curiously awaiting radio public by Station WMAL, Washington, this week from the bedside of an expectant mother in Georgetown University Hospital.

The unusual sounds of the fetal heart--beating at the rate of 140 to 160 clicks a minute--were explained by Dr. John R. Cavanagh, in charge of the dispensary at Georgetown Hospital, during the first broadcast of this kind in Washington. It was a unique demonstration arranged in connection with the third annual alumni clinic now being conducted by the School of Medicine.

The heart beats of this unborn baby climaxed a series of cardiac sounds, some normal and others abnormal, as the physician hears and interprets them through his stethoscope. Several attempts had to be made before the sounds of the fetal heart could be heard successfully for the reason Dr. Cavanagh explained, that the unborn baby was extremely restless at the time

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"HAMS" READY TO PROTECT NATIONAL CAPITAL

Earthquake or tornado, fire or flood--some day they may strike Washington, destroy all lines of communication and isolate the Capital from the rest of the United States.

Unlikely, perhaps, but the unexpected sometimes happens, and a little group of local "hams" is going to be prepared.

Roy C. Corderman, of 4401 Leland Street, Chevy Chase, Md., is the recently appointed emergency co-ordinator of the Washington area for the American Radio Relay League. The lengthy title merely means that in case disaster overtakes the city, Corderman will direct 40 amateur radio operators in maintaining contact with the outside world.

Military and naval establishment centered here would bear the brunt of the emergency communications problem, but the amateur radio operators would form an essential second line of defense.

Corderman is prepared, even if Washington's entire power system breaks down. "I have a portable set that works on two ordinary storage batteries. At Trials not long ago, I reached a point 400 miles distant," he said. "That's one of the things we want to encourage; the building of portable sets. They may come in useful some day.

"Our experience in the Midwestern floods of 1936 and to a lesser extent in 1937 showed us the necessity of preliminary organization," Corderman said. "The President himself suggested it. Emergency co-ordinators are being appointed in every part of the country. It's all being done through the American Radio Relay League, the organization of "hams."

For nearly 30 of his 40 years, Corderman has made a hobby of radio. Surrounded by instruments he largely built himself, he has talked to other "hams" in 89 countries in every continent, and within the Arctic and Antarctic Circles.

"Only this morning, I talked to Madagascar," he said yesterday. "Australia? Why, that's a daily occurrence."

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