

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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No. 1109

March 21, 1939.

FCC RESIGNATION RUMORS RAMPANT; F.D.R. SILENT

While Congress and the Federal Communications Commission looked vainly to the White House for word from President Roosevelt as to the proposed reorganization of the FCC or at least a successor to Eugene O. Sykes, resignation rumors jumped from one member to another without stopping long enough for verification.

The highlight of these rumors was one, current on Capitol Hill, that Chairman Frank R. McNinch would be "kicked up stairs" shortly to a place on the U. S. Board of Tax Appeals.

Earlier there had been reports that Paul Walker and Thad Brown, staunch supporters of the Chairman, were planning to follow the example of Judge Sykes. Commissioner Walker, although his term expires in June, formally denied the report as to himself.

Oddly enough, the reports of resignations had switched from the minority to the majority members. Last Fall, during the height of the McNinch "purge", stories that T.A.M. Craven and George Henry Payne would resign or be dismissed by Executive Order were current. Yet Commissioner Payne, at least, has continued his resistance to the Chairman's policies, when he considered them wrong, and has brought the wrath of the doughty North Carolinian down upon his head, once by formal statement.

At this stage, however, Commander Craven appears to be more firmly entrenched than ever in his job, whereas Chairman McNinch seems ready to jump in any one of several directions.

The reorganization of the Commission by legislative enactment apparently is dead for this session. Chairman Wheeler, of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, has made no effort to bring the issue to a head by scheduling public hearings despite his early support of McNinch's three-man bill.

If Congress takes any hand in the FCC mess, the best guess is that it will authorize a sweeping investigation either in the Senate or House.

So far President Roosevelt, except for his early outburst that he was thoroughly dissatisfied with conditions on the Commission, has remained strangely silent. While friends of Chairman McNinch still insist that he has the backing of the President, there has been no official intimation at the White House that this is true.

Probably the only member of the Commission who is not greatly disturbed by the turn of events is Norman S. Case, former Governor of Rhode Island, whose nomination for another seven-year term was confirmed by the Senate this session. A minority member and yet an intimate friend of the President, Commissioner Case, like Mark Twain, has friends "in both places". Moreover, he is well enough fixed financially not to be dependent upon the \$10,000 a year job.

Many names have been suggested as possible successors to Judge Sykes, who leaves the Commission on April 1st to practice law, but none appears to have the right-of-way at this time.

Among the reported candidates are five defeated members of Congress: Otha D. Wearin, of Iowa; David J. Lewis, of Maryland; Maury Maverick, and W. E. MacFarlane, both of Texas; and former Senator Fred Brown, of New Hampshire.

Others, whose names have been suggested, are Rear Admiral Stanford C. Hooper, who is said to have no desire to quit the Navy and sacrifice retirement pay; and Lieut. E. K. Jett, Chief Engineer.

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FTC COMPLAINT HITS RADIO MAIL ORDER BUSINESS

A mail order business for the sale and distribution of radios and radio parts, with places of business in five States, has been charged with making false and misleading statements, in a complaint issued by the Federal Trade Commission.

The respondents are: Wholesale Radio Service Company, Inc., of New York, New York; Wholesale Radio Service Company, Inc., of Massachusetts, Boston; Wholesale Radio Service Company, Inc., of Illinois, Chicago; Wholesale Radio Service Company, Inc., of Georgia, Atlanta; Wholesale Radio Service Company, Inc., of New Jersey, Newark, and Abraham W. Pletman, Samuel J. Novich and Max H. Kranzburg, trading as Wholesale Radio Service Company.

The complaint alleges that the respondents, by mail and through catalogs and advertisements, represented to prospective purchasers that prices listed by them were wholesale prices and that they were wholesalers. Parallel price columns quoting alleged "list prices" and "net cost" of various articles are declared in the complaint to be false and misleading, and the prices at which the products are sold to be retail and not wholesale prices.

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CROSLEY, DON LEE TELEVISION APPLICATIONS REFERRED TO FCC COM.

The Federal Communications Commission this week referred to its Television Committee applications of The Crosley Corporation, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Don Lee Broadcasting System, San Francisco, California, for construction permits for new television broadcast stations to operate on an experimental basis.

The Crosley Corporation asked for authority to use the channel 50,000 - 56,000 kc. with aural and visual power of 1000 watts unlimited time. Don Lee Broadcasting System requested frequencies 42,000 - 56,000 kc. with aural and visual power of 1000 watts, unlimited time.

The Crosley station would be erected at Cincinnati and the Don Lee station on a site to be determined in San Francisco or the immediate vicinity.

The applications are for the purpose of developing television broadcasting as a service to the public in distinction to other outstanding authorizations which permit a development of technical systems of television with public reaction secondary. Some apparatus experimentation is contemplated. However, the primary purpose is the development of a television service to the general public and a means of building programs which will accomplish this purpose. In the case of the Crosley application, the coverage of a typical television installation in the Cincinnati area is to be investigated.

On the committee are Commissioners T.A.M. Craven, Chairman, Thad Brown and Norman S. Case.

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834 FORGOTTEN NAMES OF RADIO RECALLED

One thousand names of radio sets - most of them now gone and forgotten - are listed in the current March issue of Radio Today, in connection with its "reveries of radio listening". Of the entire thousand names, only 186 are still in use on current radio receivers, according to O. H. Caldwell, editor of Radio Today.

Some unusual monickers were found decorating the tombstones of radio's dead past. Here are a few of the radio names that charmed listeners into spending \$100 to \$250 for sets, back in the early days of broadcasting:

Bear Cat; Betta-Tone; Caruso; Chanticleer; Clear-o-Dyne; Crimp-O-Dyne; Gloritone; Hy-Tone; Mel-O-Dee; Phusiflex.

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PARLEY PREPARES U.S. FOR STOCKHOLM MEETING

A conference was being held at the State Department this week (today and tomorrow, March 21 and 22) to begin the preparation for participation of the United States in the meeting of the C.C.I.R. at Stockholm, Sweden, in June of next year.

The preparatory meetings for the Conference at Stockholm are open to all individuals and agencies in the United States interested in participating in that work, the State Department said.

Following is a list of the questions to be considered:

Methods of Measuring Radio Receiver Selectivity; Methods of Measuring Radio Field Intensity and Noise; High-frequency Ship Calling Frequencies and Procedure; Sideband Suppression; Anti-fading Antennas; Receiver Selectivity Requirements; Vocabulary of Radio Terms; Measurement Methods and Tolerances for Electrical Interference; Indication of Power of Transmitter with Directional Antenna; Frequency Tolerances; Frequency Separation between Stations, in Fixed and Mobile Services.

Also, Radio Wave Propagation; Characteristics of Frequencies for Direction Finding; Field Intensities Required for Reception; Background Noise of Transmitters; Background Noise of Receivers; Sensitivity of Radio Receivers; Radio Conditions Affecting Phototelegraph Transmission; Band Width of Emissions; Amendment or Elimination of Opinions; Addition to Appendix 12 to General Radio Regulations; Universal Decimal Classification; Definition of Transmitters; Classification of Waves.

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FRENCH LISTENERS DISLIKE CURB ON RADIO NEWS

"M. Daladier, in spite of the heavy calls upon his time, has nevertheless been taking a more active interest in wireless just lately, and particularly in the relations between the broadcasting authorities and the Press", World-Radio reports. "No doubt the promised Broadcasting Bill has something to do with this interest, but restrictions placed on news bulletins in June last year, after representations made by the Press, have not proved popular with listeners. He has also published a decree reducing the six sections of the Superior Council of Broadcasting to four by maintaining the sections of Music, Literature, and Science and by altering the sections of News, Education (Sport and Leisure), and Economy to one section entitled General Information.

"Meanwhile, M. Julien, the Minister of PTT, has also been active, and is arranging to meet wireless journalists once a month to exchange information, and his chief of staff will meet them weekly to keep them informed of any innovations."

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TELEVISION ADAPTED FOR "BLIND" LANDINGS

A television system to enable plane pilots to make blind landings in fog has been designed by Roland John Kemp of Chelmsford, England. The device is described in a patent (No. 2,150,551) that has been assigned to the Radio Corporation of America by the U. S. Patent Office.

The system would not only give the pilot a picture of the field but also of the angle at which he must glide to earth for a safe landing.

Operation involves the use on the landing field of two transmitters - one a short-wave radio and the other a television transmitter - keyed together. On the airplane are corresponding receivers, also keyed together.

As the airplane approaches the field, an image is broadcast revealing to the pilot the name of the field, the direction of the wind and other information. The receiver picks this up and makes it visible on part of the television screen.

While the pilot is circling the field the transmitter, of the short-wave directional type that sends out a radio beam focused like the light of a searchlight, is elevated and swung around until its beam hits the airplane and is picked up by the receiver. This beam comprises a radio wave which is automatically varied in signal frequency to correspond with the angle it makes with the ground. This is the angle along which the pilot must glide in order to make a safe landing.

The radio impulses corresponding to this angle are picked up by the receiver and combined with the television signals with the result that on the television screen there also appears a series of oblique lines of the same angle as the gliding beam. These lines remain constantly visible to the pilot as long as he remains on the gliding beam, but disappear should he stray therefrom.

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BBC ISSUES HANDBOOK FOR 1939

Copies of the 1939 Handbook of the British Broadcasting Corporation arrived in the United States this week. The handbook reviews the progress of broadcasting and television in Great Britain and presents some interesting statistics and illustrations.

Some of the chapter headings follow: Broadcasting and the Crisis; Television in 1938; Broadcasting Links with the New World; Listener Research in 1938; the Radio Commentator; Catering for the Music Lover; Broadcasting and Education, and the Wavelength Problem.

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KEN CARRIES "THE CASE FOR ASCAP"

While the Copyright Committee of the National Association of Broadcasters was meeting in New York City this week, Ken, the fortnightly magazine, appeared on the newstands with an article on "The Case for ASCAP" by Lloyd Morris.

Illustrated with pictures of ASCAP activities, the blurb of the article states:

"ASCAP was founded in 1914 to guarantee song writers financial returns from their successful efforts by preventing wholesale piracy of copyrighted songs. Today, benevolent monopolistic trust, it has a permanent corner on all tunes that count, and all renditions are licensed. The setup is equally beneficial to commercial interests and song writers alike, but Big Business doesn't see this and seethes at the restriction."

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AIR CORPS TO TEST NEW RADIO EYE FOR FLYING

Flight tests of a new radio eye which winks 750,000,000 times each second to lead an airplane to a safe landing will be started next month at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio.

The Civil Aeronautics Authority announced this week that arrangements had been completed with the Air Corps to use its equipment and technical experts at Wright Field in testing the device. If it is approved, they said, it might be used on commercial air lines by next Fall.

The winks of the radio eye are the oscillations of the radio waves generated on the ground and projected as a narrow beam toward an oncoming plane.

By keeping the tiny dot of light cast by the electron beam centered on a screen in the plane, the pilot can keep his airplane squarely on the glide path outlined by the radio beam and reach a safe landing in fog, or under other conditions which necessitate flying "bland".

Two other dots of light indicate to the pilot the position of his airplane with respect to the ground.

One of the highest radio frequencies ever employed in aircraft radio development is used in the instrument. The 750,000,000 winks or oscillations per second is equal to a radio wave only sixteen inches long and approaches the infra-red range in the spectrum of light. Such short waves are not affected by static resulting from lightning, snow, rain or other interference and are reliable under any conditions.

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ITALY REPORTED TO HAVE QUIT S-W PROPAGANDA

Italian attempts to win over South and Central Americans through short-wave radio broadcasts have been abandoned in the face of Latin-American indifference to European political propaganda, Philip L. Barbour, of the International Division of the National Broadcasting Company, told members of the Export Advertising Association at a luncheon meeting in New York recently. Although Germany still keeps up her propaganda broadcasts, he added, they are just as ineffective.

Latin Americans consider we are unduly alarmed over the effects of European radio propaganda, Mr. Barbour continued, according to the New York Times.

"It may be that the retirement of Italy from the propaganda campaign in Latin America is sounder than her persistence in it", he continued. "There is an Italian proverb which, in the case of Italy's apparent action toward Latin America, would seem to indicate that 'the cost is greater than the prize'. In Germany's case it would seem that the cost might be the prize itself."

Much of the six hours taken up daily by Germany in sending broadcasts to Latin America is devoted to colorless programs or to propaganda so blatant that it frequently antagonizes listeners, Mr. Barbour said.

By contrast, broadcasting chains in the United States do a much more effective job, he said. His company, Mr. Barbour explained, devotes eight hours daily to broadcasts to Latin America giving six hours to programs in Spanish and two to broadcasts in Portuguese. Selection of material is governed by the preferences expressed by listeners and the American broadcasts by all companies are winning an increasing following in every South and Central American republic.

"I feel that I should say that to me all this means that we should not follow in the footsteps of those who overdo things", he concluded. "Commercially, exporters in this country may be at a temporary disadvantage. Let us not add political and cultural disadvantages to this. Our proper path, in my opinion, is to continue as we are doing, with a just demonstration of who and what we are, with little or no thought of combatting the propaganda of others."

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:::::TRADE NOTES:::::
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The Columbia Broadcasting System this week was granted a modification of a construction permit to move the transmitter site for its new 50 KW. equipment for Station WJSV, Washington, to a point near Wheaton, Md., just outside the Capital, and to install a directional antenna.

The appointment of Wilfred Guenther, formerly WLW Promotion Manager, as coordinator of television and facsimile activities for the Crosley Corporation, was announced this week by James D. Shouse, Vice-President in Charge of Broadcasting. Miss Beulah Strawway succeeds Mr. Guenther as Promotion Manager.

The Crosley Corporation is now broadcasting facsimile daily, on an experimental basis, and recently filed application with the Federal Communications Commission for a television construction permit.

An appeal to self-esteem of listeners produced the best results in a test of response to various radio commercial announcements, according to experiments by C. E. Osgood, C. N. Allen and H. S. Odbert of Dartmouth College, who describe their work in The Journal of Applied Psychology. The subjects, who were college students, listened to recordings of advertising, interspersed with dance records. They were able later to recall best the product mentioned which appealed to self-esteem. The strength of other appeals, in order, was as follows: prestige, health, universality, sex, efficiency, economy, beauty, safety and comfort.

Senator Wheeler (D.), of Montana, placed in the Congressional Record for Monday, March 20, the complete statement of S. Howard Evans, Secretary of the National Committee on Education by Radio, before the chain-monopoly hearing of the Federal Communications Commission.

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MUTUAL TO OPERATE FACSIMILE NETWORK

Plans for the formation of the first experimental facsimile chain to be known as the Mutual Facsimile Network were completed last week in Cincinnati when technical officials of three Mutual Network stations, WGN Chicago; WOR, Newark; and WLW Cincinnati, announced that regularly scheduled facsimile transmission for testing purposes will be inaugurated on March 18 among the three participating stations. A preliminary experiment of the proposed network hookup took place early Saturday (March 11) at 2:30 A.M., EST, when initial transmissions of one hour of facsimile programs originated by the three stations were tested.

With this step the Mutual network moves forward into a new field of radio broadcasting, for facsimile is the transmission of printed matter and pictures over the air for identical reproduction at receiving points.

The tentative network schedule for weekly experimental facsimile service will be from 2:30 to 3:30 A.M., EST, with 20 minute transmission from WOR, WLW and WGN in that order. Beginning March 18, until further notice, each Saturday the facsimile network will test at this time with the stations alternating in sequence as each presents its 30-minute transmission period.

Those attending the tri-station conference in Cincinnati were Powel Crosley, III, James D. Shouse, Vice-President; R. J. Rockwell, Chief Engineer, and W. Guenther of WLW; J. R. Poppele, Chief Engineer of WOR; Carl Meyers, Chief Engineer of WGN, and Fred Weber, General Manager of the Mutual Broadcasting System.

Special arrangements have been made to extend the hours of operation of existing network line facilities now used for regular Mutual programs for the experimental facsimile relay. At additional cost the facsimile transmission will immediately follow the regular day's program schedule.

Although the service is being originated at the present time by only the Newark, Chicago and Cincinnati affiliates, it is expected to be extended to all Mutual stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission for the transmission of experimental facsimile. The tests are being conducted under the Finch system of facsimile, devised by W.G.H. Finch, former Assistant Engineer of the Federal Communications Commission and head of the Finch Telecommunications Laboratories in New York.

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KDKA TO GET NEW TRANSMITTER SITE

In a move to provide more powerful radio reception for Pittsburgh's metropolitan area, Station KDKA will begin construction of a new transmitter headquarters within the next month near Allison Park on Route 8, Walter C. Evans, Manager of the Radio Division of the Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, has announced. Westinghouse radio engineers selected the Allison Park site after intensive tests during which they used balloons to carry experimental antennas into the sky.

Completion of the new building and transfer of the station's transmitter from Saxonburg within the next 10 months will mark its third major move since it flashed the world's pioneer broadcast from the roof of a Westinghouse building in East Pittsburgh, November 2, 1920.

In addition to bringing the transmitter within eight and one-half miles of downtown Pittsburgh, the transfer will also enable the station to broadcast its radio signal from the highest point in Allegheny County, Mr. Evans pointed out. A 718-foot steel tower antenna will surmount the hill-top site which has an elevation of approximately 1200 feet, about the same as Pittsburgh's Mount Washington.

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BRITISH AD MAN IMPRESSED BY U.S. RADIO

During a discussion of his impressions after a five-week tour of the United States, George P. Simon, Advertisement Director of the London Daily Telegraph and Morning Post praised American newspapers, advertising and the American system of broadcasting over WMCA and NBC networks recently before sailing.

"The development of radio in the American continent for advertising purposes", he said, "is a phenomenon positively startling to an Englishman coming from a country where the British Broadcasting Corporation has the sole care of time on the air and advertising is strictly prohibited. The multiplicity and variety of your programs is no doubt due to this development. The speed and dexterity with which so many programs are dealt is a pattern of business efficiency combined with the maximum of taste and dexterity."

The chief difference between American and British advertising men, Mr. Simon said, is that the former are more accessible and "perhaps a little more ready to see the selling man's point of view". He expressed the hope that American advertisers would take wider advantage of trading opportunities offered by Great Britain under the recently signed Anglo-American trade agreement.

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