

# HEINL RADIO BUSINESS LETTER

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No. 1577

November 9, 1943

## G.E. GIVES IMPRESSION TELEVISION MAY BE MUCH NEARER

One of the best examples of concrete post-war planning is that of the General Electric Company on television. As a matter of fact after what the delegation of 50 newspaper and magazine representatives saw and heard at Schenectady last Friday most of them seemed to think that television was here and simply awaiting the end of the war to make its formal entrance. Dr. W. G. R. Baker, Vice-President of the General Electric Company, told the visitors that the engineers had learned to make many television devices that couldn't have been manufactured on a production basis before the war. He also told the press that the development of television today is about equal to the state of radio in 1928 or 1929.

The highlight of Friday's demonstration was showing how closely television could follow the news. This was done by televising a ten-page edition of the Albany Times-Union. First the printed page was televised; then the events described were enacted by television. It was just like a sound picture based upon newspaper headlines. For instance, in the televising of an editorial by Bugs Baer you first were shown the editorial page, then you saw Bugs Baer in his shirt sleeves (wearing a pair of bright red suspenders) writing his daily editorial. Finally, you heard Bugs, who came to Schenectady especially for the showing, read the editorial, "How the 'a la' got before the carte" - the real thing which appeared in the Albany paper the next day.

At the conclusion of the program, the visitors were presented with a "Television Edition" of the Times-Union printed in honor of the occasion. One thing that wasn't televised in this paper which would have been very pat was an article by Edgar S. Van Olinda which read, in part:

"'Drums Along the Mohawk' beat with a strange, new modern rhythm last night for the Fourth Estate at Schenectady. There was a curious analogy with what transpired in the television studio of WRGB on the east bank of the Mohawk river with that of the earlier stages of Indian communication. The sound sequences, emanating from the studio correspond to the beat of the aborigines' drums, while its co-efficient, visibility was simply the scientific development of the Mohawk Indians' smoke signals. And the occasion was not unlike the early alerts of the red-skinned warriors, since it was an attempt to warn the top flight newspapermen present of the possibilities in the not too distant future of into what television may develop as a competitive factor in placing world events and local happenings, by way of the home-owned television sets, within the range of the family circle, formerly dedicated to the perusal of the family newspaper."

However, George O. Williams, Managing Editor of the Times-Union, was quick to say that he didn't believe television would ever supplant the printed word.

Following the showing at luncheon of a motion picture film on "How Television Operates", the visitors on last Friday were driven to the G. E. television relay station to the top of the Helderberg Mountains 25 miles from Schenectady. This relay station is located 129 air line miles from New York City and stands 1700 feet above sea level, with the rhombic antenna 128 feet above. The main transmitter is at an altitude of 1520 feet with 60-foot antennas above. While there, a special program originating at NBC's television station in New York was transmitted to show how pictures were received without intermediate relays or boosters from the top of the Empire State Building 129 miles distant. To this non-technical writer, the quality of these pictures was surprisingly good.

The programs transmitted from New York City are received at the relay station on the 44-50 megacycle band by means of a rhombic antenna that resembles two diamonds placed end to end and supported by four 128-foot towers. The programs then pass through an amplifier, a part of the antenna structure, that increases the signal strength about 20 times before entering a wire line leading to the relay receiving station located beneath the antenna. Here the radio signals from New York are changed to sound and picture signals. The sound part of the program is relayed from the receiving station to the main transmitter by wire line. There it modulates a standard 10-kilowatt ultra-high-frequency transmitter, and the programs are then broadcast from two antennas above the transmitter to listeners in the Capital District.

By means of a low-power 10-watt transmitter the picture part of the programs is then relayed on a carrier wave of 156-162 megacycles from a small transmitting antenna to the main Helderberg station. This transmitter is similar to the diamond-shaped one used to pick up the programs from New York but is only 10 feet across as compared with the 400 feet of the receiving antenna. In sending a picture electric impulses are transmitted at the rate of 10,000,000 a second.

Later the visitors were taken to the 40 KW. transmitter 10 miles away, the most powerful television station in operation in the United States.

That night at the dinner, C. D. Wagoner ("Wag"), head of the G. E. News Bureau, who had made a hit with the newspaper people by the brevity of his remarks and genial manner, further pleased those who hate long drawn out speaking. "Wag" introduced R. S. Peare, Manager of Broadcasting and Publicity, in a single sentence - such an introduction as only a President of the United States rates. Nor did Mr. Peare detain the boys long.

"We could throw a party at G. E. every night for sixteen nights and have a different Vice-President. We have thirteen Vice-Presidents in New York and an effort was made to deliver them to the



Republicans in a bloc at the recent election", said Mr. Peare, who looks like Wendell Willkie, who hails from Indiana, and who likewise hands out the same brand of Hoosier humor.

"However, we have here tonight Dr. W. R. G. Baker, the only Vice-President who ever had a television station named after him. When we hit upon the idea of using the call letters of WRGB, we found they were assigned to a police station in a small town in Ohio which said it would be glad to relinquish them to us. Later someone heard the Chief of Police explaining the change by saying that the call letters were the initials of somebody who had died at G.E."

"After that introduction", Dr. Baker responded, "I shouldn't make a speech, only sit up here and let you look at me."

When the newspaper was being televised, the onlooker in a balcony of the WRGB studio had the novel experience of seeing the actors and then by slightly turning his head, seeing and hearing a television set in the corner of the balcony reproduce the scene. There were also receiving sets across the street in the Van Curler Hotel.

The pictures shown were 8½ x 11 inches and were as good, if not better than, any home movies this writer has ever seen and far superior to any he saw before the war. There was no flicker and not the slightest suggestion of eyestrain. Because of the present size of the picture (11 x 18 inches was said to be the ideal size), single figures such as "Believe-It-Or-Not" Ripley, who journeyed to Schenectady for the program, came out best though the famous cartoonists, Otto Soglow, creator of "The Little King" and Russ Westover "Tillie the Toiler" working at boards side-by-side were splendid, especially during the hilarious moments when they began to draw caricatures of each other and the remarks they made while doing it.

On the other hand, a motion picture film of a football game previously televised was just about as good and the plays and the numbers on the backs of the players almost as readily recognized as in an ordinary movie and, as has been said, certainly as good as in a home movie.

There were two types of receiving sets shown. Both types were about twice as wide as an ordinary radio cabinet but in one the picture was seen in the half-raised lid and in the other on the front of the set. One guess was that when the industry went into production these sets might sell as low as \$150.

It seemed to the writer that television offered the most serious challenge to the sound movie theatres. Next to that the broadcasters who offer sound without sight. It was said, however, that the two industries might work together on it - Hollywood furnish the talent and radio the distribution.

WRGB now televises live talent programs three nights a week and motion pictures two afternoons a week and has been doing so for sometime.



Among those attending the television demonstration were:

Harold Fleming, Christian Science Monitor; William Meenam, WGY, General Electric Co.; Charles F. Monef, Boston Globe; L. B. Wood, N. Y. World-Telegram; N. S. Macneish, New York World Telegram; William Kostka, Look Magazine; S. P. McMinn, Electronic Industries, New York City; W. B. Potter, Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N.Y.; J. Raymond Hutchinson, American Television Society; Arthur T. Brush, Manchester Union-Leader, New Hampshire; Henry Matteo, United Press; Kirt King, United Press; Harold W. Cassill, New York, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; Edgar S. Van Olinda, Albany Times-Union; George O. Williams, Albany Times-Union; Ed Maher, Paul Hunter, Liberty Magazine; J. M. Guilfoyle, Wall St. Journal; Lewis Winner, Communications, N.Y. City; Joe Marty, Jr., Radio News; S. I. Newhouse, Newark Star Ledger; Robert Stivack, New York Post; Robert U. Brown, Arthur T. Robb, Editor & Publisher; Judy Dupuy, PM Newspaper; Arleen Paul, Broadcasting Magazine; Cy Kneller, Radio & Television Weekly; Bob Conly, Newsweek; Lewis Haney, King Features; Seymour Berkson, International News Service; J. P. Quitter, Cincinnati Post; W. Norris Paxton, AP.

Among those in the receiving line at G.E. in addition to Dr. Baker, Mr. Peare, and Mr. Wagoner were:

R. L. Gibson, Assistant to Mr. Peare, Dr. E. F. W. Alexander, Irving Langmuir, C. H. Lang, Kolin Hager of WGY, Bill Meenam of WGY, E. L. Robinson, and numerous others.

Typical G.E. hospitality was extended and a grand time was had by all.

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#### SAYS BASIS OF NATIONAL TELEVISION SYSTEM IS HERE

Addressing General Electric's television press party last Friday, Dr. W. R. G. Baker, Vice-President in Charge of its Electronics Department, revealed that the war has resulted in a vast new storehouse of knowledge and the ability and tools to work in parts of the television frequency spectrum never before possible.

"The fundamentals of a national system of television are here for anyone to see", Dr. Baker declared. "The working out of the complete structure and the infinite number of details will take time. The problems of economics are, to a large extent, still to be resolved. That solutions for the technical problems and the problems of economics will be found is best evidenced by a look at our present system of sound broadcasting."

"Assuming an optimistic viewpoint, we might guess that new transmitters would go into operation not more than two years after complete Government approval.

"Prior to 1929, several rather feeble attempts had been made to bring forth various systems, almost all of which were based on the use of rotating or scanning discs at both pickup and reproducing locations. These attempts did not bear fruit for several reasons -

"1 - The resolution was such that it was generally difficult to determine whether one was looking at a man or a mouse and,

"2 - It required at least one and generally two scientists to run the gadget, and

"3 - The color was something between a washed-out grey and a discouraged neon sign.

"In the 1930's, great advances began to take form in the application of the cathode ray tube as the reproducer of the picture and in new types of electronic tubes at the pick-up location.

"Now we were beginning to get some place. A mouse looked like a mouse and a man looked like a man though he needed a shave.

"As to the magnitude of our future national television system, as to whether it will be chained and whether it will produce programs acceptable to the public, let me make one more comment.

"You gentlemen of the press have an imagination equal to or better than the television engineers. You have told the public that television is possible and practical. The engineers backed you up and produced a system. You told the public they could have pickups from baseball, football, and wrestling matches and again the engineers proved you were right. You told the public television stations could be chained and at least in principle the engineers have justified your statements as evidenced by the New York-Schenectady link. So far so good. But please don't put television on a world-wide basis until at least the next decade. Your engineers have sufficient problems at home."

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FRANK RUSSELL, NBC V-P, ILL WITH PNEUMONIA

Frank M. Russell, resident Vice-President of the National Broadcasting Company in Washington, has just had a hard tussle with pneumonia. It developed from a cold and for a time was serious as it was the second attack of pneumonia that he has suffered.

Mr. Russell is now reported to be much better. He is at the Doctor's Hospital in Washington.

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## FLY TO BE "CITED" FOR FREE SPEECH SPEECHES

Quick to get on the bandwagon, the National Lawyers Guild meeting in Washington Friday, November 19th, will "cite" James L. Fly, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, "for his outstanding efforts on preserving free speech", at the dinner in connection with their meeting.

There was a report several weeks ago that Vice-President Wallace would also attend the dinner and let loose one of the blasts for which he has become so famous. If so, it is just possible the results of the recent election may have caused him to change his plans.

Mr. Fly will discuss "Communications in War Time", and will be introduced by Robert W. Kenny, Attorney-General of California and National President of the Lawyers Guild.

The dinner will be given in the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, and will be broadcast from 10:30 to 11 P.M. by the Blue Network.

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## RMA ADVERTISING COMMITTEE RESURRECTED

The special Committee on Advertising of the Radio Manufacturers' Association, headed by John S. Garceau of the Farnsworth Corporation at Fort Wayne, Indiana, as Chairman, has been re-established. It was originally created in 1940 for voluntary cooperation on receiving set advertising but was suspended when war began.

An immediate project of the Advertising Committee will be to consider publicity and other plans for the promotion of better public understanding of the radio industry's contribution to the war program. Advertising practices and problems of set manufacturers also will be under the Committee's jurisdiction. Another function of the Committee will be presentations to the public regarding the increased cost of receivers, due to rising labor and material costs, when commercial peacetime production is resumed.

The Committee members recently appointed by Chairman R. C. Cosgrove of the RMA Set Division are:

James H. Carmine, Philco Corporation, Philadelphia, Pa.; Harry Deines, General Electric Co., Schenectady, N.Y.; E. I. Eger, Continental Radio & Television Corporation, Chicago, Ill.; P. G. Gillig, Emerson Radio & Phonograph Corp., New York, N. Y.; Ed. Herrmann, Zenith Radio Corp., Chicago, Ill.; Victor A. Irvine, Galvin Manufacturing Corp., Chicago, Ill.; Thomas F. Joyce, RCA Victor Division of Radio Corporation of America, Camden, N.J.; Stanley Manson, Stromberg-Carlson Co., Rochester, N.Y., and Ellis Travers, The Crosley Corp., Cincinnati, Ohio.

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## EDGAR BILL WANTS BETTER TEAMWORK ON NAB PUBLICITY

Station managers are being asked to recognize their responsibility in the conduct of public relations by "signing up" with the Public Relations Committee of the National Association of Broadcasters, Edgar Bill, Chairman, announced last week.

A printed pamphlet entitled: "There Is an Indispensable Man!" has been mailed to the personal attention of each station manager. The return card requests the signature of the manager as the party primarily responsible for the conduct of public relations at his station. This, the pamphlet points out, is not only a pledge but provides a personal contact for the NAB Public Relations Committee and District Public Relations Chairmen, seventeen in number.

"We know", said Mr. Bill, "that some stations have full time directors of public relations, but they are not many. These men are doing a fine job and are perhaps several years ahead of the industry. We are already working with them and will expect their names to come back to us on the return cards. The great majority of stations, however, do not have such people on a full time basis and cannot be asked to provide them in these times. That's where the manager comes in; because he has been actually responsible for public relations, delegating authority to various members of the staff, as required."

The pamphlet asks station managers to acknowledge their responsibility for the following basic reasons: (1) Because he controls station policy, (2) Because he can commit the station to co-operation in public projects, (3) Because he can direct the expenditure of funds for staff memberships in civic and social clubs and other organizations, (4) Because he can delegate responsibility, (5) Because he is a "public symbol" of the station itself, (6) Because he is permanent.

"Many public relations projects are in the mill for local action", Mr. Bill concluded, "awaiting the returns from station managers throughout the industry."

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## WHITE-WHEELER HEARINGS BEGIN SECOND WEEK

The hearings before the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee on the White-Wheeler radio bill to reorganize the Federal Communications Commission will begin their second week at the Capitol today (Tuesday).

Chairman James L. Fly of the Federal Communications Commission, who stirred up the animals considerably last week, will again take the witness stand at today's session.

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# "MIRACLE AERIAL" LOOKS LIKE ANY OTHER WIRE TO FTC

William Wheeler, trading as Miracle Manufacturing Co., Conshohocken, Pa., manufacturing and selling mechanical devices designed as attachments for radio receiving sets, has been ordered by the Federal Trade Commission to cease and desist from misrepresentations of the devices designated "Miracle Radio Control" and "Miracle Aerial Loop".

In advertisements in periodicals and other media, the Commission finds, the respondent has represented that the use of his devices will result in greatly improved radio reception; enable one to hear clearly both foreign and domestic broadcasts which otherwise would be unobtainable, and that the results obtained from the use of the devices are marvelous and unbelievable. Tests disclose, the findings state, that the Miracle Radio Control has no effect whatever upon a receiving set and is wholly without value in improving radio reception, and that the Miracle Aerial Loop is nothing more than a length of insulated copper wire, attached to a wire loop, capable of serving as an ordinary aerial, but is no more effective for that purpose than a length of ordinary copper wire.

The respondent has been ordered to cease and desist from representing that the device Miracle Radio Control has any beneficial effect upon a radio receiving set, or that Miracle Aerial Loop has any beneficial effect upon a receiving set in excess of that of an ordinary aerial or aerial extension.

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## SEEK \$75,000 TO CONTINUE FCC PROBE; COMMITTEE BROKE

Whether the investigation of the Federal Communications Commission, started by Representative Cox (D), of Georgia, and now headed by Representative Lea (D), of California, is to continue depends upon whether more funds are forthcoming from Congress.

The Committee will ask a House appropriation of \$75,000 to round out the investigation. Of the \$60,000 already appropriated, only about \$2,000 remained unspent.

Representative Lea, who announced a completely revised Committee procedure following the Cox resignation, said the Committee is trying to "iron out all of the snags and get this thing on an even keel".

Asked whether Eugene L. Garey, General Counsel of the Committee under Cox's chairmanship, and like Cox criticized for his conduct of the investigation, would be retained, Representative Lea said the Committee "has made no determination".

Unquestionably the retention of Mr. Garey will arouse considerable discussion if the appropriation is granted.

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## SHOUSE GOES TO LONDON FOR OWI

Following in the footsteps of William S. Paley, of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Niles Trammell of the National Broadcasting Company, James D. Shouse, Vice-President of The Crosley Radio Corporation in Charge of Broadcasting, will undertake a special overseas mission for the Office of War Information. It is at the invitation of the British Broadcasting Corporation and Mr. Shouse will leave for England soon.

A pioneer broadcast executive, Mr. Shouse has served on the OWI Radio Bureau consulting staff since its creation two years ago. He also has been identified with overseas operations, in view of the Crosley ownership of WLWO, international broadcasting station at Cincinnati.

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## RCA ENGINEERS PREDICT RADIO WEATHER

A telephone rings in the Communications Research office of RCA Laboratories at 66 Broad Street, New York City. The engineer answering gets the query:

"What are radio conditions going to be between now and the end of the month?" He refers to a chart on his desk, and replies:

"The 17th will be moderately disturbed, the 26th and 27th severely disturbed, but otherwise quiet."

"Simple?" queries Henry E. Hallborg, of RCA Laboratories in Radio Age. "Yes, but the development of means that enables such forecasts, which have become practical aids to the international communications services of RCA, and of other organizations is another story.

"Radio weather must not be confused with rain, fog, pressure and temperature at the earth's surface. It pertains to the condition of electrified layers far above the earth.

"It was found desirable to have an immediately available reference source for radio weather. This was provided at the R.C.A. Communications Research Department Receiving Section, at Riverhead, L.I., N.Y. It consists of a six-mile-long long wave receiving antenna, abandoned when short waves supplanted long waves for South American communications. This loop is grounded at both ends. The currents circulated by magnetic disturbances are continuously registered on an earth current recorder. These 'earthograms' provide a direct source of information on radio conditions.

"These methods are the ones adopted by Communications Research, RCA Laboratories to follow and to forecast radio weather. They provide a clue to the logic which the engineer could apply when



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he answered the query 'What are radio conditions going to be between now and the end of the month?'

"The solar-created electrified layers enshroud the earth like onion skins. Those which affect radio weather exist at altitudes ranging normally from seventy-five to 250 miles, in the form of free ions in a vacuum as perfect as the finest radio tube. Atmospheric air and storms, on the other hand, occur in the 'troposphere' extending not more than ten miles above sea level. It is the outermost of the earth's layers, the 'ionosphere', that determines radio weather. Solar radiation activity is the generator of conditions prevailing in this 'radio roof'.

"The sun sends us light and heat. It also sends us radiations of many wavelengths, ranging from deadly actinic rays, which are fortunately dissipated in the 'ozonosphere' at about thirty miles up, to the slower rays which are manifested by terrestrial magnetic disturbances. Actinic and light rays take 8-1/3 minutes to travel from sun to earth. The rays creating magnetic disturbances may require from one to three days to bridge the 93 million-mile gap. These slower rays originate in spot group areas on the sun."

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#### ROBERT P. MYERS NEW RCA ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL

Robert P. Myers, a senior attorney in the Legal Department of the National Broadcasting Company since 1935, has been appointed an Assistant General Counsel of the Radio Corporation of America, John T. Cahill, General Counsel, announced last week.

Mr. Myers first joined RCA in 1928, working in the field of world-wide radio communications. He became Assistant General Counsel of the old Radio Victor Corporation of America in 1929, retaining the same position with its successor, the RCA Victor Company, Inc. (now the RCA Victor Division) in 1930. In 1934 and 1935 he served as Assistant General Counsel of the theater companies of Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation.

Mr. Myers is a native of Pasadena, Calif., and a graduate of Leland Stanford University, where he was awarded A.B. and J.D. degrees. He is a member of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York and of the FCC Bar Association. He and his wife, Mrs. Rowena Mason Myers, with their two children, live at Rye, N. Y.

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 ::: TRADE NOTES :::  
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The tenth anniversary of the opening of the NBC studios in New York's Radio City will be observed on Armistice Day, November 11. No special broadcast or ceremony is planned - the event will be marked by "broadcasting goes on as usual".

Billings of the Mutual Broadcasting System for October, 1943, hit \$1,407,787, a new monthly high in the network's history. This is an increase of 85.8 per cent over that for October 1942, when billings totalled \$773,221. Billings for the first ten months of 1943 total \$10,758,264, an increase of 36.8 per cent over the same period for 1942, when the total came to \$7,865,138. The total for 1943 ten-months passes the 1942 annual figure of \$9,636,122.49, which up to this year was the highest figure ever attained by Mutual.

General Electric Credit Corporation, an investment company organized under the New York State Banking Law, has been formed by the General Electric Company to broaden the scope of activities carried on since 1933 by the G.E. Contracts Corporation, and will include the business of the latter company which was principally financing the sale of consumer goods.

Management of the new company will be the same as that of the General Electric Contracts Corporation of which G. F. Mosher is President. The main office of the new corporation will be at 570 Lexington Ave., New York City, and branches will be operated in other principal cities.

Free advertising by radio, newspapers, magazines, outdoor advertising, and car-card space for the Government has aggregated more than \$200,000,000 in value since May 1, 1941, Representative Cannon of Missouri told the House last week.

Robert R. Ferry has been appointed an Assistant Director of the Domestic Branch of the Office of War Information. Mr. Ferry replaces Stephen E. Fitzgerald, who has resigned to become Public Relations Director of the Bell Aircraft Corporation. Mr. Ferry has been Chief of the Office of Program Coordination of OWI. In his new post he will be responsible for the supervision and direction of planned information campaigns on the various homefront war programs. Mr. Ferry, former New York advertising man, came to OWI from the War Production Board.

Radio Corporation of America earned \$2,516,231 or 12 cents a common share in the September quarter, compared with a revised net of \$2,003,110 or 9 cents a share a year ago. In nine months ended September 30, net was \$7,435,025 or 36 cents a share against \$6,999,127 or 33 cents a share in the same 1942 period.

Beginning the week of November 8th, the National Broadcasting Company will inaugurate an extensive newspaper advertising campaign for Station WEAf, using space for 12 weeks in all Manhattan daily papers.

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