

The National Association of Broadcasters

1760 N STREET, N. W. * * * * * WASHINGTON, D. C.

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SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

No. 1

Government Control Looms for Radio

Meeting in Washington May 19 to study the White-Wheeler bill, the NAB legislative committee considered, among other things, the loss of control of the American System of Broadcasting to a government agency and after due deliberation issued the following statement, which was dispatched to all newspaper, radio wire, trade press and press association channels:

Washington, D. C., May 19. Unless Congress enacts a new radio law, government control of broadcasting in this country is an accomplished fact, a special legislative committee of the National Association of Broadcasters announced today.

The committee assembled to study the bill introduced by Senator Wallace H. White, Jr., and Burton K. Wheeler, which re-establishes the liberties and limitations of radio, and to consider the effect of the Supreme Court decision of May 10 which "places broad and fantastic powers in the hands of the Federal Communications Commission", the committee said.

"The Supreme Court decision," it was explained, "hands over to the Commission complete control of broadcasting. This government agency now has the power, whenever it wishes, to determine what the American people shall and shall not hear, whether it be news, music, drama, comedy or political broadcasts. The world's last remaining system of free radio has been brought under complete government domination by this decision, a condition which previously has been bitterly deplored by the people and the press of the United States. This result, astonishing to the radio industry and the public alike, emerged from a case purportedly concerned only with the power of the Commission to regulate contracts between stations and networks. The decision went far beyond these issues and constituted an hitherto unsus-

pected interpretation of 'public interest, convenience and necessity' by the majority of the court, with strong minority dissent. New legislation is the only hope of free radio in America," spokesmen for the committee concluded.

The committee, consisting of Neville Miller, President of NAB, Chairman; Don S. Elias, WWNC, Asheville, North Carolina; Clair R. McCullough, WGAL, Lancaster, Pa.; James D. Shouse, WLW, Cincinnati, Ohio; Frank M. Russell, NBC, Washington, and Joseph H. Ream, CBS, New York, laid plans for NAB participation in hearings on the White-Wheeler bill, scheduled to begin May 25.

Following issuance of this release, the following telegram was sent to the NAB board of directors, stating that a special session of the board to consider problems arising from the network decision would probably be called about June 1.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MET TODAY. DUE TO EMERGENCY CREATED BY COURT DECISION COMMITTEE BELIEVES IT PROBABLY WILL BE ADVISABLE TO HOLD SPECIAL BOARD MEETING WASHINGTON TUESDAY WEEK, JUNE FIRST. WILL ADVISE YOU DEFINITELY BY MIDDLE OF NEXT WEEK. SUGGEST YOU MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW. REGARDS.

NEVILLE MILLER

The decision in the network case was printed in full in the May 14 issue of the NAB REPORTS. The decision in the KOA case is printed in full in this week's issue of the REPORTS.