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INDEX TO ISSUE OF MAY 4, 1949.

"Needn't Hesitate To Buy TV Set", Sarnoff; Hits Obsolescence.....	1
Practical Test For "Phonevision"; Illinois Bell Studies Plan.....	3
Caustic New Hollywood Critics Hop On Radio, TV And Movies.....	4
Hoax Broadcast Panics Mississippians; Disc Jockey Fired.....	6
Ralph Atlass Resigning From NAB Takes Another Shot At BMB.....	7
Radio And Television Bibliography Issued By FSA.....	7
Who Talks Too Much To Who; Now Miller, NAB, Gets Bawled Out.....	8
Believe Radio Still Plenty Useful, Trammell, Gittinger Tell ANPA..	9
Fred Schilplin, 80, KFAM, St. Cloud, Dies At N.Y. Meeting.....	9
Channels Changed Affecting 200,000 Police, Fire, Etc. Units.....	10
U. S. Protests "Voice" Jamming.....	11
Projector Suspended From Ceiling Provides 6 x 8 Foot TV.....	11
Truman Knew What To Do With Big Pig WWL, New Orleans, Sent.....	11
22 Philco Plants Strikebound.....	12
Radio Tube Sales Increased In March.....	12
Scissors And Paste.....	13
Trade Notes.....	15

No. 1873

May 4, 1949

"NEEDN'T HESITATE TO BUY TV SET", SARNOFF; HITS OBSOLESCENCE

Confirming in detail a statement credited to him when he left the White House recently after conferring with President Truman, Brig. Gen. David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board of the Radio Corporation of America, made his position even clearer last Tuesday in the big television set obsolescence controversy which has been rocking the broadcasting industry.

Reporting to the 30th Annual Meeting of RCA stockholders in New York, General Sarnoff said:

"In recent months, you doubtless have read some of the dire predictions about quick obsolescence of television receivers. Many facts have been omitted. No one need hesitate to buy a present-day type of television receiver, for there is no indication that receivers of 1949 design will be obsolete in the near future. It is interesting to note that RCA Victor television receivers, first introduced to the public in 1939, are still in use and giving satisfaction, although more than ten years have passed.

"Television is too powerful a force for the public good to be stopped by misleading propaganda. No one can retard its advance any more than the carriage maker could stop the automobile, the cable the wireless, or the silent picture the talkies. Television is something the public has long desired and is eager to have. It is here to stay, because the people like television and want it."

General Sarnoff urged patience on the part of the public while showmen and performers develop improved techniques, declaring that only through the cooperation of the audience will the showmen know what to provide in entertainment, news and education.

"Ultimately the success of television will rest primarily on programming", he declared. "Television is a new force in communications, and it is also a remarkable new art form. As such it is fraught with problems and requires experimentation, both scientific and artistic, to determine the direction of progress that will satisfy the public.

"We in RCA -- now, as in the past -- gladly abide by the public's decision, for we have found public opinion to be essential in charting the future of an invention, an industry, or an art. This is in keeping with the character of a country that enjoys freedom to invent, freedom to compete, freedom to think, and freedom to criticize...

"The outlook for television in 1949 is bright. It is continually gaining in popularity with the public, and as a new industry, it is one of the safeguards against a serious economic recession for it promises to be a vital factor in the Nation's economy.

"The radio industry is particularly fortunate in being closely allied with science and invention. This alliance always holds the

promise of new products and new services. Scientific research is as vital a function in the RCA as is manufacturing or broadcasting. Radio has been, and will continue to be, a broad field for new developments and expansion. Even in this day of television, we believe that we are only on the threshold, for radio is still a fertile field for invention, discovery and progress."

General Sarnoff said that from time to time voices had been raised against ownership of broadcasting stations and manufacturing plants by the same organization, but declared that practical proof of the value of this ownership to the nation, to the public and to the industry, now is being witnessed.

"For instance", he said, "if the National Broadcasting Company had not gone on the air with television stations and programs before manufacturing of television sets got under way on a mass production basis, television might never have been started."

With regard to the talent fight between CBS, NBC and others, General Sarnoff said:

"We believe time will show there is no profit to the network, the sponsor or the artist in the purchase of over-priced talent packages. Commercial program costs must be measured by what radio is able to deliver to advertising sponsors. According to recent trade reports, some of the so-called 'assets' purchased in these talent raids already are dwindling.

"Leadership built over the years on a foundation of solid service cannot be snatched over-night by buying a few high-priced comedians. Leadership is not a laughing matter.

"Broadcasting faces no easy task during this conversion period for each new step presents an economic problem of its own. The policy of the National Broadcasting Company has been and continues to be to provide the highest variety of entertainment and the best informational, cultural and educational programs.

"At the same time, we seek to maintain program costs at an economic level that will pay off to the advertiser, the affiliated station and the network. This means the constant production and addition of new, high quality, dynamic programs, the encouragement of new talent, new program ideas, and new personalities. In all these respects your Company intends to lead, not to trail, competition."

Pointing out that the impact of war and the subsequent re-conversion period created an unusual situation, General Sarnoff said: "In the return to more normal business conditions, where the law of supply and demand again is in operation, and to a buyer's market in which competition is keener -- it is clear that 1949 will be a more difficult year than 1948."

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PRACTICAL TEST FOR "PHONEVISION"; ILLINOIS BELL STUDIES PLAN

There will be a practical large scale test of customer-interest in "Phonevision", pay-as-you-go television by telephone without commercials, in Chicago next Fall.

This was learned from Items for Management issued by the Long Lines Department of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company which further stated that the television by telephone plan is now being studied by the Illinois Bell Company but that no definite conclusions have been reached or agreements made concerning the facility arrangements which might be employed in the Fall test.

About 300 specially equipped telephone television receiver installations are expected to be made for the Chicago tryout. The tentative plan also provides for offering a telephone user a new first run movie, daily, over a 90 day period, with the customers paying about \$1.00 for each picture they view.

The Items for Management reference to "Phonevision" follows:

"Recent news stories of a proposed test of 'Phonevision' have elicited many queries from Long Lines people. 'Phonevision', as you have probably read in your newspapers, is an idea of the Zenith Radio Corporation, Chicago. All kinds of predictions are being made (depending on the newspaper or periodical you read) on the participation of the Bell Telephone Companies in the plan.

"Under the Zenith proposal, part of the program time of television radio broadcasting stations would be devoted to 'Phonevision' programs consisting of first-run movies or other special features. Television sets not equipped for 'Phonevision' would receive a distorted picture when tuned to a 'Phonevision' program. 'Phonevision' customers, however, would have special receivers, or attachments on their regular receivers, which would be capable of eliminating the distortion when a correcting signal was available. Zenith has proposed that correcting signals be distributed to 'Phonevision' subscribers by transmission over telephone lines and that set-owners call the Telephone Company when they wish to see a special program. A further part of this plan contemplates that the Telephone Company would bill the user for the 'Phonevision' service.

"The American Telephone and Telegraph Company has told Commander E. F. MacDonald, Jr., President of the Zenith Corporation, that the Bell System companies do not feel it would be appropriate to sponsor or undertake 'Phonevision', and the Bell companies would probably not find it practical to do more than provide circuits to any prospective customers desiring such facilities. However, the Bell System is always receptive to new uses to which its plant might be put provided they do not interfere with the primary undertaking of furnishing telephone service and the Bell companies have stated that they would be glad to provide communication services to broadcasters, or other organizations which might initiate 'Phonevision' service.

"Zenith has announced plans to test customer-interest in 'Phonevision' by trial transmissions in the Fall, involving about 300 specially equipped television receiver installations in Chicago. They have stated that the tentative plans provide for offering a new first-run movie daily, over a 90-day period, with the 'Phonevision' customers paying about \$1.00 for each picture they view. For the trial Zenith wishes to use Private Line telephone facilities in the distribution of the correcting signals. A plan for using Private Line channels, which would connect the central broadcasting point with each of the 'Phonevision' customers, is now being studied by the Illinois Bell Company but no definite conclusions have been reached or agreements made concerning the facility arrangements which might be employed in the conduct of such a trial."

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CAUSTIC NEW HOLLYWOOD CRITICS HOP ON RADIO, TV AND MOVIES

Editors this week received the first issue of Hollywood Memo which described itself as "A Clip Sheet of News and Views of Films, Radio and Television by Hollywood's Creators and Craftsmen", and published by The Film Division of the Arts, Sciences and Professions Council. A conspicuous line states that anything from the Memo "may be reprinted in whole or in part" and that it is being sent to all film and radio editors, to labor, school, religious and minority publications, to cultural, fraternal, civic and women's organizations throughout the U.S.A.

A memo addressed to the American audience states, in part:

"Hollywood Memo is presented as a clinical monthly digest of news and opinion about the mass entertainment industries.

"Memo will deal with what most people don't know about movies, radio and television - and should know.* * * *

"Memo will be a bulletin of inside information and interpretation from writers, actors, directors and other craftsmen.

"Memo will seek to establish a more direct link between the people inside Hollywood's sound stages and broadcasting studios -- and the audience outside.

"Memo will evaluate the content and background of important films and programs and analyze general trends.* * * *

"Memo is concerned with making American movies, radio and television more responsive to the realities of American life.

"Memo is interested in bringing back to the theatres the 35 million adult Americans who now habitually ignore the movies because the movies habitually ignore adult themes.

"Memo is interested in rescuing radio from the soap sellers and in protecting the public stake in the new television medium.

The following is a typical Memo comment:

"Stop, Look, Listen and Organize -- if you don't want to be smothered in tripe or smashed by the propaganda train at the radio and television grade crossing.

"Throughout the U.S.A. radio listener groups are forming Councils of Vigilance to guard against misuse of the publicly owned radio air channels.

"The American Association of University Women has established 45 Listener Committees in California, and hundreds more in other states.

"The Girl Scouts of America Radio Council, the Voice of Freedom Committee headed by Dorothy Parker, the Wisconsin Joint Committee for Better Radio, with headquarters in Madison, and the Greater Cleveland Radio Council in Ohio -- these and many other groups are stepping up an offensive against the perverting of radio from the 'public interest, convenience and necessity' stipulated by the 1934 Federal Communications Act.

"Such listener groups, keeping a spot check on radio stations in all areas, will help prevent such degradation of the radio as happened over a long period on Station KMPC, a powerful 50,000 watt station dominated by C. A. Richards.

"Evidence has been presented to the Federal Communications Commission that Richards, in defiance of FCC regulations, instructed his news broadcasters to slant and distort the news.

"Notes in Richards' handwriting ordering his broadcasters to slant their copy against Jews and always to link Jews with Communism and Roosevelt and the New Deal with both Jews and Communism, have been presented to the FCC. These notes were presented by outraged former employees of KMPC.

"Richards' FCC hearing, in which his right to a radio channel license is being challenged, will be reported on in the May Memo."

Another sample of Memo's point of view follows:

"Bernard Shaw, when asked what he thought of television said, 'I'm afraid to look.'

"That many Americans are not afraid to look is indicated by video's furious growth. One hundred thousand sets a month are being sold, mostly on the installment plan, and the vast majority of the purchasers are in the lower income brackets.

"Three major conflicts are emerging in the rapid development of this powerful new medium.

"The first is the scramble for financial control.

"The second is the scramble for trade union jurisdiction.

"The third is the fight to make the television screen reflect the interest of the public.

"Insiders report that these three conflicts are all interconnected.

"The scramble for control is among three well established trusts: telephone, radio and motion pictures. All three saw the new industry as a threat to their heavy investments in telephone lines, radio stations, theatres. A fourth trust, the electrical products industry, while connected with the other three was nevertheless impelled to develop the new medium.

"This has led to a fight of enormous confusion. We see the spectacle of Western Union, a subsidiary, suing its parent A. T. & T. for delaying construction of a coaxial cable. We see motion picture corporations buying up radio networks while certain patents are fought over, buried, dug up, interred again. All other entertainment enterprises, such as baseball, football, prize-fighting, are also wondering what the new industry will do to their box office and real estate.

"The scramble for trade union jurisdiction reveals the same confusion. Screen actors squabble with radio actors, screenwriters with other writers, and Hollywood's oldest-guard union, the IATSE, is rapidly moving into the field, seeking to dominate it. Meanwhile, working conditions in the new industry are undercutting minimums attained in other fields.

"It is clear that these inter-trust and inter-union conflicts are closely related to the fight to make television represent public interest rather than vested interest. The Federal Communications Commission has issued a 'public service' mandate, and if the public remembers that they own the television channels, not the trusts or the advertisers, this great new medium of mass communication may still be used for enlightenment and entertainment consistent with the dignity of the American people."

There is this concluding note:

"You Tell Us: The editors would welcome your suggestions as to certain kinds of material you would like to see published in this Clip Sheet. Write to Hollywood Memo, Arts, Sciences and Professions Council, 1586 Crossroads of the World, Hollywood, California."

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HOAX BROADCAST PANICS MISSISSIPPIANS; DISC JOCKEY FIRED

Bob McKee, an announcer for a Jackson, Miss., radio station, reported on his disk-jockey program last Sunday night that "the moon is falling into the sun and the Mississippi River basin is an earthquake danger area".

Reaction to the program, which lasted only three and a half minutes and was labeled fictitious before it began, was both immediate and unexpected, a dispatch to the New York Times states.

A Baptist minister heard about it and dismissed his Sunday evening prayer service, telling the 350 worshippers present to go and warn their neighbors.

"It looked like a white sheet was pulled over the congregation when I told them, they turned so pale", the Rev. H. A. Milner said later.

Several girls living in the Y.W.C.A. went into near hysteria.

The weather bureau, newspaper offices and radio stations were flooded with calls that came in until after midnight. The program went on the air at 9:04 P.M.

Mr. McKee was suspended from his job at once. He was dismissed Monday morning.

James Ownby, the station manager, said the station was extremely sorry for the incident. He ordered the program stopped as soon as he heard it start and had corrective announcements made for the remainder of the night.

Mr. McKee said the program was his own idea. He was attempting to give the disk-jockey show something different. It had not been cleared with the station's acting program director. Mr. McKee said he announced the program as fictitious, then interrupted a record to announce that "the moon is falling into the sun. The entire Mississippi River basin from Winnipeg to New Orleans has been declared a danger area. Earthquakes are expected."

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RALPH ATLASS RESIGNING FROM NAB TAKES ANOTHER SHOT AT BMB

Ralph Atlass, owner of WIND in Chicago, announced last week that the station had resigned from the National Association of Broadcasters. He indicated that his other radio property, WLOL, Minneapolis, undoubtedly also will pull out of the NAB.

Mr. Atlass, active in NAB functions until two years ago when he started to absent himself from both regional and national meetings, gave as chief reason for his walkout the Association's renewed financial support of Broadcast Measurement Bureau. He is quoted as contending that "BMB is no good for either network affiliates or indie stations."

KTLA, Los Angeles, which Mr. Atlass is purchasing, is not an NAB member.

Another Chicago dispatch states that WIND, Atlass station, is discounting trade talk of television inroads these days. In fact, the Chicago AM indie has just hung out an SRO sign on its programming for the rest of the Summer.

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RADIO AND TELEVISION BIBLIOGRAPHY ISSUED BY FSA

More than 400 sources of information on radio and television are listed in a new Radio and Television Bibliography just issued by the Office of Education, Federal Security Agency.

This guide was prepared by Gertrude C. Broderick, Specialist in Radio Education, under the direction of Franklin Dunham, Chief, Educational Uses of Radio, Office of Education. Harry Moskowitz assisted in the compilation.

Accompanying each reference is an annotated description. In addition to general radio and television sources, the bibliography offers summaries of published information on careers in radio, broadcasting techniques and script writing, radio education, scripts, books, and plays. Material is also indexed under engineering, frequency modulation, television, radio and recording equipment, transcriptions, and periodicals.

Sources of general information, and an alphabetical index to the bibliography's 417 entries conclude the Office of Education publication. Copies are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. at 15 cents each.

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WHO TALKS TOO MUCH TO WHO; NOW MILLER, NAB, GETS BAWLED OUT!

Recently Wayne Coy, President of the Federal Communications Commission let out quite a squawk because he said a broadcaster had accused him of talking too much. Now comes the Editor & Publisher, trade journal of the newspapers of the country, making the same damning allegation against Justin Miller, broadcasters' top brass, to wit:

"Judge Justin Miller, President of the National Association of Broadcasters, used the occasion of his address before the American Society of Newspaper Editors last week for a sneering attack on Editor & Publisher directing his remarks specifically to an editorial printed March 6, 1948.

"But Judge Miller, in trying to emphasize the 'dullness of perception' and the 'pathetic inconsistencies which pervade' that editorial, talked more than he should have and succeeded in convincing some of his listeners as to the soundness of the editorial he was attacking.

"The theme of Judge Miller's 20-page address was 'Attacks on Freedom of Communication'. In it he warned of the threat to newspapers inherent in present government encroachments on the freedom of radio because it sets a pattern for similar control of the press, and appealed for combined newspaper-broadcasting efforts to preserve freedom of speech and press.

"Our editorial had concerned 'Radio Editorials' and said: 'In contract to newspapers which need only the daily endorsement of readers and advertisers to survive, radio stations are licensed and must apply periodically for renewal of those government licenses. They need listeners and advertiers to survive, but they also need governmental sanction. A medium which functions by virtue of a government license, subject to review and renewal on the basis of program content, should not be permitted editorial expression.'

"The fact remains that newspapers are not yet licensed but radio stations are. There may be threats of licensing newspapers against which newspapermen are continually alert, but as for radio it is a 'fait accompli'.

"Government already has its foot in radio's door. It does not yet have a foot in the newspaper door.

"The simplest and best way to give radio complete freedom of editorial expression would be to stop the licensing procedure. Since that cannot be done without creating confusion on the air waves, the next best thing is to eliminate quality of 'program content' as a requirement for licensing. If Congress would surround the FCC with safeguards against the dangers Judge Miller has pointed out, perhaps editorial opinion could be broadcast without threat of license suspension by the governmental overseer."

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BELIEVE RADIO STILL PLENTY USEFUL, TRAMMELL, GITTINGER TELL ANPA

A good word was put in for radio at the Bureau of Advertising session of the American Newspaper Association last week by both Niles Trammell, President of the National Broadcasting Company, and William C. Gittinger, Vice-President of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Admitting that the competition of television for the advertising dollar "cannot be lightly dismissed", Mr. Trammell declared that radio, too, must adjust itself to this "evolutionary development". He added, "It may seriously affect marginal techniques. But no one medium can encompass the whole advertising job for American industry; we cannot glimpse the foreseeable future when television will duplicate in coverage, technique and economy the job that radio is doing today as a medium of mass communication."

Mr. Trammell expressed doubt that television will displace any advertising medium "that is doing a good job", and he reminded the publishers of the history of radio, which was once feared for its possible effect on other media. Radio advertising, network, regional and spot, but excluding local, he said, increased from \$10,500,000 in 1928 to an estimated \$350,600,000 in 1948 -- but during that same period, he asserted, newspapers advanced from \$236,000,000 to \$339,000,000 in national advertising revenue, and magazines from \$177,700,000 to \$462,000,000."

"I believe that radio will continue to grow. If I am wrong, it is going to take an awfully long time to cut down radio's tremendous size," Mr. Gittinger said.

"It's quite possible that radio may be blitzed temporarily in a market -- we'll say, like New York. We are under the gun right now. . . full-page ads day after day. . . tremendous pressure. . . tremendous set sales.

"All right! If that should happen, I believe that radio will soon come back and find its proper place, just as phonograph records did.

"I believe the American people are ready and big enough in numbers to swallow up another big entertainment and advertising medium without harming or discarding the existing ones."

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FRED SCHILPLIN, 80, KFAM, ST. CLOUD, DIES AT N.Y. MEETING

Fred Schilplin, publisher of The St. Cloud (Minn.) Daily Times and owner of Station KFAM, died last Thursday night, apparently after a heart attack in a taxicab in New York City. Mr. Schilplin, who had attended the American Newspaper Publishers' Association convention, was riding to Pennsylvania Station to board a train for home. His age was 80.

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CHANNELS CHANGED AFFECTING 200,000 POLICE, FIRE, ETC. UNITS

An order by the Federal Communications Commission Tuesday, effective July 1, generally gave more frequencies to public-service organizations while, in some cases, it cut down allocations to specialized types of mobile wireless telephones. It returned to these mobile units the 44-50 megacycle band once taken away from them and assigned to television, but removed from television a year ago.

The new orders affect not only the 200,000 mobile wireless telephone units, but 50,000 authorized stations to which they report.

Newspapers were taken out of the general "industrial radio service" category, in which they shared frequencies with many other users, and received, for spot news coverage, four frequencies in the 162-174 megacycle range. These will be shared, on occasion, with motion-picture companies on location, but with no one else.

Under the order newspapers may use larger equipment, including units installed in the cars of reporters and photographers.

At the same time the Commission turned down applications for general usage of wave bands for the transmission of radio facsimiles of press photographs. It authorized, however, experimental operation of equipment for this work "on available bands above 952 megacycles".

Police radio services were shifted somewhat, the report stated. Fire radio stations received wider permission to operate, with the new order embracing rural and suburban fire companies without restriction by size of population in communities, as heretofore.

Radio stations used in highway maintenance work received official recognition for the first time. Permits to use mobile radios in forestry conservation were enlarged from simple authorization to use radio in fighting fires to much broader operations.

The Commission reorganized its "land transportation radio service" category by particularizing to a greater degree the usages of radio by taxicabs, trucks, railroads and buses, and it authorized the establishment of an "automobile emergency radio service" to speed emergency road service by automobile associations or by garages.

Another service that received formal recognition was the "domestic public mobile radio service". This was designated as a public service for hire, operated either by telephone companies or by private agencies, to handle communications by individuals between fixed radio stations and mobile units.

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U.S. PROTESTS "VOICE" JAMMING

The State Department announced Monday night, according to the International News Service, that it has appealed Soviet jamming of "Voice of America" broadcasts behind the iron curtain to the International Telecommunications Union of which Russia is a member.

The protest was sent on Saturday to the international headquarters of the organization in Geneva.

George V. Allen, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, said that the Department also has demanded that the Geneva organization request the Soviet Union "immediately to take necessary steps to put an end to the jamming operations".

The Department declared that U. S. radio direction finders have determined that the interference comes from equipment within the Soviet Union.

It was pointed out that the jamming became particularly intense simultaneously with the start of negotiations on lifting the Berlin blockade and another meeting of the "Big Four" Foreign Ministers on the German problem.

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PROJECTOR SUSPENDED FROM CEILING PROVIDES 6 X 8 FOOT TV

A new life-size television projection system, featuring an optical barrel which can be suspended from a convenient ceiling mounting is now being offered by the Radio Corporation of America.

The system, as described in Radio Age, is especially adaptable for use in night clubs, hospitals, taverns, clubs, hotels and lunch rooms, home installations, churches, schools and in television broadcast studios for monitoring, sponsors' viewing rooms, and overflow audiences. The optical barrel which is focused on a screen up to 6 by 8 feet in size, of either front or rear-projection type, is connected to the control console by a 40-foot cable. The console, containing television and audio components, as well as controls, can be built-in if desired, or placed in an out-of-the-way location.

The unit has a 30-watt amplifier, with facilities for microphone and phonograph inputs so that the installation may be used as a public address system when television programs are not on the air.

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TRUMAN KNEW WHAT TO DO WITH BIG PIG WWL, NEW ORLEANS, SENT

President Truman got a forty-pound pig last Monday. It was brought to Washington by George W. Shannon, Farm Service Director of Radio Station WWL in New Orleans. Mr. Shannon did not bring the pig into the White House, but told Mr. Truman all about it. The President asked that it be shipped to the family farm at Grandview, Mo.

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22 PHILCO PLANTS STRIKEBOUND

About 6,500 employees in twenty-two plants and warehouses of the Philco Corporation remained away from work this week to enforce demands for higher wages and a pension plan.

The company, a major manufacturer of radios, television sets and refrigerators, called the work stoppage a strike, but union leaders claimed it was a lockout.

The union-management contract expired at midnight Saturday and officials of Locals 101 and 102, United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers, CIO, have taken the stand of "no contract, no work".

Massed picket lines marched around the company's main plants for three hours Monday morning. They permitted engineering, maintenance, payroll and personnel employees to enter, but barred all others, including clerical workers.

At the height of the demonstration an estimated 3,000 pickets were in the line. Many carried placards reading, "Philco employees locked out", and "We ask your help in securing a decent contract."

The workers are demanding a pay increase of 15 cents an hour and the inauguration of a pension plan which union leaders estimated would cost the company 4-1/2 per cent of its payroll. The company has offered free hospitalization for all employees; two additional paid holidays, increasing the total to eight, and double time for work on holiday pay.

William Balderston, President of the company, asserted that the situation "in our highly competitive field is such that a rise in wages at this time would put us out of competition with other companies completely."

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RADIO TUBE SALES INCREASED IN MARCH

March sales of radio receiving tubes increased 1.8 million over sales in February but were 3.7 million under sales in March, 1948, the Radio Manufacturers' Association reported last week. Sales in March totalled 14,505,349 tubes compared with 12,643,788 in February and 18,208,842 in March last year.

Tubes sold for new sets by RMA member-companies aggregated 9,847,090 and replacements numbered 3,420,843 in March. Another 1,143,855 tubes were exported and 93,561 were sold to government agencies during March.

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 ::: SCISSORS AND PASTE :::
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Cost Of 5 To 10 Television Theatre Net Studied
 ("Hollywood Reporter")

National Theatres is seriously considering establishing five to 10 television theatres in this area, it became known yesterday. A survey to determine costs has just been started. It is expected the survey will take from six months to a year. If the project proves feasible, NT, through Fox West Coast, will be prepared to install big-screen video in the houses almost overnight, picking up special events to augment the houses' regular screen fare. Speedy installation of equipment would be made possible by tests now being made cooperatively with RCA.

The policy would bear out predictions made a year ago by Spyros Skouras as to the future relation of TV to theatres.

NT, through its FWC, Fox Intermountain, Fox Midwest and Fox Wisconsin chains, controls nearly 500 houses, and FWC has approximately 30 theatres in the immediate area under survey. Assuming that 10, or one-third, are ultimately retooled for video, the same ratio would indicate NT will eventually do the same to a total of 166.

This figure, however, was blown down to "about 100" last night by authoritative sources who predict "the company will limit its conversion policy to metropolitan areas where competition is toughest." It was further pointed out there are large areas in NT's overall operation where telecasting is not likely for some time.

At this time, circuit officials figure that the initial theatre television machines will pick up special events being broadcast by stations, with eventual development towards special programs designed and staged especially for the hooked-up theatres.

RCA has already announced that it is starting production of a pilot run of 100 theatre television machines, with cost of each set to be under \$25,000. This large screen video equipment would undoubtedly be used by FWC for the start of its theatre television project.

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Believe It Or Not!
 ("New York Times")

The next time a Congressional committee has to consider the appropriation for the Voice of America it might call as witnesses the masters of the Russian radio. These gentlemen will not answer the summons in person, but they are already testifying in absentia. Since the middle of last week they have been subjecting the Voice to what Charles W. Thayer, Chief of the State Department's International Broadcast Division calls "far and away the worst jamming" in its history. The Voice's programs have been criticized, even in this country. It is none the less apparent that it is sending out words that the Russian Government fears.

What is there to be afraid of in words? Some persons in the United States seem to fear them. The State Department itself seemed to fear them when it denied foreign left-wingers a chance to talk their way around the country. But the Moscow Communists appear

to look on them as a deadly menace. We can only suppose that there are radio listeners in Russia and the satellite states who, given a choice between the Moscow radio and the Voice of America, would believe the latter.

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A Lotta' Money
(Leonard Lyons in "Washington Post")

Gen. David Sarnoff, head of the Radio Corporation of America, had his pocket picked in the lobby at "Kiss Me, Kate" one night. The wallet contained \$700 in cash. General Sarnoff, whose technical achievements broadened the boundaries of modern life, was a victim of the old-fashioned jostle-and-pickpocket trick.

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The Way The British Rate Reception
("London Calling")

In a recent issue of London Calling we reemphasized to listeners the value to the BBC of their program comments, suggestions, and criticisms. Listeners' reports on their reception of the overseas transmissions are no less valuable, as they materially assist the engineers in their efforts to provide a satisfactory service.

Reports on reception covering a period of at least one week - and given, if possible, in GMT - are preferred, as the most useful information is that derived from regular listening. But if you are unable to listen through a complete program, reports on conditions over shorter periods are still valuable.

A three-figure code has been devised to simplify such reporting. The first figure indicates the "signal strength" on the following scale: 0 - inaudible; 1 - very weak; 2 - weak; 3 - fairly strong; 4 - strong; 5 - very strong. The "magic eye" or other tuning indicator on many receivers gives a useful guide to the strength of signal.

The second figure indicates the "strength of interference" caused by unwanted stations: 0 - none; 1 - very weak; 2 - weak; 3 - fairly strong; 4 - strong; 5 - very strong.

The third figure indicates the overall value or merit of reception, which depends on the strength of BBC transmissions and degree of interference present: 0 - nil, completely unintelligible; 1 - very poor, only a few words intelligible; 2 - poor, but mainly intelligible; 3 - fair, completely intelligible although close attention necessary; 4 - good, completely intelligible and easy to follow; 5 - very good, comparable with normal medium-wave reception (a relatively rare experience).

The assessment 5-0-5 would thus indicate perfect reception; 5-4-2, for example, would mean a "very strong signal but with strong interference, reducing overall merit to poor, but mainly intelligible" (The third figure must be consistent, of course, with the first two figures, e.g., "1-5-5-" is an impossibility.)

Reports should be addressed to the Chief Engineer, BBC, London, W. 1, England.

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 ::: TRADE NOTES :::
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Television was brought to the attention of the National Capital last Sunday by a special television section in The Washington Post.

 Radio has contributed the words "disc jockey" to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary just out.

 Motorola, Inc. - March quarter: Net earnings, \$909,516, or \$1.14 a common share, compared with \$720,299, or 90 cents a share, last year; sales, \$15,212,622, increased 22 per cent from \$12,437,347 volume a year ago.

 FCC stastics reveal that the highest annual operating expense of 14 TV stations in 1948 was \$814,000; the lowest \$59,000. Average: \$538,000.

 A former GI in New York City last week filed suit in District Court in Washington for \$200,000 libel damages against Columnist Drew Pearson, the Bell Syndicate, Inc., and The Washington Post.

The suit was filed by Joseph B. Franzino, a minor, through his father. He charged he was libeled in the Washington Merry-Go-Round July 30 in an article about a black-market scandal involving the Army in Japan.

 Aircraft Radio Corporation - For 1948: Net profit, \$95,770, equal to 33 cents a common share, contrasted with a net loss of \$105,597 for 1947; net sales, \$1,822,082, against \$458,007.

 Opening of the first direct radiotelegraph circuit between San Francisco and Canton China, was announced last week by H. C. Ingles, President of RCA Communications, Inc., New York City. He said direct service also has been opened by RCA between the Philippine Islands and Canton.

Operations with Canton are in addition to long-established RCA radiotelegraph service between the United States and Shanghai. First commercial contact with the Canton station was made by the RCA station in San Francisco at 4 P.M. (Pacific Standard Time) last Wednesday, April 27. Establishment of service followed soon afterward, Mr. Ingles said.

 Twin television consolette models with 10 or 12 inch picture tubes in identical mahogany cabinets were announced over the week-end in Sunbury, Pa., by the Westinghouse Home Radio Division.

 Television Box-Score by Television Broadcasters' Assn:
 Stations Operating61
 CP's Granted58
 Applications Pending321

The Textile Workers Union, CIO, will mark its tenth anniversary, May 14, with the holding of a "convention by radio". Members of 700 locals in all parts of the country will hold meetings that evening to hear broadcast talks by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Senator Frank P. Graham of North Carolina, and Gov. Chester Bowles of Connecticut.

The union has arranged to have the special anniversary program heard from 8:30 to 9 P.M., over ABC in each time belt to facilitate the holding of dinner meetings. A special dramatic script will be prepared with Melvyn Douglas and Aline MacMahon scheduled to narrate leading roles.

Broadcasts have had to give way to theatrical performances but for probably the first time, a Broadway show will be closed down for an evening to enable its stars to broadcast.

This will be done Monday, May 16th, at 9 P.M., EDT, to enable Ezio Pinza and Mary Martin, co-stars in New York's smash hit "South Pacific" to appear on the "Telephone Hour". Rodgers & Hammerstein of "Oklahoma" fame are the authors of "South Pacific".

Likewise stars have gone from musical comedy to the Metropolitan but Pinza, one of the really great stars of the "Met" is among the few who have gone from the Metropolitan to a musical comedy.

The advent of television has in no way altered the duty of Catholics to attend mass on every Sunday and Holy Day. The revised adult catechism issued recently makes itself clear on the point.

Though it does not refer specifically to television, one section asserts that "To satisfy the obligation to assist at mass on Sunday a person must actually be present at the place where mass is celebrated. . . A person who is a notable distance from the worshippers certainly is not bodily present at mass."

Two new network channels were added Monday to the Bell System's important television network route between Philadelphia and Chicago. Introduction of the additional channels will permit broadcasters, who have been sharing the single channels operating in each direction, to present Midwestern television audiences with a wider choice of network programs coming from Eastern studios.

A total of three west-bound and one east-bound channels will now be available, according to the Long Lines Department of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company. Of the west-bound channels, two will operate every day on a 24 hr. schedule. The third will be available only after 6 P.M. from Monday through Friday but on a 24 hr. basis on Saturdays and Sundays.

Between Monday and Friday the single east-bound channel will only be available for television transmission after 6 P.M. However, this circuit will also be placed in operation for network television service at any time on Saturdays and Sundays, making it possible to bring such week-end Midwestern events as sporting events to video audiences in the East.

Re-election of Fred E. Ahlert, a composer, as President, and the election of other officers of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) took place last week in New York.

Mr. Ahlert reported the ASCAP writer membership had reached a total of 2,041 and the publisher membership, 361.

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