

HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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No. 1550

August 3, 1943.

NEW SHORT-WAVE SPOOK SPOKESMAN EMBARRASSES OWI

Having quickly killed off "John Durfee", its invisible speaker who as "The Voice of America" insulted King Victor Emmanuel III by short-wave, mortification was added to the Office of War Information in discovering that another dummy short-wave speaker "Walter Herrick" was still on the job. "Durfee" apparently handled matters of policy which were too delicate to be credited to any one person. He was a sort of diplomatic Charlie McCarthy whereas "Herrick", supposed to be a military analyst, was the Mortimer Snurd in that particular field.

Whether any one person impersonates "Herrick" is not known but it was said that "John Durfee", who voiced the attack of Samuel Grafton on the Italian King was James P. Warburg, the well-known author, now with the O.W.I. In the meantime, the newspapers continue to fume.

"It took the world-shaking news from Rome to rattle loose from his moorings in the closet of the Office of War Information a hitherto unheard-of skeleton, by name John Durfee", says the Washington Daily News (Scripps-Howard). "Durfee, it develops, is an 'American political commentator' whose utterances are quoted by the OWI in its propaganda broadcasts to foreign lands. The difference between Durfee and other commentators is that there is no Durfee. He is only an articulate wraith dreamed up by the ingenious OWI - an ectoplasmic straw man beckoned out of the cosmos to serve the purposes of 'psychological warfare'.

"Elmer Davis and his assistants have often emphasized the 'factual' nature of their expensive outgivings, both for the foreign and domestic trade. They never mentioned John Durfee before. And at this writing, in spite of numerous inquiries, they have not yet been able to explain why, with all the galaxy of flesh-and-blood commentators available for quotation, they must conjure up this spook.

"The whole thing smells of dishonesty.

"John Durfee is one more reason why OWI's Overseas Division should be turned over to the State Department, which seems to know a little more about American foreign policy than the OWI."

David Lawrence, the columnist wrote:

"The mixup over the sending out as 'The Voice of America' a short-wave broadcast under the auspices of the OWI, which in a moment of delicate crisis began calling the new Italian government names, is not one that has been satisfactorily resolved and more may be heard about it when Congress reconvenes."

"The 'moronic' Italian King short-wave incident", observes Mark Sullivan, "is no momentary tempest. Understand it and you will get a light on problems and embarrassments facing us in the fighting in Europe."

Berryman had a cartoon in the Washington Star showing Robert Sherwood, the well known playwright, now head of the OWI Overseas Branch, which pulled the prize boner of the century, standing at a microphone. In the background was Secretary Hull plunking away at a typewriter. President Roosevelt was saying to Sherwood: "You do the broadcasting, Bob, but Cordell Hull will write the script and remember-- no ad libbing! This isn't play-writing. This is war."

William Philip Simms, of the United Press wrote:

"President Roosevelt's public spanking of OWI for overstepping the bounds in its radio remarks beamed abroad brought delight to foreign envoys here, together with the fervent hope that, at long last, a much-needed reform was on the way. For a long time now, the Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information has been a perpetual headache, not only for many diplomats here but for their governments, mostly in exile. They say that a considerable proportion of the broadcasts beamed to their countries do more harm than good."

"The man who prompted Roosevelt to rebuke the OWI for calling Vittorio Emanuele a moron was Admiral Leacy", Drew Pearson observed. "He hotly footed it over to the White House immediately, warned the President there was no use heaping abuse on the new Italian government until it had a chance to act."

"Trouble was that OWI's broadcasts have been operated by a group of well-meaning Italian exiles who are so close to the situation they don't see the over-all long range picture."

The Washington Star said:

"Short-wave news and propaganda is broadcast by the Overseas Operations Branch of OWI after the announcer's introduction, 'This is the Voice of America, one of the United Nations'. It is obvious that the words spoken by this 'Voice of America' should be selected with meticulous care, in conformity with an over-all policy precisely defined by the Secretary of State, acting for the President. The incredible thing is that this evidently has not been the case until the OWI fumbled a foreign broadcast concerning 'the moronic little King' of Italy and brought a rebuke from the President. Robert E. Sherwood, Director of the Overseas Operations Branch of OWI, conferred with Secretary Hull and indicated afterward that everything was now understood. But why was this not done in the first place? OWI has made a number of mistakes, which it has been commendably frank in admitting, in the past. But an odd thing about OWI mistakes is that the top men never seem to have realized they were mistakes until somebody else told them so."

"In the judgment of this observer, the Office of War Information, our chief agency of propaganda, fell down lamentably in its treatment of Mussolini's fall from power", William L. Shirer, columnist and radio commentator, concluded. "It muffed completely the greatest propaganda opportunity of the entire war.

"The event was stupendous, our opportunity great. And yet all this great Nation, whose armies in Sicily, whose bombers over Italy, had contributed so much to chasing the Tyrant from Rome, had to say to the world about it was that it was of no importance!

"There were the millions of enslaved peoples of Europe waiting breathlessly to hear if the news was as good as it had first seemed.

"But from the powerful American transmitters of OWI, to which so many of them look for honest and objective guidance in evaluating the day's news, all they heard was a quotation from a New York columnist: 'It changes nothing in Italy.'

"This correspondent could not believe his ears and eyes. Berlin, citadel of the Axis, was flabbergasted by the news. Dr. Goebbels, for the first time in his life, did not know what to say. That was evident to anyone listening in to Berlin. Yet the Voice of America was telling Italians and Germans and the occupied peoples that 'there is still no reason to believe that the essential nature of the Fascist regime in Italy has changed.'

"And an American commentator for OWI was informing them that 'for the American people, the resignation of Mussolini is welcome news, but it is not considered here to be an event of great importance.'

"Good God! Not an event of great importance! As Churchill was to say the next day, Tuesday, Mussolini's end marked 'the close of an epoch in the life of Italy. The keystone of the Fascist arch has crumbled and without attempting to prophesy, it does not seem unlikely that the entire Fascist edifice will fall to the ground in ruins, if it has not already so fallen.'

"I do not believe the American people were so stupid or uninformed as to believe that Mussolini's downfall was not an event of great importance.

"Our British friends turned out to be more astute propagandists. The first words of a BBC broadcast in German to the German people only three hours after the announcement of the Duce's end said:

"'The world today witnessed the collapse of fascism in Italy, the prelude to the dissolution and end of fascism and national-socialism throughout the world.'

"The news, we are told by the Berlin correspondent of the Stockholm paper Dagens Nyheter, hit all Germans 'like a bombshell. Nobody could deny that it is the biggest shock of this war for the Germans.'

"But when there were the OWI transmitters telling them that 'it changes nothing in Italy', that the American people did not consider it 'to be an event of great importance', that 'there is no reason to believe that the essential nature of the fascist regime in Italy has changed.'"

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MILLER HANGING ON, BAD NEWS TO FLY WHO KEEPS MUM

Although credited with being one of the chief factors in the move to pry Neville Miller loose from his \$35,000 job as President of the National Association of Broadcasters, Chairman James L. Fly of the Federal Communications Commission made no comment upon the failure of the latest attempt to unseat Mr. Miller. Usually three strikes are out but this was not the case with Mr. Miller, who at Chicago last week successfully resisted the third attempt to oust him from the presidency.

Likewise those about Mr. Miller had no comment to make. Although there has been considerable improvement in the handling of NAB publicity since this was taken over by Walt Dennis, an old Hearst man, not a line was given out in Washington about the Chicago meeting. Inquiries were referred to Willard Egolf, an assistant to Mr. Miller, who attended the meeting. Either Mr. Egolf was gagged or inexperienced in talking with Washington correspondents.

"You saw the resolutions that were passed at Chicago", he said.

"Yes, but what do you think - " the inquiring reporter started to ask.

"I was told to give out those resolutions", Mr. Egolf cut in, "and not to think."

One of the resolutions expressed appreciation to William B. Lewis, late of the OWI and former Vice President of the Columbia Broadcasting System for withdrawing his name as a possible successor to Mr. Miller. There was also reportedly a deal on for Mr. Lewis to go in as vice-president until Mr. Miller's term expires next June but the "Crown-Prince" idea apparently didn't go so well either. The feeling was that if Mr. Lewis made a fight for Mr. Miller's place, this would cause a row within the industry which might bring down the wrath of Representative Cox, of Georgia, and maybe result in the industry getting investigated so that was considerable relief when Mr. Lewis asked that his name be withdrawn. Nor did there seem to be much likelihood that Mr. Lewis would be a candidate for Mr. Miller's place in 1944. "I'd bet \$50 that he will not be", one broadcaster said. "Furthermore, I'd bet the same that Bill Lewis will have another job within 30 days."

Another resolution said the purpose of the Chicago meeting was "misrepresented to some sections of the industry as bearing on the termination of the contract of the incumbent president before the termination thereof". This was taken to be a bit of camouflage.

The NAB Board at Chicago named a Nominating Committee of six to make recommendations for a President of the Association to take office following the expiration of Mr. Miller's term next June.

The Committee members who are to report at the next regular meeting of the Board or at a special meeting called for this purpose are Don S. Elias, WWNC, Asheville, N.C.; G. Richard Shafto, WIS, Columbia, S. C.; John G. Gillin, Jr., WOW, Omaha, Nebr.; J. O. Maland, WHO, Des Moines, Iowa; James D. Shouse, WLW, Cincinnati, and Paul W. Morency, WTIC, Hartford, Conn.

Notwithstanding the apparent effort to soft-pedal differences at Chicago, it is believed the Cox Committee may still ask some embarrassing questions about the meeting there but exactly what these questions will be, if any, only the hot-tempered Congressman from Georgia will be able to tell.

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AMERICAN MASS METHODS SPEED UP RADIO PRODUCTION

Quantity production of radio equipment for the armed forces was only possible after American mass production methods were applied to the diamond die industry, Charles E. Wilson, Executive Vice-Chairman of the War Production Board said today.

Indispensable in the radio equipment program, he explained, is a coil of wire so fine that it is invisible to the eye. One pound of it will span a hundred miles.

This wire must be drawn through precisely drilled diamond dies. Prior to the war, there was no diamond die industry in this country making the smaller dies needed for this purpose. Our small requirements were filled in France and the Low Countries, where die craftsmen had been trained for generations.

"We were up against it", Mr. Wilson said. "We desperately needed that wire. We had to have craftsmen who could fashion the diamond dies. After a thorough search we found half a dozen and persuaded them to go to work at their old calling. There was a shortage of tools, too, but with government aid, four small workshops were set up in an effort to build this vitally needed industry.

"The next step was to see to what extent we could apply the use of machines to producing the dies on a larger scale. As a result of experiments conducted first in Britain and then in this country, we have perfected a machine which can drill from eight to 12 dies at one time, instead of making them singly, by hand, as was the Old World custom."

"WPB also set up an experimental laboratory at the Bureau of Standards to improve processes and make dies with a longer operating life", he said. "These scientists are on the road to some significant discoveries.

"The more wire we can draw through each individual die, the fewer dies we need. While this work is still going on, we have

found ways to greatly lengthen the life of the die, which was normally limited to the drawing of one pound of wire."

Mr. Wilson pointed out that the die which draws as many as 25 pounds or 2,500 miles of wire is preserved as a museum piece, but added, "We're getting more of those museum pieces."

At the beginning of the year, it was estimated that the United States would need between 25,000 and 30,000 of the critical small-sized diamond dies. At the time that seemed like a hopeless task, Mr. Wilson said. Today it appears quotas will be met and next year may see the end of the many problems and fears that faced this infant industry.

"We still have production problems in radio", Mr. Wilson went on, "but we can safely say that this particular bottleneck has been broken."

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FCC AWAITS BLUE NET SALE APPLICATION

Although there is an informal understanding, the actual application for the transfer of the stations involved in the \$8,000,000 sale of the Blue Network to Edward J. Noble, the Life Saver Candy King, and former Under Secretary of Commerce, has not reached Washington. While the sale is a big victory for Chairman James L. Fly and the Federal Communications Commission, whose regulations brought about the sale and unquestionably the transaction will be approved, nevertheless with Representative Cox of Georgia trying to get something more on them, they are checking into the interests associated with Mr. Noble in the deal.

"Mr. Noble has taken full responsibility for the purchase, but there is some uncertainty as to what persons or interests will come in with him", Mr. Fly told a press conference. "Naturally the Commission will want to know who all of the owners are."

While explaining that he was not expressing approval of the sale, Mr. Fly said he thought disposal of the Blue Network by Radio Corporation of America represented "a fine and good example of industry cooperation with Government."

Mr. Fly was in New York when the deal was closed. Originally James H. McGraw of the McGraw-Hill Publishing Company was in on it but was supposed to have backed out for fear that his being in the publishing business might conflict with the FCC's pending order on newspaper ownership.

There is still the matter of selling of Mr. Noble's Station WMCA for which he paid \$850,000 in cash in 1941. It was denied that the New York Times, which broadcasts news bulletins over the station would purchase it. There was some talk that Don

Flamm, previous owner, might try to buy it back. Mr. Flamm charged that pressure was exerted forcing him to sell the station and this was one of the charges the Cox Committee was expected to go into.

In discussing the acquisition of the Blue Network, Mr. Noble said: "I have been tremendously impressed with the Blue Network's record of public service, with the work of its management and personnel and particularly with its contributions to our Nation's War effort.

"There will be no change in the management. The officers and executives who have guided the destinies of the Blue Network since its separation will continue at the helm. The entire personnel will be retained and the Network will continue functioning as heretofore.

"The policies and practices which have been responsible for the Network's record of accomplishment will be continued. As a matter of fact, the Network officials plan to extend its services to listeners, advertisers and its affiliated stations."

Continuing, Mr. Noble said, "I accept fully the responsibility of public service which ownership of the Blue Network will place upon me. In fact, I regard this responsibility to the people much as an elected official sees his responsibility to the public. In every phase of broadcasting - public service, the all-important war service, news, information, entertainment - the Blue will continue to serve its listeners and to increase its service to the Nation."

Mr. Noble presently is the owner of Station WMCA in New York City. In this connection he stated: "The principal station of the Blue Network, WJZ, is operated from New York City. In accordance with the current policies of the FCC, I propose to dispose of all my interest in WMCA as soon as a suitable purchaser is found."

Mark Woods, President of the Blue Network, expressed himself as being pleased with the new ownership. "As the first Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Authority, 1938-39, and as President of the Board of Trustees of St. Lawrence University, Mr. Noble is imbued with the fundamental concept of public service. He represents the type of forward looking man that assures the continued operation of the Blue Network in the public interest", declared Mr. Woods.

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How should educational methods be revised in the post-war world to insure against another war? What steps will have to be taken to re-educate the Nazi-bred youth of Germany? These are some of the questions which will be considered when Willard E. Givens, of the National Education Association; George F. Zook, American Council on Education, and James Rowland Angell, President Emeritus of Yale University, participate in a discussion on the NBC Inter-American University of the Air post-war planning series, "For This We Fight", on Saturday, August 8 (NBC 7:00 P.M., EWT).

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HOUSE ACTION TO ABOLISH OWI PLANNED BY REP. BARRY

That the Office of War Information is not through with its troubles on the Hill was apparent when Representative Barry (D), of New York, declared that he was framing a bill to be introduced when Congress reconvenes next month to abolish the OWI and to transfer its activities to the State Department.

Recent "irresponsible utterances" of the OWI regarding the Italian King and Marshal Badoglio, Mr. Barry asserted in a statement "might very well have caused the loss of many thousands of American lives."

"The staff of OWI appears to be filled with fellow travelers or Communists who are more interested in propagandizing their own doctrines than in winning the war", Mr. Barry said. "They are causing consternation and confusion in the occupied countries."

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ONLY HE CAN AFFORD FREE MUSIC, PETRILLO TOLD

Mr. Petrillo's free orchestra concert plan is given quite a going over in an editorial in the Washington Star:

"By waving his magic wand, President James C. Petrillo of the American Federation of Musicians seems to be able to stop or start almost anything he wants to stop or start in the field of music. But he has set many people to figuring over how he proposes to carry out his plan of providing some 570 free concerts by the Nation's leading orchestras for the smaller communities lacking opportunity to hear good music. If he can do it, fine! But when he talks about donating \$250,000 - 'double that if found necessary' - for 570 concerts by the orchestras he listed, he is not talking the language of the orchestra manager who has to meet an orchestra payroll.

"The operating expenditure for the New York Philharmonic for a season of 129 concerts will run close to \$600,000. The Boston Symphony, most expensive in the country, runs higher by perhaps \$100,000. The Minneapolis Orchestra pays out more than \$250,000 for about seventy-two concerts. In recent years our own National Symphony Orchestra's operating expenses were about \$175,000 for seventy-eight concerts. So it goes. Operating costs for thirteen of the Nation's leading symphony orchestras - including all but four of those listed by Mr. Petrillo for his concert tours - for 1,124 concerts given in one recent season totaled \$3,870,000, and their operating deficits after sale of tickets and all other revenue - including the recordings, which Mr. Petrillo has banned - exceeded \$1,590,000.

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"At these rates, which are perhaps typical, 570 concerts by these thirteen orchestras would cost in the neighborhood of \$2,000,000.- four times what Mr. Petrillo was ready to pay 'if found necessary'. This is not looking a gift horse in the mouth, for if Mr. Petrillo can do something to bring more good music to the American people, he should be thanked for it. But if he does it at union scales, and under the conditions which must be met by any other symphony orchestra management, it is going to cost him more than the half million dollars he said he was ready to spend. For Mr. Petrillo has made music expensive in this country. To furnish it free is a privilege that only a czar can afford."

H. I. Phillips, N. Y. Sun has this to say about Mr. Petrillo's presidential orchestral tour:

"All out for Caesar Petrillo's Certified Saxophonists!
This way to the gala band concert by Caesar's Cruising Cornetists!"
* * * * *

"Why listen to the best music in all the world in the cool comfort of your own home by merely sitting in a cozy chair and twisting a knob when you can fight your way through a sweltering mob and hear a concert by Caesar's hand-picked musickers in the flesh on the village green?"
* * * * *

"Why get your melody over the air without strain, effort or suffering when you can undergo exertion and inconvenience? This-uh way-uh, ladies and gennulmen! Let that little boy and girl through! Step lively!"
* * * * *

Get ready for the above, folks! It's coming soon.
James Caesar Petrillo, boss of the musicians, who has put all sorts of bans on music by air and otherwise and deprived the public of more music than you would think possible, now announces that he is going to give the people a great big break.
* * * * *

He is going to provide a traveling orchestra of 90 pieces to tour the country and make up for all you have sacrificed!
Gangway! And don't say Caesar isn't a big-hearted boy!
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A dispatch from Chicago said that Mr. Petrillo expected to begin the concerts at once. Following a similar one in Chicago for the Middle West and West, there will be a meeting tomorrow (Wednesday) in New York of Union officials from Eastern cities having symphony orchestras. Saying that the concerts were for "civilian morale", Mr. Petrillo seemed worried only about transportation facilities but thought this problem could be solved because "after all, this was President Roosevelt's idea".

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TRADE NOTES

A shortage of radio tubes is making it necessary for manufacturers of radio apparatus in Denmark to curtail their 1934-44 production, reports the Commerce Department. In order that the 1,000,000 sets now in use in the country may be maintained, dealers have been instructed that tubes supplied for repair work are not to be used for any other purpose.

No connection, of course, but the advertising slogan for the O'Sullivan Rubber Company, who will sponsor Former OPA Chief Leon Henderson in his weekly news commentaries, which begin Saturday, August 14, at 6:45 P.M., EWT, is "America's No. 1 Heel". Leon will start off with more than seventy stations on the Blue.

The case growing out of a complaint issued by the Federal Trade Commission against Davega City Radio, Inc., 76 Ninth Ave., New York, has been ordered closed by the Commission.

The complaint alleged that the respondent in its advertising material concerning so-called special prices of radios sold by it carried in smaller and less prominent type the fact that additional charges were made for essential parts of the products. The respondent having discontinued the practice, the Commission has ordered that the case growing out of the complaint be closed without prejudice to the right of the Commission, should future facts so warrant, to reopen it and resume trial thereof in accordance with its regular procedure.

Asked about the Western Union-Postal Telegraph merger proceedings, Chairman James L. Fly of the Federal Communications Commission said he was hopeful that by Wednesday of this week the firms involved would have a complete plan ready to present on the problem of revision of international traffic.

That cupid was hovering over Col. Robert R. McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune and owner of Station WGN, and Mrs. J. Fred Essary, of Washington, D. C., was intimated by Drew Pearson in his broadcast last Sunday night. Colonel McCormick was married to Annie Irwin Adams in 1915 and she died in 1939.

Mrs. Essary is the widow of the former Washington correspondent of the Baltimore Sun and former President of the Gridiron Club. Mrs. Essary herself is a newspaper woman on the staff of the Washington Times-Herald owned by Mrs. Eleanor Patterson, a cousin of Colonel McCormick. She is popular socially and one of the beauties of the National Capital.

NBC's Radio-Recording Division closed during the past week two new and two renewal contracts for syndicated programs. KOMA, Oklahoma City, has taken 26 programs of "Flying for Freedom" for the John A. Brown Co. department store; WKZO, Kalamazoo, Mich., has signed for 39 programs of "The Name You Will Remember" for Sal Fayne. The advertising agency of Smith, Taylor & Jenkins, Pittsburgh, has renewed the series "Let's Take a Look in Your Mirror" for Dr. Ellis Sales Co., broadcast over WAIT, Chicago, and WRC, Washington.

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NEW SYLVANIA PRESIDENT OLD TIMER IN RADIO

Walter E. Poor, new President of Sylvania Electric Products, Inc., has been an enthusiastic worker in the field of lighting and radio for many years. Mr. Poor's first contact with this field was made in 1909. His first contribution to the lighting industry was a low-wattage sign lamp.

Upon the combination of the Hygrade Lamp Co. and the Sylvania Products Co. in 1931, Mr. Poor was appointed Vice-President in Charge of Manufacturing and continued in this position until his appointment as Executive Vice-President of Hygrade Sylvania Corp. in December, 1941. He has served on the Executive Committee of the company and has been a member of the Board of Directors for many years.

Mr. Poor succeeds B. G. Erskine, who was elected Chairman of the Board.

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WJZ MAKES NEW SURVEY OF LISTENING HABITS

A detailed study of listening habits, by Crossley, in the area covered by major New York radio stations was completed last week and results released by John McNeil, Manager of Station WJZ.

Outstanding for intensity and scope, the "WJZ Multiple Market Study" measured the dialing habits of listeners to all stations in cities of 75,000 population and over within the 1/2 mv/m contour of WJZ. Cities in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Delaware came under the Crossley scrutiny. A total of 68,226 calls were made in Metropolitan New York, Philadelphia, Allentown, Reading, Scranton, Wilkes Barre, Camden, Trenton, Bridgeport, New Haven and Wilmington.

The purpose of the survey was to get a much-needed comparison of the listening habits in Metropolitan New York with those of the other millions of people who live outside of New York, but still within the primary areas of the leading New York stations. Because of the diminishing signals of New York's score of independents and the widely varying degrees of signal strength thrown by the 50,000 watt stations in the outside area, time-buyers have found that the listening outside of New York cannot be compared with that in the Metropolitan Area.

According to the "Multiple Market Study", WJZ was revealed as the dominant New York station in seven out of the ten cities surveyed. No figures are being released, however, on WJZ's standing with the local stations in the cities surveyed, as the intent of the survey was not to pose WJZ as a competitor of the stations in those particular cities.

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