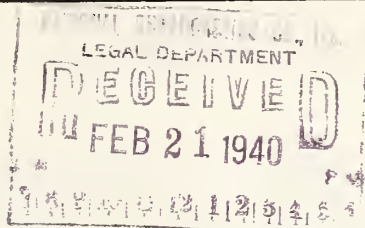


HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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No. 1210

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February 20, 1940

FCC STUDIES COMPLAINTS ON INTERFERENCE

The Federal Communications Commission gets many complaints about local interference to broadcast reception and its engineers spend a great deal of time studying remedies although, in most instances, the FCC is powerless to act.

The Commission has no authority to investigate, or require, the elimination of interference caused by diathermy and other electrical apparatus, ignition systems of automobiles, electrical signs and other contributing agents, an FCC statement points out. A number of States and municipalities have enacted ordinances to meet this problem. In connection with interference caused by power systems, some of the power companies maintain investigating departments which cooperate with individuals in an effort to remedy interference conditions. Complainants can generally, and should be ready to, furnish detailed information as to the type of interference experienced, which in all probability will be of value in locating the cause.

Low power radio frequency devices, used for control purposes, are under the jurisdiction of the Commission, although licenses under certain circumstances are not required.

The general problem of interference has been approached by the Commission from the point of view that the public as a whole will be best served through cooperation in the industry. Efforts in this direction have been centralized in a coordinating committee of the American Standards Association, with headquarters in New York, which affords representation to all those interested in the reduction of electrical noise. Among organizations represented are the American Transit Association, ASA Telephone Group, Association of American Railroads, Bureau of Standards, Canadian Department of Marine, Edison Electric Institute, Federal Communications Commission, Institute of Radio Engineers, Institute of Radio Service Men, National Association of Broadcasters, National Electrical Manufacturers' Association, Radio Manufacturers' Association, Radio Manufacturers' Association of Canada, Society of Automotive Engineers, and the Radio Club of America.

The States of Maine and Washington, and the Territory of Hawaii, have had statutes on the interference problem for years, two of them since 1921. Los Angeles passed a controlling ordinance in 1931. Other municipalities having kindred regulations are Crescent City and Santa Ana, Calif.; Bloomington and Franklin, Ind.; Storm Lake, Iowa; Atchison, Kans.; Bunkie, La.; Bay City, Two Harbors, Iron River, and Munroe, Mich.; Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.; Lincoln, Nebr.; Boonville, N.Y.; Dumright, Okla.; Marshfield, Roseburg, and Portland, Ore.; Waynesboro, Va.; Spokane,

Wash.; Antigo, Ashland, North Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Stevens Point, Watertown, and Waupaca, Wis.;

Reallocation of frequency assignments under the North American Regional Broadcast Agreement is expected to eliminate the interference of high-powered stations operating in Cuba and Mexico, which are, of course, outside of the jurisdiction of the Federal Communications Commission.

Interference caused by diathermy equipment presents a problem with which the Commission has been very much concerned of late, particularly because of its supplemental effect on television programs. Among the many complaints received is a resolution adopted by some 30 police departments, pointing out that police transmitters in the emergency service are required to maintain rigid tolerance but that no similar regulations have been placed on diathermy, and requesting the Commission to declare diathermy a nuisance to police radio. In some instances, diathermy interference to radio communication is observed over distances involving thousands of miles.

While legislation clarifying the Commission's jurisdiction in this matter may be the final solution, during study of the problem every effort has been made by the Commission to alleviate the situation through the cooperative efforts of the manufacturers, the medical profession, and the radio industry. The Commission has been in close touch with the Council on Physical Therapy of the American Medical Association in this respect.

Radiation of electrical energy is not essential to the proper functioning of diathermy apparatus and can be eliminated or controlled without impairing the usefulness of the apparatus. There has never been any attempt on the part of the Commission to suppress the use of this important device; however, since the radio and medical services both involve the use of equipment in connection with the safety of life and property, and since the radiation of energy from the electro-medical apparatus can be controlled at small cost by screening the room in which such apparatus is used, it is felt that the interested parties should cooperate to the adoption of standards of good engineering practice which will permit both services to operate without mutual interference.

As for simpler types of interference, the FCC said:

When operating a receiving set in the immediate vicinity of a broadcast station, cross-talk interference will be experienced if the receiver does not have at least two pre-selector tuned circuits between the antenna and the grid of the first detector tube. Further, it must be properly shielded to prevent strong unwanted signals from entering the set except through the antenna.

An average set should be capable of receiving a desired station 50 kilocycles removed, even if operated within a few blocks of a broadcast station. The performance of many receiving sets encountering cross-talk interference may be improved materially

both for selectivity and sensitivity if properly aligned and tubes checked and replaced if found defective. Some receivers which are not capable of separating the desired from the undesired station 20 or more kilocycles removed may be improved materially by employing the simple "wave trap", obtainable at most radio stores.

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MEXICO MAKES NO RESERVATIONS IN SIGNING TREATY

The Department of State has advised the Federal Communications Commission that no reservations have been made by Mexico in approving the North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement as published in the "Diario Oficial" of February 15. It was expected that Cuba, as the depository government, would be notified at once.

The North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement was signed at Habana, Cuba, at the conclusion of the First Inter-American Radio Conference on December 13, 1937. It was signed by representatives of Canada, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, and the United States.

The agreement was not to become effective until ratified by Canada, Cuba, Mexico, and the United States. The ratification by Mexico is the last required to make the agreement valid, and permits starting the necessary engineering measures to carry out its provisions.

As previously predicted by the Commission, the assignment of some 730 standard broadcast stations may be affected by reallocation. However, it is not possible to determine definitely any individual assignments until the entire plan is worked out with respect to stations in all the countries which are parties to the agreement. A shift in any one assignment may affect materially the entire plan. Accordingly, all assignments must be worked out in relation to the entire pattern and can be announced only concurrently. The Commission will give due notice to all licensees when the general plan is determined.

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A total of 260 radio stations have signed license agreements totalling subscriptions of \$1,159,467.50 to join Broadcast Music, Inc., the National Association of Broadcasters announces. An additional 115 stations have indicated approval of the plan, it was said, but have not signed agreements.

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PRESIDENT'S POWERS CURBED IN DITTER BILL

Strict limitation on the powers of the President over radio stations in times of national emergency are provided in the bill introduced last week by Representative Ditter (R.), of Pennsylvania, to amend the Communications Act.

Explaining provisions of the measure, which would extend station licensing periods from three to five years and otherwise liberalize the Act, Representative Ditter pointed out that Section 7 of his bill seeks to limit the power of the President to take over radio stations to instances of military need in actual wartime or insurrection.

This provision is one of several attacks on the emergency powers of the President that have been made by the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, which drafted the Ditter bill. The Committee is headed by Frank Gannett, New York publisher as Honorary Vice Chairman, and Republican presidential candidate. Dr. Edward A. Rumely, of New York City, is Secretary.

"Very broad and, I believe, excessive powers are reposed in the President of the United States, in time both of peace and war, to take actions adversely affecting radio stations and even putting them out of existence", Representative Ditter explained.

"In time of peace he may accomplish this by proceeding under Section 305(a) of the Act to grant a station's frequency to some Government station without cause or hearing. Section 2 of this bill proposes to correct this by requiring either that the privately owned station be given an equally desirable assignment or that there be a hearing.

"Section 606(c) of the present law confers unlimited powers on the President to close stations, to remove their equipment, or to authorize the use or control of stations, by any department of the Government upon a bare proclamation not only that there exists war or a threat of war, but even (a state of public peril or disaster or other national emergency, or in order to preserve the neutrality of the United States.' We have now become familiar with the broad meaning of which the word 'emergency' is susceptible. Even in time of war, it seems to me it should be for Congress and not the President to determine whether we are to sacrifice one of our two principal agencies for mass communication. Nevertheless, yielding somewhat to those whose judgment may be better than mine as to possible sudden military needs, I have confined my proposed amendment to this section to a situation short of war or insurrection which is the equivalent of war. Otherwise, I propose that it be made perfectly clear that the section is not to be used as an excuse for exercising censorship or for closing or taking over broadcast stations. Even in time of war or insurrection, my bill limits the closing down or taking over to imperative military need."

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EDUCATIONAL USE OF RADIO SURVEYED

The Federal Radio Education Committee, with the cooperation of the U. S. Office of Education, is endeavoring to learn through surveys how community leaders in education and radio cooperatively use radio to raise the level of mass understanding of common problems.

John W. Studebaker, U. S. Commissioner of Education and Chairman of the Federal Radio Education Committee, this week called attention to a study of 63 local radio forum and discussion programs that have been broadcast over 47 stations in 34 communities throughout the United States.

"It is my conviction that one of radio's greatest opportunities for constructive service lies in the field of public affairs education", said Commissioner Studebaker. "We still have many answers to find to the question whether, as a people, we can develop enough intellectual capacity to solve our problems democratically; that is, through the intelligent participation of the rank and file of our citizens. The answer depends in large part on the zeal and ingenuity with which station managers and educational leaders cooperatively attack the problem of mass education in public affairs via radio."

Dr. Paul M. Sheats, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin, who conducted the survey, found that most of the forums on the air have been initiated by radio stations, private and public colleges and universities, boards of education, citizens' committees, Y.M.C.A.s, churches, service groups, and newspapers. His report reveals how radio forums are launched, how programs are planned, the development of program technique, audience relations, and listener response.

"Station managers who have thought seriously about their public service responsibility in regard to treatment of current controversial issues are favorable to the forum as a pattern for their programs in this field", says Dr. Sheats. "Few station managers, however, will embark on a series of public forums or public affairs discussions unless they can depend on a large amount of outside assistance and volunteer local leadership willing to accept responsibility for impartial, careful and skillful management of the broadcast. The trend", he points out, "may be toward the employment of full-time educational directors on the regular staffs of radio stations." Station managers and program directors generally prefer to have forums managed by a non-partisan citizens' committee which represents the various political, economic, and social interest groups in the community, the survey indicated.

The Federal Radio Education Committee report emphasizes that leadership is being offered by national educational, agricultural, church, and service organizations to promote public affairs education, that public interest has been aroused, and that the radio industry has an opportunity to capitalize upon this cooperation and interest by producing significant and effective educational programs.

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FCC REVISING REPORT ON GREAT LAKES

Faced with the task of digesting a complicated, two-volume report, the Federal Communications Commission has obtained from Congress an extension of time for reporting on what form of radio transmission, voice or code, should be used by distressed vessels operating on inland waterways.

The report, replete with intricate tables, was handed the Commission a few days before it was to have been forwarded to Congress. With the extension of time, the report, Commission officials said, was sent back to the staff for rewriting and briefing.

When it comes back it is expected to furnish the basis for a lengthy discussion on the merits of use of voice radio in times of distress at sea. The report recommended that voice radio be required exclusively on ships of the Great Lakes and that the use of code radio or code be made optional in sending distress calls on ships plying the Chesapeake Bay and other inland waters.

Further controversy may be stirred, before the Committees of Congress, if not before the Commission, when they consider the report over the proposal to provide voice radio exclusively on ships plying the Great Lakes. Labor leaders already have protested against the recommendation because they say voice installations will cut down on employment on ships. Voice sets would be operated by license operators, but not of the same grade and experience as those required to be aboard ships which carry code sets.

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Watson Lee has joined the Columbia Broadcasting System Network sales organization. Mr. Lee was for a number of years Eastern Advertising Manager of Woman's Home Companion and had previously been connected with The Blackman Company and J. Walter Thompson.

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WSAL TO APPEAL REVOCATION OF LICENSE

Continued operation of Station WSAL for at least 20 days despite an order revoking the Salisbury (Md.) station's license has been assured by the Federal Communications Commission.

Attorneys said that during that period, set aside to permit application for a rehearing of the license revocation order, the station could operate as usual.

In event the Commission should refuse to reconsider its order, they said WSAL could appeal to the Circuit Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia. Ordinarily, attorneys said, that Court would order a stay of the Commission's order pending a decision on the appeal.

Two companies are ready to step in with radio service at Salisbury, served for over a year by WSAL. They are the Delmarva Broadcasting Co., and Peninsula Broadcasting Co., both of which filed applications for authority to take over the service while revocation proceedings were pending against WSAL.

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LARGEST RADIO WEATHER SET-UP IS TESTED

Radio operators this week were testing a new weather reporting service which will be the largest unit of its kind in the world. The weather reports will be transmitted from LaGuardia Field, New York, after being gathered by two new stations at Sayville, L.I., and Barnegat, N. J.

When complete the new radio set-up will be the largest weather reporting service of its kind in the world, according to the New York Times, giving four-tape weather data ten hours a day. The completion of the service is contingent on the leasing of additional space.

United Air Lines has announced that it would install a new 5,000-watt radio transmitter in its new hangar at the field, to be completed by March 1. The transmitter will have two-way voice range with airplanes of the line 500 miles away.

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An unusual tribute will be tendered the transmitter engineering staff of Station WOR tomorrow (Wednesday) by the Western Electric Co., builders of the 50,000-watt WOR installation. F. R. Lack, representing Western Electric, will present a trophy to the station's Carteret, N.J., technical personnel in recognition of its record of broadcasting 8221 hours last year without a single program technical failure. The trophy, a handsome plaque, will be accepted by J. R. Poppele, Chief Engineer of WOR.

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STATIONS TOTAL 817 ON FEBRUARY 1ST

The Federal Communications Commission issued operating licenses to eight stations, granted seven permits for the construction of new stations, and deleted four stations during the month of January, 1940.

There were 769 stations operating and 48 construction permits outstanding on February 1st as compared with 727 and 39 a year ago.

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BRITISH FEAR U.S. MAY TAKE TELEVISION LEAD

S. Sagall, Managing Director of Scophony, Ltd., has prepared a memorandum containing proposals for the relaying of television programs over the telephone wires, according to The Electrical Review, British publication.

"He thinks that such a system could be operated on an inclusive rental basis at a charge of 5s. per week to subscribers", the article stated. "This country has held the lead in television so far, but the total cessation of the service will, he fears, allow the leadership to pass to the United States, where development is being actively pursued. The memorandum also refers to the possibility of introducing television into cinemas."

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PARKS SERVICE DEVELOPS TWO-WAY RADIO

Development of a mobile radio antenna by National Park Service engineers which makes possible long distance two-way communication from motorized Park Service field equipment has been reported to the Interior Department.

Heretofore, reliable two-way radio communication from the ordinary Park Service patrol car has been limited to a few miles. By use of a development of the base loaded type antenna, communication between points more than 100 miles apart has been attained, using the frequencies between 2,500 and 3,500 kilocycles. With an older base loaded antenna and the tuned loop, satisfactory short-distance communication has been maintained in the field, but with the newer equipment, approximately sixteen times the efficiency of the old loaded base type has been achieved, and much more than over the turned loop type. The new method is of great importance to the National Park Service in its annual battles with forest fires.

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PHILCO CLAIMS THREE TELEVISION DEVELOPMENTS

Three new achievements in television research, described as "important steps forward in solving television's fundamental problems" were announced in Philadelphia last week by William H. Grimditch, Vice-President in Charge of the Philco Radio & Television Corporation's engineering laboratories.

The announcement was made at a special showing in Philadelphia attended by radio and science news writers from New York, Philadelphia, and Washington.

The three Philco advances as described by Mr. Grimditch are:

1. Better television picture -- Television reception of a 605-line picture instead of the present 441-lines. This gives an increase of 30 percent in picture detail. The new 605-line picture has 24 frames per second in accordance with standard motion picture practice.
2. Plug-In Television -- Television reception based on vertical wave transmission permitting built-in vertical loop antennas.
3. Discrimination against noise -- Use of the built-in loop antenna to reduce diathermy and noise interference, one of television's most vexing problems.

"To the public", Mr. Grimditch said, "these advances will mean a better television receiver at lower cost.

"Although these achievements are important steps forward toward making television as reliable as present-day radio broadcasting", Mr. Grimditch added, "one big problem yet to be solved is a better, simpler, stronger, and more reliable synchronizing system to prevent picture slippage before television becomes practical."

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RADIO MAY GET STOCK EXCHANGE ADVERTISING

Broadcasting stations may soon get a new sponsor to the tune of \$800,000 a year, according to Louis M. Schneider, financial columnist, writing in the current Editor & Publisher. It is the New York Stock Exchange.

"As originally planned," he wrote, "the advertisements were to have been placed in some 400 newspapers and in about 300 towns and cities. Now that the idea has been revived, there is an even chance of its going to the radio chains."

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STOCKHOLDER SEEKS \$270,000,000 IN RCA SUIT

An action for recovery of more than \$270,000,000 was filed in Federal Court in New York City on Monday against the Radio Corporation of America, Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Co., General Electric Co. and 24 officers and Directors of the three concerns, according to the Associated Press.

J. Webster Manning, holder of 1,000 shares of R.C.A. common stock, filed the complaint, a derivative stockholders' suit, basing it on two alleged causes of action.

The first cause charged that from 1919, the year of RCA's organization, until 1936, General Electric and Westinghouse controlled RCA voting stock and, as a result, the policies and the Directors of RCA, Mr. Manning asked for an accounting of 6,500,000 shares of RCA common stock, worth \$40 a share, which, it was alleged, RCA gave to General Electric and Westinghouse in 1932 in return for certain rights to manufacture, sell and distribute radio apparatus controlled by General Electric and Westinghouse.

These agreements, the complaint charged, were illegal because the Government then was investigating the radio industry and the assets and rights turned over to RCA were worthless.

The complaint also charged that ratification by RCA stockholders was obtained by fraudulent means and misleading information.

The second cause of action dealt with the lending to Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corp. of \$11,600,000 for a 10-year, 6 per cent debenture issue in November, 1931. RCA directors at that time, the complaint continued, knew that R-K-O was about to go into bankruptcy. The issue was an unsecured, secondary obligation, subject to a prior issue of \$6,000,000, secured by all of R-K-O's assets, the complaint said.

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BAN ON RADIOS IN TAXICABS PROPOSED IN N.Y.C.

The banishment of radios from all New York City taxicabs on the ground that fragments of swing music, playlets and news are a general nuisance and of no particular interest to the cab-riding public, will be asked of the Police Department by the Broadway Association when the next licensing period, April 1, 1940, comes around, according to the New York Times.

H. Frederick Bright, Managing Director of the Association said his organization's petition and collection of protests had not been presented yet to Commissioner Valentine, but that it would be as soon as the two largest cab operating companies, Parmelee and Terminal, had completed a survey of the drivers' reactions to the proposal.

Conflicting views were obtained from various cab operators, as well as a note of protest from a spokesman for the taxi-cab division of the Transport Workers Union.

"The Association is absolutely right", said Nathan Levine, President of Bell Transportation Company, which operates 400 radio-equipped cabs. "As a matter of fact, I signed the petition myself. Cabs with radios are a hazard to the public, as they take the driver's mind off the road. It was the worst thing that ever happened to the taxi business. The accident ratio went up immediately after the radios were installed. And the passenger doesn't care about them - they're usually in the cab too short a time to hear a broadcast, and static usually interferes."

A woman president of another company, Mrs. Frances Cohen, head of Mural Transportation Company, which has 103 radio-equipped cabs, took an opposing view.

"Yes, it's a nuisance and a headache to the owners, and we'd save a lot of money by doing away with them, but we find the public likes radios, wants them and demands them, and we'd prefer to keep them", Mrs. Cohen said. "Then it's a source of great comfort to the drivers. It's really the only diversion they have. It's also educating for them to hear the news of the day."

The Union spokesman took the same view, declaring that cab radios were "an aid and comfort to the men, who have long waits between calls - and calls are very few these days."

Mr. Bright listed six reasons for the ban, to be proposed to Mr. Valentine. They are:

"Taxi radios are an accident hazard in that they detract the driver's attention from driving.

"They are of small interest to passengers, who hear through them only a fraction of a radio program.

"They create unnecessary noise and are particularly disturbing at night.

"Their use during major sporting events, etc., while cabs are parked at curbs, causes crowds to gather thereby blocking sidewalk movement and creating opportunities for pickpockets to ply their trade.

"They merely serve to amuse the driver while the cab is not in service.

"They upkeep and maintenance is an unnecessary expense on an overburdened industry."

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