

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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NO BROADCASTER WORRY SEEN IN NEW DEFENSE BOARD

There seems to be a general opinion that the broadcasters have nothing to fear in the new Federal Communications Defense Board just created.

"The broadcasters have had the idea that the Government would swoop down and take over all the broadcasting stations in the country", one high official said. "Nothing could be farther from the truth. They wouldn't know what to do with these stations if they had them.

"I believe the new Defense Communications Board will simply follow the President's order to recommend such precautions and reallocations as shall seem desirable under military conditions. For instance, as you well know, attacking planes may be guided by beams from a radio station. That being true, the frequency of a station may be changed here and there but that wouldn't necessarily mean the taking over of a station, but if it did, which would be very doubtful, it would mean only that station."

Chairman James L. Fly, of the Federal Communications Commission, who is also Chairman of the new Defense Board, has repeatedly assured broadcasters that no drastic steps were contemplated. Chairman Fly almost simultaneously with his appointment as Defense Chairman, again vigorously set forth these views in a National Defense broadcast sponsored by the Office of Government reports. The broadcast took the form of an interview as follows:

INTERVIEWER: I understand, Chairman Fly, that the Communications Act gives the President special powers with respect to communications in the event of war or other national emergency. Just what do those authorizations embrace?

CHAIRMAN FLY: It is only natural, and logical, that the President is given certain powers to coordinate and utilize important systems of communication during national emergency. For one thing, Section 606 of the Communications Act enables the Chief Executive, if he finds it necessary for the national defense and security, to accord certain communications priority. And, under like emergency, he may from time to time suspend or amend existing rules and regulations pertaining to radio communication, and permit Government use of particular facilities, if need be. Also, stringent provisions may be invoked to prevent sabotage of radio or wire communications in time of national stress.

INTERVIEWER: Does this mean, Mr. Chairman, that the Federal Government will take over radio communication bodily in event of war or presidential proclamation that an emergency exists?

CHAIRMAN FLY: No, that is not my understanding. On the contrary, it seems obvious that program service should continue pretty much as at present. After all, that is the American system of broadcasting, and distinguishes it from the situation abroad, where broadcasting has degenerated to a system of propaganda, and television has been "blacked out", amateurs rubbed out, and research and progress retarded for more years than we may yet realize. Such chaotic conditions as regards communications must not invade the United States. For one thing, our Government does not want to interfere with radio broadcasting any more than is necessary for the national protection. Likewise, it is expedient to preserve intact the present linking up of radio stations throughout the land. This is a large country, and the advantage of efficient and instantaneous communication throughout the 48 States and possessions is essentially important.

International communications are likewise important. Of course, I do not mean to imply that, under actual emergency, the Government might not temporarily enlist particular radio outlets for military purposes, and in the extreme picture, temporarily shut down, say, seaboard transmission which might serve as a beacon to an enemy in event of air raids. Also, in an actual emergency, the Government would undoubtedly require certain periods in which to broadcast official bulletins and other public announcements. But that would not necessitate taking over broadcasting facilities bodily. The broadcasters stand anxious and willing to lend their facilities and give time to the nation at stated periods or on other occasions when such need arises.

INTERVIEWER: From what you say, Chairman Fly, I am led to assume that in the defense picture you are receiving the cooperation of the industry.

CHAIRMAN FLY: We most assuredly are, I am delighted to report. Furthermore, this collaborative spirit is reflected in all fields of communication. It not only permeates the broadcasting industry, but extends throughout the commercial fields, and into the domain of the amateurs. You must realize that the amateurs constitute a valuable source of supply of operators and other experts for the military and other services in time of war.

CHAIRMAN FLY: Besides cooperating in every particular with the Commission in normal times, the amateur has been of particular aid in the national defense set-up by policing his own frequencies. It may be interesting for you to know that by voluntary action most amateurs stopped communicating to warring countries long before the Commission imposed its general prohibition respecting foreign contacts. I cannot over-emphasize the fact that action of the Commission in prescribing certain general curbs is precautionary rather than disciplinary. We are proud of the patriotic and cooperative response of operator and industry both.

INTERVIEWER: Mr. Chairman, has the FCC uncovered any startling use of radio for espionage purposes?

CHAIRMAN FLY: I have no report for you on that score. I might explain though, that in times like these our investigations of alleged unauthorized use of radio have increased tremendously over the thousand or so cases we had last year. The American public is now naturally "Fifth Column" conscious. Every antenna on a coastal fisherman's shack or a mountain cabin is a potential "spy" outfit in the eyes of some observing citizens under the present situation. It is necessary for the Commission to inquire carefully into every case reported to its field offices, even though these suspicious wires oftentimes lead to harmless receivers. I will say that most cases of unlicensed operation turn out to be acts of thoughtless or mischievous youth.

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DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS BOARD CREATED

President Roosevelt on Tuesday created by Executive Order the Defense Communications Board the chief function of which is to coordinate the relationship of all branches of communication to the National Defense. This refers not only to radio broadcasting, but also embraces common carriers such as commercial radio-telephone and radiotelegraph as well as other telephone, telegraph and cable facilities. The Board, according to the Order, will have no power to censor radio or other communications, or to take over any facilities.

The President designated James L. Fly, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, as Chairman of the new Board. Others appointed were Maj. Gen. J. O. Mauborgne, Chief Signal Officer of the Army; Rear Admiral Leigh Noyes, Director of Naval Communications; Breckenridge Long, Assistant Secretary of State in Charge of International Communications; and Herbert E. Gaston, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in Charge of the Coast Guard.

A section of the Executive Order set up specific barriers against exercise of censorship by the new agency. It said:

"The Board shall take no cognizance of matters pertaining to censorship. The Board shall study the physical aspects of domestic standard broadcasting and shall recommend such precautions, supplementary facilities and reallocations as it shall deem desirable under foreseeable military conditions. It shall also make plans for the speedy and efficacious use of all necessary facilities in time of military emergency."

The Order specified the Board's functions as follows:

- "a. The needs of the armed forces of the United States, of other governmental agencies, of industry, and of other civilian activities for radio, wire, and cable communication facilities of all kinds.
- "b. The allocation of such portions of governmental and non-governmental radio, wire, and cable facilities as may be required to meet the needs of the armed forces, due consideration being given to the needs of other governmental agencies, of industry, and of other civilian activities.
- "c. The measures of control, the agencies to exercise this control, and the principles under which such control will be exercised over non-military communications to meet defense requirements."

"During any war in which the United States is a belligerent, or any national emergency, the existing Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee shall act as a Committee of the Board, but only in an advisory capacity", the Order concludes. "While the Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee is so acting as an advisory committee, all of its reports, recommendations, or communications normally prepared for submission to the President shall instead be submitted to the Board, for consideration from the standpoint of National Defense and for disposition."

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CANADIAN SALES

The Canadian RMA has reported sales last July of 24,029 receiving sets compared with 23,720 in July 1939. Of the July, 1940, sales 12,346 were electric sets, 7,157 battery sets, 2,193 portable sets, 134 phonograph combinations and 1,639 automobile sets. The comparative July 1939 sales were 12,122 electric sets, 10,500 battery sets, 134 phonograph combinations and 964 automobile sets. Canadian inventories reported at the end of July were 114,241 sets against 71,449 in July, 1939.

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THAD BROWN CONFIRMATION STILL IN JEOPARDY

Evidently Senator Charles W. Tobey, (R.), of New Hampshire, is marking time as he continues to block the confirmation of Col. Thad Brown, Republican, for reappointment to the Federal Communications Commission in the hope of adjournment of Congress. If Congress adjourns, the nomination, of course, will automatically die with the session. However, if there is only a recess, then there is still a chance for confirmation.

Whether there will be an adjournment or recess is, at this writing, a question of considerable doubt although it is thought enough pressure has been brought to bear to predict a recess. A majority of Senate and House leaders want to adjourn but the Republicans and many Democrats are against this, expressing the belief that the President should not be given too free a hand in the present emergency. One plan is to recess until after election, say, November 15th.

In the meantime, no further call has been issued for a meeting of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee to further consider the confirmation of Colonel Brown. A majority of the Committee would have confirmed him some time ago but Senator Tobey, planning to have additional evidence, threatened to blow the roof off the Senate if they tried to jam the thing through. Then, too, it has been thought that Colonel Brown's name would be withdrawn but at this date, such has not been the case.

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U. S. INTERNATIONAL STATIONS MULTIPLY

With National Defense requirements as a stimulant, there is considerable activity among the U. S. short-wave stations. This is indicated in the latest listings of International Broadcast Stations, showing the construction permits in many cases to increase the power. Those listed are as follows:

Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.: WCBX, near Wayne, N. J., 10 KW, C.P., 50 KW; WCRC, Brentwood, N. Y., 50 KW (C.P. only); General Electric Company: WGEA, South Schenectady, N.Y., 25 KW, C.P. 50 KW; WGEO, South Schenectady, N.Y., 100 KW; KGEI, San Francisco, California, 20 KW, C.P. 50 KW; National Broadcasting Co., Inc., Bound Brook, New Jersey: WRCA, 35 KW, C.P. 50 KW, WNBI, 35 KW, C.P. 50 KW.

The above list does not include the new short-wave station being built by Westinghouse at Boston to take the place of that company's pioneer short-wave station at Pittsburgh.

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DUTCH RADIOS FOR U.S. RESHIPMENT REPORTED

With Germany out of the market for the present, the Netherlands remains the only competitor of the United States in the Dominican Republic, Vice Consul William Belton, of Ciudad, Trujilly, reports. It is understood that large stocks of Dutch radios are being held at Curacao for reshipment to the American market, and it is possible that before this supply is exhausted, arrangements will have been made to meet the demand from Dutch owned factories in countries of Holland.

Considering the population, demands for radio sets in the Dominican Republic is limited. Customarily, trade slacks off during the months previous to the release of new models. It is estimated that approximately 5,000 sets are in use in the Dominican Republic. The greatest stimulus which radio sales have received has been the improvement of broadcasting in Cuba, which transmits programs of considerable popularity locally.

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NATIONAL TELEVISION PROGRESS REPORTED

The National Television Systems Committee is now working on the many technical and commercial problems involved. Progress is reported already on some of the standardization work, and under the chairmanship of Dr. W. R. G. Baker of the General Electric Company, an almost continuous session of meetings, experiments, studies and exchange of technical data has been arranged.

Over forty organizations are enrolled in the organization work of NTSC and its nine panels or subcommittees. Further meetings of the nine television panels will be held in New York from October 1 to 4.

Of the forty organizations participating under the National Television Systems Committee in the enterprise of developing a national television service, the following research and engineering organizations are represented: Columbia University, Dartmouth Medical School, Eastmankudal Company, Institute of Radio Engineers, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Pennsylvania and University of Virginia.

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A new flying school radio station will be installed by the Lewis Holy Name School of Aeronautics, at Lockport, Illinois.

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MICROPHONE TRANSFORMS SLOVENLY SPEECH OF SENATORS

Senator Henry F. Ashurst, recently defeated for reelection from Arizona, one of the Senate's greatest orators, paid his respects to the microphone as follows:

"The microphone - forever pushed in front of the modern Cicero by newsreel, radio, and public-address men - may even nourish the old art of moving speech", Senator Ashurst is quoted as saying. "The microphone has transformed many men of sloppy, snippy, slovenly speech into superb speakers. In the past 15 years it has made scores of thousands of excellent speakers.

"The microphone has seemed to eliminate those great banes of public speaking - overtone and overstatement.

"Superlatives in speech are usually evidences of a weary man or sometimes of an indolent man who does not seek a more nearly exact medium of expression.

"I've long cultivated flaming, brilliant, rotund, gorgeous sentences", he explained. "But I would advise speakers of this era to use short, lance-like sentences."

This new hard-hitting manner is called forth, he explained, by the demands of the microphone, the need for simply put speech.

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ARMSTRONG RECEIVES FM PATENT

Dr. Edwin H. Armstrong, originator of present-day FM (frequency modulation) broadcasting, has received a patent (No. 2,215,284) for an improved method of FM transmission and reception which is claimed to give extremely high fidelity.

The new system, as described in the patent, permits transmission of the lowest to the highest pitched audible sounds, covering the entire audible range from thirty to 16,000 cycles. Present-day radios operating on amplitude-modulated radio waves cover but half this range, the patent states.

In Dr. Armstrong's new method of FM broadcasting and reception the high-frequency sounds of the broadcasting band are amplified many times more than the low-frequency sounds. Then the frequency of the wave to be broadcast is varied by the amplified currents. This produces a wide band of frequency variations. This wave is broadcast and when picked up at the receiver is amplified. The amplified currents are passed through a detecting device, where the frequency variations are converted into a band of currents of variable amplitudes. By this conversion distortions which would produce noises are suppressed. When both low-pitched and high-pitched sounds are reproduced, free from distorting noises, they go into the microphone at the transmitter.

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DR. JEWETT HEADS BELL RESEARCH BOARD

Dr. F. B. Jewett, Vice President of American Telephone & Telegraph Co., in charge of research, this week resigned as President of Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc., as of October 1, and will become Chairman of the research concern's Board of Directors.

Dr. O. E. Buckley, Executive Vice President of the Laboratories, controlled by American Telephone & Telegraph, will succeed Dr. Jewett as President.

It hardly seems possible but the Bell Laboratories Record in West Street, New York City, has been going now for fifteen years. The first issue appeared in September, 1925.

The Fall of 1928 saw the announcement of the Laboratories' program for aircraft radio development. Through subsequent years descriptions have appeared of transmitters and receivers which have become standard equipment on American airways.

At the present time more than two thousand yachts and coastwise craft can be connected by radio with Bell System telephones. This system was described in the Record for November, 1932. It supplements the ship-to-shore system for passenger steamers whose initial installation on the "Leviathan" was described in January, 1930.

Several entirely new Bell System services have had their inception within the lifetime of the Record. There is the teletypewriter network, as furnished to police and aeronautical authorities. There is the teletypewriter switching system, described in January, 1932, and now serving 14,000 stations. There are the radio broadcasting networks, carrying programs to hundreds of stations. There are unattended central offices, bringing dial service to places formerly served by magneto boards. There are secretarial, time-of-day, and weather services.

The following articles appear in the 15th Anniversary issue of the Record:

"The Nature of Organic Insulating Materials", C. S. Fuller; "Six-Way Directional Microphone", W. R. Harry; "New Voice-Frequency Electrical Delay Network", H. M. Thomson; "Unit Ventilator", O. C. Eliason; "Synchronized FM Transmitter", W. H. Doherty; "Toll Crossbar Call-Distributing System", J. Meszar; "A Dialing Circuit of Increased Range", F. K. Low; "An Important New Magnetic Alloy"; "Magnetic Ultra-Micrometer", W. B. Ellwood.

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 ::: TRADE NOTES :::
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The Commission on September 24, 1940, extended to March 29, 1941, the effective date of Section 3.32(b) of the Rules Governing Standard Broadcast Stations.

Appointment of Milton Weiner, who for 15 years has been connected with the Music Department of Station WLW, Cincinnati, as General Manager of Music and Associated Activities of that station, has been announced by James D. Shouse, Vice President of The Crosley Corporation in Charge of Broadcasting.

American radio newsmen in London are sleeping in the British Broadcasting Corporation's studios frequently these days to avoid being on the streets during air raids, reports John Steele, WOR-Mutual London commentator and chief of the MBS foreign staff. Mr. Steele adds that the danger of falling steel fired from British anti-aircraft batteries adds to the perils of life in London.

Says Leonard Lyons in his "New Yorker" column: "This is why Charles Michelson is conferring with the radio chains now: The G.O.P. claimed that the President's Chickamauga Dam speech, which lasted 22 minutes, was political. The radio stations, therefore, gave Willkie free time, for his Coffeyville speech - but that lasted 57 minutes. Michelson now demands 35 minutes free time for the New Deal." This was addressed to "Radio Daily".

KDKA's pack transmitter is still being packed around. WBZ-WBZA borrowed it in August for a broadcast from a blimp at Boston, and nearly lost it when a storm hit the blimp just as it was taking off. It came back to Pittsburgh for two more aerial broadcasts, and has now been shipped to KYW in Philadelphia for another special event.

Congress is completing action on the National Defense revenue legislation and promptly after enactment, copies of the new law relating to tax rates of corporations, including excess profits, amortization and other provisions will be issued. In the recent final hearings by the Senate Finance Committee, tax modification provisions recommended by the Radio Manufacturers' Association were presented in cooperation with National Association of Manufacturers and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

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DEVELOPS FM "TRANSLATOR" FOR OLD SETS

A new frequency modulation "translator", by the use of which the owner of a conventional or present-type amplitude modulation radio receiver can pick up the new FM broadcast programs, has been developed by the Radio Department of General Electric. Used in conjunction with the present-type receiver, it brings in the high fidelity and relatively static-free FM programs, thus protecting an owner's investment in radio equipment he now has.

The translator sells at \$49.95. Housed in a walnut cabinet standing 9 inches high, 15½ inches wide, and about 8 inches deep, is provided with a shielded cable for connection to a conventional radio. Terminals are located at the rear of the cabinet for antenna and ground connections. A special dipole antenna is recommended for best results, although in many locations an ordinary antenna will operate satisfactorily. The translator has its own dial scale, with a tuning range of 42 to 50 megacycles, and six tuning keys conveniently located below the illuminated dial.

A plug-in connector on the back of the translator chassis permits easy attachment of a television picture receiver. A wired-type of record player may also be used in conjunction with the translator. These two features are provided so that either of the other two uses to which an ordinary modern radio is put - television sound or record playing - can be carried on just as always despite the fact that the FM translator is connected permanently into the parent set. A manual control to facilitate such operation is supplied on the face of the small cabinet.

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RETAIL SALES SPURT TO 10,000,000 SETS

Retail sales of radio sets throughout the country are running a good 20 percent ahead of a year ago, distributors in New York reported, and volume for the year as a whole will mark up a new record, probably well in excess of 10,000,000 sets. While table models continue to lead, there is a larger demand for phonograph combinations and the average unit sale is beginning to increase steadily. The war and the presidential campaigns are the chief reasons for the greater demand, plus the fact that the cheaper table models, which have now been in vogue for several years, are replaced more rapidly than the consoles.

Confirming this trend was a statement by Charles Robbins, General Manager of the Emerson Radio & Phonograph Company, who said radio sales will reach a new all-time high this Fall and Winter.

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FM RADIO GOAL 100,000 FOR 1941

Radio set manufacturers have set a sales goal of at least 100,000 frequency modulation receivers for 1941, and are confident that volume will pass this mark, if stations get into operation rapidly, according to the New York Times. So far there are only five sets on the market but within another month or two, fourteen manufacturers will have models available in those areas covered by FM broadcasting.

"The chief difficulty faced in the promotion of FM sets is that they are considerably higher than the average set sold today and an educational campaign is needed to impress the public with FM superiority over the standard amplitude modulation broadcasting", the Times goes on to say.

"FM sets range in price from about \$150 up, whereas the average unit sale this year of AM sets is between \$30 and \$35. Total sales of standard sets this year will probably exceed 10,000,000. Last year the number was about 9,200,000, of which approximately two-thirds comprised the cheaper table models. Phonograph radio combinations reached a new high last year with about 500,000 sold and this year the figure is expected to be pushed up to 600,000 units."

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COLUMBIA AGAIN ENTERS PHONOGRAPH INDUSTRY

The Columbia Recording Corporation has entered the phonograph field and will market two models. At one time the name Columbia was associated with a leading phonograph manufacturing company and since that time has gone through the process of being absorbed into a radio network, reappearing as an important producer of records and finally back to its original field, phonographs.

Columbia will not make the machines, however, the producer being an "important radio manufacturer". Two models are offered; a portable at \$35 and a table model at \$69.50.

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