

The National Association of Broadcasters

1760 N STREET, N. W. * * * * * WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

No. 12

SPECIAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

Oct. 22, 1943

The Following Material Pertaining to and Including Representative Mundt's Remarks in the House on October 18 Are Reprinted in Full as Taken From the Congressional Record of That Date.

Mr. MUNDT. Mr. Speaker, in these days of global warfare news stories of great significance tumble over themselves so rapidly that frequently a matter of primary importance on the domestic front gets far from the publicity it deserves. As a result, many citizens are sometimes months behind in the business of getting caught up with far-reaching developments on the home front.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the recent announcement of the Columbia Broadcasting System by which it self-imposed upon itself a voluntary code of radio good behavior and impartial performance is an item of this kind. Judging from the almost universal acclaim which this public-spirited action has won from Members of Congress and from impartial editors who have commented upon it, I believe this move on the part of C. B. S. is an epochal step in the direction of protecting free speech and fair play on the American radio. C. B. S. should be congratulated and supported on its patriotic decision to protect its listeners against propaganda and politics and to give all sides of all controversial issues an equal opportunity to be heard over its great radio network. It is hoped that the other radio networks will quickly follow this wise policy as enunciated by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the decision of C. B. S. to prevent the use of a semipublic monopoly such as radio by private individuals or commercial sponsors of propaganda or political purposes will do more to preserve private ownership and operation of radio in this country than anything which has happened since the advent of broadcasting.

Perhaps a few wealthy radio tycoons who own or control big radio outlets feel secure in their power and believe it to be reference to but a straw

man when it is declared, as I am about to declare, that private ownership and operation of radio in this country is not a guaranteed certainty for even the next 4 years—to say nothing of the permanent future.

Let these big men of radio scoff if they want to—I happen to know that the danger that privately operated radio in this country may have a short life is not something to be blithely overlooked. Stockholders and officials of large radio corporations might well remember that indifference to danger signs along the way was precisely the attitude which trapped the great industrialists of Germany into becoming the servants of the Nazi political state. Indifference to public opinion and to public trends in this country may well do the same for our radio industry.

Those who are in authority for the moment in private radio have a responsibility to themselves, to their stockholders, to the cause of private radio, and to America itself, to discontinue flaunting bad practices in the face of public opinion and to take steps to eliminate them before they give cause to support existing plans to make radio a public instead of a private monopoly. For that reason, the far-sighted and public-serving decision of the executives of C. B. S. is not only gratifying to all those believing in the continuance of private radio but it is one which the executives of other radio networks might well emulate. It should not be forgotten that one persistent offender in the radio field may well break down the dike which is now holding back the flood waters of Government-operated radio.

As background for what I am about to say with regard to two important questions which must soon be settled by the radio industry, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Congress,

Mr. Speaker, I want to call attention, briefly, to some previous considerations which I have given this subject and which appear in earlier issues of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

In the RECORD for May 30, 1940, under the title of "A Question Radio Executives Should Ponder Seriously—and Answer Carefully," I set forth some suggestions which, if followed, I hoped and believed would tend to safeguard private radio in this country and prevent it from flaunting its way into complete Government control or even ownership. Permit me here to read you a few paragraphs from those remarks:

A CHALLENGE TO THE SELF-RESTRAINT OF RADIO

Mr. Speaker, I have a passionate devotion to the American principle of free speech. But should such freedom, when exercised over air channels which are privately owned and from which others are excluded by governmental regulations, get out of bounds to the detriment of the public morale, it would become a public problem of vital concern to the entire Nation. Wise self-restraint, now, by the radio companies themselves is, in my opinion, a far better solution to the problem of hysterical excesses and unduly exciting and provocative broadcasts than any laws which Congress could devise. Surely such restraint can prevent the necessity of new legislation to meet the problem propounded by the question of what is and what is not public-serving broadcasting of war news.

We can still too well remember the results of Orson Welles' purely fictitious broadcasting of a fanciful invasion from Mars. So real did the highly emotionalized speeches of radio speakers appear that a near panic developed in many localities in America. Wisely, radio executives themselves took steps to prevent a repetition of such a sensational program to unnerve large portions of the populace. Confronted, too, with the problem of how much emotionalism and hysteria to convey over the air waves in reporting war news, it is my hope these same radio executives themselves, with no legislative stimulus or restraint, will use equal discretion in not permitting factual reporting to be colored by hysterical or emotional commentators whose inflections and intonations can well induce emotional upsets and develop panicky thinking if they carelessly or deliberately engage in all the histrionics of their art instead of functioning simply as reporters of news.

COMMENTATORS CULTIVATE THE "ILLUSION OF INTEGRITY"

On the other hand, especially among radio commentators who inject their personal opinions and emotions into the news, too frequently an attempt is made to create an "illusion of integrity" which leads the unwary listener to believe that what he hears is more factual or fulsome and reliable than what he reads. Obviously, such is not the case

because newspapers and radio stations, alike, are limited by the same conditions in foreign countries and all are circumscribed by the same foreign censors and the same propagandists who are in the business of distorting the facts for military or psychological purposes.

Following that discussion, Mr. Speaker, I received a telephone call and then a letter from Harry C. Butcher, vice president of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The letter from Mr. Butcher was dated June 5, 1940, and said in part:

To repeat what I told you on the phone, I think your statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD indicates that you have given a great deal of thought to this subject, as have the executives of the broadcasting networks and stations generally. We appreciate the responsibilities placed upon us by these trying times and are attempting, I believe, with considerable success, to inform the public honestly and conscientiously. Certainly Columbia is making every effort in that direction.

This letter was followed by conferences with representatives of the broadcasting industry and by considerable additional correspondence, with Mr. Kaltenborn and other commentators and officials personally interested in private ownership and operation of radio and its utilization in the best possible public interest. As a result of this correspondence and these conversations, I again addressed the House on June 18, 1940, summarizing my observations and proposing five specific factors to which it seemed to me the radio industry should give serious consideration and develop remedial policies. Mr. Speaker, I incorporate extracts of that speech at this point as a part of these remarks.

RADIO'S RESPONSIBILITIES EXPAND WITH RADIO'S PRIVILEGES

Mr. Speaker, all Members of Congress are aware of the severe charges recently leveled at the American radio industry by certain Government officials charging it with "monopolistic practices" and other unfair policies. Personally, I am unwilling to subscribe to these charges on the basis of available evidence. I think that the record of American radio, taken as a whole, is highly commendable. Great public service is rendered the public by radio through its practice of making available to speakers of opposing sides on controversial issues like periods of free time to present their arguments. To my knowledge radio has not yet been guilty of using its monopoly of favorite air waves and its protective licenses and permits to sponsor one set of protagonists against another or to freeze out opposing viewpoints. It is my sincere hope that radio will never permit itself to become guilty of such prejudicial practices because to my mind that would be a big step back-

ward through providing potent arguments for more Government control or supervision and for substituting bureaucratic control—never very satisfactory and seldom very equitable—for self-restraint and fair-play codes which radio can much better provide for itself by a faithful recognition of the responsibilities which always attach themselves to such special privileges as radio presently enjoys.

With the hope that radio may redouble its efforts to avoid justifiable criticism and that it may reexamine its practices to the end that the best public interests may always be served, I summarize herewith some considerations which I believe radio executives should carefully ponder and not lightly shunt aside on the basis that at this time no great complaint is evident in demands for legislative reforms or executive restraints. The time to eliminate a widespread public demand for governmental correctives is before the complaint is crystallized—once the crusade is on and a chorus of demands for Government action is apparent, it is frequently too late to stem the tide and all too often the alleged correctives go too far and impose new vices more pernicious than those they would eradicate. No business enterprise is ever so strong or so safe that it can afford to discard substantial segments of its good will by turning a deaf ear to sincere critics and trusting to time alone to quiet valid criticisms. For that reason, I list the following factors for whatever value they may have in stimulating thought leading to the preservation of free radio in America and the nipping in the bud of any proposals that Government action be utilized to eradicate such minor deficiencies as radio may now be heir to. American radio is good and it is getting better. It is entitled to a fair chance to demonstrate that its self-imposed regulations are adequate to serve the public interest and to protect the functions of democratic government in this great Republic.

A SUMMARY OF FACTORS FOR RADIO EXECUTIVES TO CONSIDER

1. Ninety percent of present-day radio programs are free from substantial criticism by the public. That in itself is a high tribute to American radio. The 10 percent of radio programs which cause concern are in the opinionated observations of speakers who are either on the pay roll of the radio companies themselves or who speak for hire for commercial sponsors. Radio cannot afford to ignore the significance as molders of public opinion which these opinionated observers have and the delicate problem growing out of them concerning how far radio or commercial sponsors go in employing speakers for hire to shape public opinion.

2. Radio executives should study the advisability of setting up self-imposed regulations whereby sponsored programs by commercial groups, professional commentators, speakers working for pay and salaried reporters on sustaining programs, should not permit their personal prejudices, their individual opinions, their

political philosophies, and their own viewpoints to color the programs in which they participate. To expand this type of opinionated program to its full extent would be to permit the opinion backed by the biggest purse to propagandize America and dominate the air waves. Carried to its ultimate degree, a billion-dollar sponsor could purchase enough time and sponsor speakers and commentators enough to superimpose its philosophy or policies upon an entire people. Thus, such free speech on the air could be used to circumvent the free thinking of a nation.

3. Radio's current policy of permitting conflicting sides of controversial questions to have equal opportunity with free radio time to present its arguments is Americanism in action. It is the essence of democracy and is highly commendable. But if speakers on commercial programs and those speaking on the sustaining programs of the big radio chains themselves attempt to influence public opinion and present lopsided arguments on public questions they can well destroy and nullify the great democratic value of the prevailing policy of giving free time to all sides of a controversial question, because the professional commentators and speakers are on the air so much more frequently than the laymen.

4. Radio should recognize a responsibility for not permitting itself to be for sale to the highest bidder on controversial questions, which is not shared by the newspaper business. The difference is clear-cut and obvious. As many newspapers can present themselves for public approval in any State or community as the public will support, they seek and secure no governmental license and obtain no governmental monopoly of favored channels of presentation. Thus editors have an independence which radio systems cannot rightfully exercise because radio by its very nature is more monopolistic than are the newspapers. Too many radio stations find too few choice air waves to share for day and night broadcasting. Therefore the Government licenses some and must refuse concessions to others. While no legitimate complaint can attach to this necessity, it does impose upon those radio units favored by Government permit to own an air wave the obligation not to exercise that concession to plump for one opinion or to play down another.

5. Excesses and abuses in the realm of these optionated programs by speakers for hire are the danger zone around free radio in America. Government regulation could correct the abuses but I hope it will never have to come to that. In my opinion, such coercion is unnecessary. Radio deserves the opportunity to eliminate these abuses for itself where they occur and to guard against their extension. To say they never occur, is to blink at the facts; to say they are the prevailing practice, is to exaggerate the exception. Between the extremes of too many too highly opinionated commercial or sustaining programs, and a ban against all interpretative speakers and personal commentators there is surely a happy compromise at which point such speakers for hire can

be selected who will exercise uniform good taste and opinions balanced by open-minded recognition that others equally wise may hold differing viewpoints. Such speakers can be secured, I believe, who will stress the factual over the prejudicial elements of news and who will avoid taking sides on issues of political importance or governmental significance at times and on points which comprise periods of our national history when the general public is seeking to formulate clear-headed and far-reaching decisions which may determine our national destiny for many years to come.

In view of the foregoing experience, Mr. Speaker, I am naturally gratified as are many other Americans, both in and out of Congress, at the progressive and forward-looking step in the interests of free speech and fair play which have been taken by the Columbia Broadcasting System in its recent declaration of policy assuring the listening public that C. B. S. would not permit its facilities to be exploited for propaganda purposes. A few radio commentators have utilized the facilities of other radio networks to condemn C. B. S. for forthrightly barring propaganda from its network. Consequently, Mr. Speaker, I want at this time to read into the record an open letter written by Paul W. Kester, vice president and general manager of C. B. S. at the present time, which presents the C. B. S. point of view in this matter. The letter follows:

FREEDOM OF THE AIR

DEAR MR. WINCHELL: During the past several days you have commented critically on Columbia Broadcasting System's news broadcasting policies. There are at least three points not thus far mentioned in your column, which we think your readers should have in order to understand the real issue involved. In view of your own interest in freedom of expression and journalistic fairness, we urge that you publish this letter explaining why we feel that freedom of expression on the air is protected, not "muzzled" by Columbia Broadcasting System's policies of noneditorial news reporting and news analysis.

1. You have not mentioned the fact that, while keeping opinion out of news broadcasting as such, we invite the freest expression of opinion elsewhere in our broadcasting schedule. In other words, our air is wide open to the most partisan speakers on every major issue in the news. Proponents and opponents of lend-lease, post-war collaboration, price control, tax policies, etc., have championed their respective sides of public arguments in a constant battle of public opinion over the Columbia Broadcasting System network. But it is presented as opinion and not as news. This is most important because it eliminates the camouflaged propaganda that opinionated reporters could otherwise insinuate into a field which we

think should remain simon pure, honestly objective, and utterly noneditorial.

2. Your comments, we think, imply that Columbia Broadcasting System's policies preclude straight news reporting on "controversial subjects" in the news. The opposite is true. For instance: The draft of fathers is one of the "hottest" controversies now before the public. It has been dealt with fully, freely, and fearlessly on Columbia Broadcasting System network news for the past several weeks. None of our news reporters or news analysts has sought to lobby for or against it. Nor has any one of them avoided accurate news reporting of the controversy's daily progress.

3. You should have told your readers the simple, physical fact that lies behind our policy of non-partisan news broadcasting. The number of radio wave lengths is, at present, definitely limited. There are only a certain number of physical facilities, that is, of radio transmitters which can be linked into radio networks. Clock hours are also limited. And thus a small group of news commentators, commanding preferred positions and established audiences on nationwide networks, could, if they opinionated their news broadcasting, exert a dangerous and dominating power over public opinion. Such power in the hands of a few, would destroy all fairness on the air—and in a domestic world, there is no freedom without fairness.

PAUL W. KESTER,
Columbia Broadcasting System.

NEW YORK.

THE C. B. S. POLICY STATEMENT

Mr. Speaker, the new policy statement of the Columbia Broadcasting System, to which Mr. Kester's letter refers, dated September 7, 1943, speaks for itself. I am incorporating it with my remarks at this point in the RECORD, since it deserves the study of every American who places the preservation of free speech high among the attributes of this Republic:

To C. B. S. news analysts:

This is a restatement of Columbia's policies in regard to news analysis, an explanation of their reasons for being, and a declaration of our intention to enforce them rigidly to the end that the American listening public will be best served.

Please do not expect anything new in this memorandum. No innovations are involved. It is sent you at this time merely because there have been occasional instances recently in which there seemed to be a lack of clear understanding of our policies both on the part of news analysts and of our editors. I trust this will clear up any confusion which may have existed, especially among newer members of our staff. If not, then I shall be all too happy to discuss these matters with you personally at greater length and supply you with fresh copies of previous material dealing with our policies.

First off, let it be emphasized that Columbia has no editorial views except in regard to radio itself. By extension, those men selected by us to interpret or analyze the news must also refrain from expression of editorial opinion or our non-editorial position becomes an empty shell.

Each of you has been chosen by us because of your background and knowledge, insight, clarity of thought and special ability to make yourselves understood by vast audiences. We feel we have faced and met a considerable responsibility in your selection. We now feel that you must meet and face much the same responsibility in writing your analyses. For we have said to ourselves, "We will not choose men who will tell the public what they themselves think and what the public should think." And we ask that you say to yourselves, "We are not privileged to crusade, to harangue the people or to attempt to sway public opinion."

In our view, then, the function of the news analyst is to marshal the facts on any specific subject and out of his common or special knowledge to present these facts so as to inform his listeners rather than persuade them. The analyst should attempt to clear up any contradictions within the known record, should fairly present both sides of controversial questions and, in short, should give the best available information upon which listeners can make up their own minds. Ideally, in the case of controversial issues, the audience should be left with no impression as to which side the analyst himself actually favors.

The news analyst, so restricted in the expression of his personal beliefs, may argue that he is being denied freedom of speech, that if he were employed by a newspaper or a magazine, he would have much greater latitude in speaking his mind. This argument brings us to the reasons for the policies I have just enunciated and the best way to deal with those reasons is to declare at once that there is a very considerable difference between the radio station or network and a newspaper or magazine.

The essential contrast is supplied by the available opportunities for publication and for broadcasting. Nothing except lack of funds or unwillingness to risk them prevents anyone anywhere from starting a newspaper, a magazine, or a publishing house. Within the laws of libel, obscenity and sedition, the publisher is then able to say editorially anything he wishes to say, or to hire men to say it for him. But in the case of broadcasting, there are only a certain number of frequencies available for broadcasting stations and by the same token, only a limited number of networks can be created and maintained on a national basis. It is this limitation which makes for the basic difference between broadcasting and the press, from which stems our noneditorial policy. Without such a policy it is easy to see that a powerful and one-sided position on serious issues could be created for a small group of broadcasters locally, regionally, or nationally.

The threat of such unbalanced power is inimical

to a democratic and free radio or to democracy itself.

As for those radio-news analysts who cry out that the limitations which our policies impose on them threaten freedom of speech, I think the opposite is true. For we have set aside regular broadcasting periods in which controversial issues of the day can be and are discussed first by one side, then the other. We have declined repeatedly to sell time for the discussion of these issues, so that the greater amount of time (and with it the effective control of public opinion) would not be at the disposal of the side prepared to spend the most money.

Actually freedom of speech on the radio would be menaced if a small group of men, some thirty or forty news analysts who have Nation-wide audiences and have regular broadcasting periods in which to build loyal listeners, take advantage of their "preferred position" and become pulpsters. To permit these men to preach their own views would be to create for C. B. S. news a super-editorial page, instead of no editorial page at all. Then freedom of the air, within the genuine spirit of democracy, would be merely a hollow phrase. There is no sense to the idea of erecting a barricade that will protect public opinion from one-sided assault and then drilling holes in that defense whereby men in our own employ are permitted just such assault.

Our policies are meaningless unless strictly enforced and every news editor is held accountable for their enforcement. We are quite aware that other networks and individual stations may not as yet have similar policies. We hope that in the interest of furthering a free and democratic radio all of them will come to agree with us. But whether or not they do, we want C. B. S. world news to continue to set the highest possible standards of news objectivity and to retain its leadership in public confidence.

PAUL W. WHITE,
Director of News Broadcasts.

SEPTEMBER 7, 1943.

Mr. LANDIS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MUNDT. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. LANDIS. I just want to say that I believe the Members of Congress and others generally are in debt to the Columbia Broadcasting Co. for its readiness in attempting to solve the very serious situation existing in radio newscasting.

Mr. MUNDT. I thank the gentleman for his contribution, and in view of his well-known advocacy of free speech and fair play, it has extra significance. I am sorry, however, that I cannot yield further during these remarks as I have all the material here which I can cover in the time allotted me.

In this connection I would like to read from an article appearing in the October 18, 1943, issue of Broadcasting, the weekly news magazine of radio.

On page 22 of that magazine an article appears, written by Ed. Craney, general manager of Z-Bar Net, the radio network throughout the State of Montana.

Mr. Craney entitled his article "Free Speech, the Right To Be Heard," and I commend the reading of the entire article and editorial to Members of Congress and citizens who are interested in this problem of working out a radio code and a radio policy which will protect the rights and freedom of speech.

I will quote briefly from this article appearing in Broadcasting magazine of October 18: Mr. Craney says:

We of the Z-Net—

Montana's radio network—

recognized the above problems and strove to solve them in the year 1930 with the establishment of the Montana Radio Forum. CBS has just done so. Some say there is no problem—others say some other method must be found. All right—let's find it. I believe all of us are actually striving for the same goal—freedom of speech—the right for both majorities and minorities to be heard on American radio.

Then continuing in his article, Mr. Craney points out there is a definite distinction between the freedom of expression as it is applied to the newspaper field and how it is applied to radio, because of the differences which are obvious between radio and the newspaper.

He asks this question in his article:

Is radio like a newspaper?

Then he answers:

No—anyone with the funds can start a newspaper. Radio is limited and licensed by Government because of the present lack of frequencies. The good newspaper presents factual news of the day written by "on-the-scene reporters of events all over the world."

It has an editor who is free to express his views on any subject in its editorial columns.

Then he points out the differences existing because of limited facilities on the air, because the radio depends on licensing by the Government to enable a certain station to dominate specified air waves at stipulated times; and he points out further on down that radio broadcasts cannot be laid aside and read later; if the broadcast is not heard it is lost forever.

Still later in the article he calls attention to the fact that there are some who think radio can

cure this commentator trouble by a device which has been tried in Montana, the home State of Senator WHEELER who has, himself, devoted a lot of study to the radio situation.

I quote further from the article again:

We of the Z-Net believe commentaries are healthy. We believe the public needs their ideas—we said "theirs," not his or hers. We have saluted C. B. S. on its stand because we know it has taken courage to recognize the problem and C. B. S. is trying to solve this problem. While we do not say our method is the ideal we nevertheless believe it is more practical than any other thus far devised for the protection of the right to be heard and the right to hear.

And I think the Members of Congress who are interested in the welfare of radio are interested in the fact that Mr. Craney recognizes that freedom of speech on the radio means that there must be a right to be heard as well as a freedom of the right to hear and it cannot be exclusively placed within the power of an individual operator on the air.

Continuing the quotation from Mr. Craney's article:

We have merely endeavored to build the columnist page of the newspaper into an air show. We never put a single commentator on the air. We insist on two or more peoples' ideas being expressed on the same or on adjacent shows or we don't carry the broadcast.

I hope the Members of Congress will take time to read this entire article, because it offers an approach to the solution of a very disturbing problem; that is, the alarming tendency of commentators increasingly to use their time and their position to attack individuals in both private and public life and to propagandize and lobby for public causes in which the speakers or sponsors may or may not have a selfish or ulterior motive.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us leave the problem of making free speech on the air a fact rather than a fiction for the time being and examine the recent Supreme Court decision which bears on the same subject. Later in this talk, I shall return to the original proposition in an effort to show how the circumvention of free and impartial expression on the air by making it the sole privilege of the sponsors with the biggest purse buying up select time on a semipublic monopoly or of the radio companies themselves has a direct relationship to the implications and ramification of the Supreme Court decision of May 10.

On May 10, the United States Supreme Court in a decision of 5 to 2 with the majority opinion being written by Justice Frankfurter and the

minority opinion being written by Justice Murphy made it the constitutional law of the land that the Federal Communications Commission should have the right to determine the composition of the traffic on the air. To use the exact words of Mr. Justice Frankfurter with reference to the Federal Communications Act of 1934:

It puts upon the Commission the burden of determining the composition of that traffic.

I think as we go along with this discussion, Mr. Speaker, it will become clear how this decision of the Court has a direct bearing on what should be considered broadcasting policies which are compatible with the best public interests and with considerations of free speech and fair play. It should also become clear how the Court's decision supports my contention that since radio is a semi-public monopoly exercised through preferential licenses granted to some and denied to others, it must either adopt for itself or have imposed upon it from without a public-serving policy which does not permit one group of citizens or one individual to have opinion-molding opportunities which are denied to those of opposing points of view.

RADIO IS NECESSARILY MONOPOLISTIC IN CHARACTER

In Mr. Justice Frankfurter's majority opinion we find some interesting evidence in support of these observations. In support of the statement that radio is monopolistic in character under its existing network system, Mr. Frankfurter makes this statement in a quotation from the Federal Communications Commission:

It pointed out that the station affiliated with the national networks utilized more than 97 per cent of the total nighttime broadcasting power of all the stations in the country.

Under these conditions, it is obvious that if the networks are to be used for propaganda or political purposes, or to support or oppose programs of public policy, there must either be provided equal and suitable opportunity for reply or else we must reconcile ourselves to the fact that those who buy up the radio time are to be granted the exclusive right of indoctrination over the air waves in America. I think it will be generally conceded that to make indoctrination the exclusive right of the fellow with the fattest purse or the man with the best spot on the dial is not sound Americanism. And it is not conducive to the permanent operation of private radio in this country. It is, in fact, according a privilege to a

few which will sooner or later draw penalties from the many.

The extent to which this monopolistic character of private radio, when coupled with the use of indoctrination and propaganda over the air, might be used or abused to distort or warp the thinking of America is further elaborated upon by subsequent statements in the prevailing opinion of Justice Frankfurter.

For example, he points out that the Federal Communications Commission found that network affiliation contracts usually contain so-called network optional-time clauses. Under these provisions, the network could upon 28 days' notice call upon its affiliates to carry a commercial program during any of the hours specified in the agreement as network optional time. The Commission reported:

We find that the optioning of time by licensee stations has operated against the public interest.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, it can be seen how this could be true if networks permit sustaining or commercial commentators to engage in opinion-molding propaganda which could thus be "force fed" over station outlets which, in themselves, are out of sympathy with the propaganda line of the sponsor or the network. For example, many commentators on the air have seemingly joined in a crusade to discredit the farm bloc in Congress and to a certain extent the farmers of America by insinuating that they are demanding better prices for food products than are warranted. Quite apart from the merits of such contentions—and for one I believe they have no merit whatsoever—it is obvious that a radio station in a farm State might seriously object to being forced to broadcast a network program expressing antipathy to the farm element and broadcast by some city commentator who knows nothing about farming conditions and cares less.

It is also brought out in this decision of the court that net work affiliation contracts contain a clause defining the right of the station to reject network commercial programs. The F. C. C. is quoted as finding that "these provisions do not sufficiently protect the public interest." The F. C. C. further states:

We conclude that a licensee is not fulfilling his obligations to operate in the public interest, and is not operating in accordance with the express requirements of the Communications Act, if he agrees to accept programs on any basis other than his own reasonable decision that the programs are satisfactory.

Still another indication of the fact that chain

broadcasting and network growth has made radio increasingly more monopolistic and consequently more subject to public regulation than ordinary private enterprise is the following statement included in the Frankfurter decision with reference to radio facilities in the major cities and primary news sources of this country. I quote:

Competition among networks for these facilities is nonexistent, as they are completely removed from the network-station market. It gives the network complete control over its policies. This bottling-up of the best facilities has undoubtedly had a discouraging effect upon the creation and growth of new networks.

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES REQUIRE PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Now, sir, let us get down to a discussion of how the monopolistic development of radio, which in itself has granted special privileges to some, demands the acceptance of special public responsibilities on the part of the radio industry if the present system of radio is to be public serving rather than public perverting.

In the gist of the prevailing decision of the Court, Justice Frankfurter said on May 10:

It puts upon the Commission the burden of determining the composition of that traffic.

In that, Mr. Speaker, he referred to the traffic over the air waves of this country. Continuing to quote from Justice Frankfurter, he further said:

The facilities of radio are not large enough to accommodate all who wish to use them. Methods must be devised for choosing from among the many who apply. And since Congress itself could not do this, it committed the task to the Commission.

Mr. Speaker, this responsibility for devising methods "for choosing from among the many who apply" for radio time as well as for station licenses is the crux of the whole matter insofar as demonstrating whether private radio is to serve the public interest or to serve as a propaganda vehicle for some sponsor, some commentator, some political administration, some network, or some cause.

If it is argued that the method of "choosing from among the many who apply" for time on the air, for example, shall be that of permitting the fellow with the fattest purse to buy advertising time and employ commentators or speakers to denounce or support individuals in public life, institutions of government, organizations of private citizens, or occupational groups, it simply resolves itself into a policy of favoritism to some

and frustration for others. In like manner if this process of "choosing" is to be operated so that radio networks can employ commentators on their sustaining time to applaud one point of view and abhor another it means that freedom of speech has become a fiction instead of a fact. It would mean in short that radio networks were reserving to themselves a freedom to indoctrinate which is incompatible with real freedom of speech.

ACCESS TO THE MICROPHONE AN ESSENTIAL IN FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Mr. Speaker, let us keep always in mind the fact that freedom of speech must mean freedom of access to the microphone as well as freedom of acclamation insofar as radio is concerned.

In the concluding summary of the majority opinion as delivered on May 10 by Justice Frankfurter, this analysis of the true meaning of free speech is again emphasized. Says the prevailing opinion:

We come, finally, to an appeal to the first amendment. The regulations—

Of the Commission—

even if valid in all other respects, must fail because they abridge, say the appellants, their right of free speech. If that be so, it would follow that every person whose application for a license to operate a station is denied by the Commission is thereby denied his constitutional right of free speech. Freedom of utterance is abridged to many who wish to use the limited facilities of radio.

RADIO FACILITIES ARE LIMITED

Mr. Speaker, that statement from the majority opinion should be high-lighted. Let me repeat it:

Freedom of utterance is abridged by many who wish to use the limited facilities of radio.

It is this elemental truth which the new policy of the Columbia Broadcasting System recognizes in its decision to keep all propaganda off its programs unless equal opportunities are given at the same hour and on the same coverage for expression of the other point of view. It is this same fundamental truism which the critics of the new C. B. S. policy ignore and which, when violated, gives cause for public demands restricting the use of radio for private propaganda purposes.

It is, of course, to be expected that a few commentators, Mr. Speaker, or radio officials who enjoy monopolistic privileges of free expression and who have at times used these individualized opportunities to lobby for or against this, that, or the other cause in accordance with their personal

views or corporation outlook will disapprove of steps taken along the direction of the C. B. S. policy. Such men may wail that "freedom of speech is being curtailed" but they are not thinking primarily of freedom of speech in the aggregate but of their own personal freedom to use a semipublic monopoly as a personal opportunity to pontificate, propagandize, or pillory. They ignore the axiom that freedom of speech to be realistic when applied to radio must also include freedom of access to the microphone for opposing points of view. Otherwise, any other interpretation of freedom of speech over the air would be a restriction of freedom of thinking rather than an expansion of it. What the thought processes produce depends upon what information is provided as the basis for thinking. If radio is to do its just share toward developing sound and sane national thinking it must either refrain from projecting prejudice and propaganda or else provide for equal representation for all points of view.

RADIO DAILY QUOTES KALTENBORN AGAINST C. B. S.

In the Radio Daily for Thursday, September 16, Mr. Kaltenborn is quoted by this New York City publication which is read widely in radio circles as being severely critical of the C. B. S. policy of barring propaganda from its newscasts. Radio Daily quotes a speech which Kaltenborn made at a luncheon in the Waldorf-Astoria wherein he states in part:

The argument that commentators should have no opinions because only a limited number can be put on the air is false. Newspaper space is also limited. Only a certain number of columnists can get their material printed. Today, we have almost as many commentators with a national following as we have columnists with a national following. The radio news analyst cannot and should not function night after night as preacher or soap-box orator. He cannot constantly make himself a medium for passionate expression of personal or minority opinions.

Mr. Speaker, these statements by Mr. Kaltenborn warrant some analysis. It appears that there are some blind spots in his thinking. For example, his assumption that an exact analogy can be drawn between newspapers and the radio is inaccurate. While it is true that only a limited number of columnists may get their columns printed, it is equally true that most newspapers present their readers with a balanced diet by carrying columnists with conflicting points of view in the same issue so that the same set of readers get both sides of the question. Such is

not the case with radio. It is also true that in a paper's editorial columns it frequently takes exception with something a columnist reports in another section of the same edition. And it is vitally significant that newspapers almost invariably accord to citizens the privileges of answering charges or criticisms by printing open letters in the paper in refutation of something a columnist may have said. This is a feature almost entirely lacking in present radio policy insofar as it applies to prejudicial newscasting, to slurs and criticisms on radio time sponsored by advertisers who sometimes have their own "ax to grind" or to attacks and lobbying propaganda projected by commentators speaking on sustaining programs provided by the networks and in which the nature of the news is colored either by the bias of the corporation officials or by the prejudice of the individual commentator.

The right of rejoinder, Mr. Speaker, is fully as important as the right of criticism insofar as freedom of speech is concerned. It appears that Mr. Kaltenborn overemphasizes a single side of the problem in his criticisms. It is significant, moreover, that even Mr. Kaltenborn notes the excesses to which his profession is heir by continuing:

The radio analyst should not function night after night as a preacher or soap-box orator. He cannot constantly make himself a medium for passionate expression or minority opinions.

That is sound advice. But like the best medicine in the pharmacopoeia, it can affect no cures if never taken.

One wonders, for example, how zealous Mr. Kaltenborn and certain radio officials would be for the "rights of free speech" about which they talk if regulations provided that any individual, group, or cause which is attacked on the radio should have the right to insist upon a like amount of time on an equally important program in which to make reply. I am afraid that those who now enjoy choice radio program periods and carefully selected wave lengths would be the first to protest if public policy insisted that those wont to abuse this privilege must provide those offended with an opportunity on the next regular program to present their side of the story. Advertisers would be less inclined to permit or instruct commentators to engage in crusades of indoctrination if they were compelled to give opposing points of view an opportunity to be heard "on this same station at this same hour next Sunday evening" or whatever the case might be. It is this inavailability of radio time of like importance to vary-

ing points of view which makes one of the big distinctions between a private enterprise like a newspaper and a semipublic monopoly like a great radio network which depends upon the perpetuation of its license to protect it in the use of a highly coveted wave length which it alone can utilize.

Radio officials and men like Mr. Kaltenborn should not expect to be able to enjoy all the privileges of a monopolistic hold on certain wavelengths which is assured them by the Government and at the same time to have all the opportunities for projecting purely personal points of view which would be theirs if they were engaging in a completely competitive enterprise. If government is not to step in to safeguard the public against the propagandist on the air, the radio industry itself must recognize its responsibilities in this matter and not fall back upon the weak ability that anything which is fair practice for newspapers is also fair practice for the radio.

To conform with the standards of good manners and fair play on the air, it is not necessary to destroy the sparkle and spirit and pungency of radio reporting. It is necessary only to remove the malicious, the prejudicial, the inimical, and the purpose-serving tactics of certain broadcasters and to safeguard the interests of veracity by insisting that radio reporters follow the precepts of good reporting, anywhere, rather than color their reports with personal prejudice and individual bias.

Members of Congress and citizens generally can quickly bring to mind the commentators that they hear and make their own classifications as to whether they measure up to the responsibilities which are theirs as performers on an exclusive state licensed by the public as a monopoly or whether they pervert their power for personal profit, political advantage, prejudicial acclaim, or just because of habitually bad radio manners. Occasional violations of good taste and good practice can be overlooked, but the repetitious offenders jeopardize the whole future of privately owned radio due to the fact that they abuse their control of a great public-opinion-forming institution which in its very nature is not available to all and which looks to government to protect it against infringements by competitors who frequently might covet a popular wavelength to propagandize a different party line or point of view. It is the hope of those of us in Congress who are working on this problem that the good judgment of enlightened leaders in the industry which has made radio

strong will not too long delay taking the steps needed to make privately owned radio as secure as it is strong.

Justice Frankfurter points out, in this prevailing opinion:

Unlike other modes of expression, radio inherently is not available to all. That is its unique characteristic, and that is why, unlike other modes of expression, it is subject to government regulation.

There is no denying the validity of this conclusion.

Radio networks which permit speakers and commentators on either sustaining programs or commercial broadcasts habitually to belabor Congress or the executive departments, or to attack individuals, groups, or points of view are flagrant violators of their public responsibilities as the licensed operators of a semipublic monopoly. Continued flaunting of this responsibility, Mr. Speaker, is certain to result in legislative curtailments of private radio or in similar action by the F. C. C. C. B. S. has taken the lead in attempting to avert this result by imposing a voluntary code of fair play and good manners upon itself. It is hoped other networks will do likewise, as I, for one, would deplore seeing private radio replaced by government radio in this country.

RADIO INDUSTRY MUST MEASURE UP TO ITS RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr. Speaker, the radio industry must measure up to its responsibilities as custodians of the public interest on the networks or by its own shortsightedness it will dig its own grave by its own indiscretions.

The serious offenders of good taste and wise policy on the air probably do not number more than five or six. But these five or six can ruin radio for the host of able and conscientious commentators who serve the public interest, and they can cause the stockholders and owners of radio facilities to find their investments becoming worthless and their period of ownership suspended by governmental interference.

ASSOCIATED PRESS DEMONSTRATES BEST REPORTING IS UNBIASED

Mr. Speaker, the phenomenal success of the Associated Press provides the complete rejoinder to those who insist that to be interesting radio reporting has to be biased, prejudicial, or opinionated. The Associated Press serves newspapers of every political preference. It gathers news for papers in

every section of the country, and readers in every walk of life look to it for the complete and candid coverage of the news. Surely nobody would argue that the freedom of the press is curtailed because the Associated Press does not permit its great corps of reporters to use this agency of public service as a device for purveying personal spleen or propagandizing and lobbying for public policies. C. B. S. may not have found the final answer to the important business of keeping radio free and fair, but it has faced the problem and is approaching a solution. Perhaps radio might find something worth emulating by studying the reportorial habits of the Associated Press.

CONGRESS WAITS TOO LONG—THEN GOES TOO FAR

It is the history of government in this country that we in Congress wait too long before taking corrective action in matters like this, and when we act we go too far. All this can be avoided if radio management will cooperate now in eliminating the causes for growing discontent before they compel corrective legislation. Simply to ignore the situation is to court disaster.

Before concluding this address I wish to emphasize that it is my conviction that private radio is much to be preferred to Government radio in a Republic such as this. Even with its present deviations from proper policy at times I must prefer radio as it is to radio as it would be under Government ownership, operation, or domination. However, there is no use of our ignoring the signs of the times.

There are many who prefer a system of radio such as operates in Britain. I do not. As a believer in private radio, however, I am growing steadily more convinced that either through voluntary steps or through legislative channels arrangements must be made to discontinue propaganda activities on the air by speakers utilizing sponsored advertising time or enjoying monopolistic privileges as commentators on network sustaining programs.

It is not the exclusive province of the U-Tell-'em Soap Co., the We-fool-'em Lotion Co., or We-know-all What's It Co. to indoctrinate the American public with the peculiar personal views of the men and women they engage to capture the attention of the audience and to propagandize it between sponsor "plugs" for this or that particular commercial product. Nor is it the inherent monopoly of speakers representing the networks themselves on sustaining time continuously to criticize or commend, to applaud or abhor, to propa-

gandize or to pillory without suitable and adequate opportunities being given for a similar expression of opposing points of view.

Radio provides this equal opportunity for all during political campaigns but it fails to do so in the day-to-day and week-to-week programs which come to us over the air.

THIS PROBLEM MUST BE SOLVED

A number of us in Congress, Mr. Speaker, have made and are making a study of the abuses of radio and proposals for correcting them. We ask the cooperation of all Members on this matter, since it is of vital concern to all. Government has a responsibility in this matter which we do not propose to ignore and which we must not dodge.

It is our hope that the radio industry will take steps to eradicate its own evils, but if Government must act it is felt that Congress can prescribe regulations which will make freedom of speech on the air an equally true privilege of all and not merely an opportunity for propagandizing to the privileged few.

The Columbia Broadcasting System has courageously and patriotically pointed the way for the preservation of private radio and free speech on the air in this Republic. In this effort it deserves the plaudits of all who believe in equal opportunity and fair play. If similar policies prevail or are adopted by the other networks one of the major causes of dissatisfaction with present-day radio will have been corrected. C. B. S. may not yet have found the perfect solution to a vexing problem, but it has made candid recognition of the problem and has taken courageous action to do something about it.

It is the hope of those of us who are devoting ourselves to this subject that these corrections will be made voluntarily by the great radio networks rather than to force congressional action by a continuation of the abuses which C. B. S. has so wisely set out to correct. America neither wants its radio information distorted by Government domination, by party politics, nor by personal pundits with axes to grind and purposes to propagandize. Good judgment and fair play would seem better devices than censorship for preventing the monopolistic facilities of radio from becoming the devices for propaganda for a select few in this great Republic.

American citizens can form their own conclusions when they are given the undiluted and uncolored facts. It is the function of a semipublic monopoly such as radio to relay the facts rather than to fashion the thinking of America.

SUPREME COURT DECISION HAS DANGEROUS
IMPLICATIONS

Before concluding, let me say that while I have quoted at length from the majority opinion of the United States Supreme Court in its decision of May 10, I am not at all pleased or satisfied with some of the implications of that decision. I am not happy over the prospect of having the Federal Communications Commission or any other body "regulate the composition of the traffic" over the air waves of America without some definite standards being set up in advance which circumscribe and direct those regulating powers.

A broad application of the "regulation of the composition of the traffic" on the air waves could mean outright Government censorship. Its very existence as a right of the Commission operates as a silent threat of censorship to automatically tend to color and bias radio reporting. Now that the Supreme Court has decreed that this right exists, Congress should act promptly to define it clearly, and to limit it definitely so as to bar all possibility of censorship either direct or indirect.

If radio requires a traffic cop of the air America wants him to be bound by specific instructions as

to what violations he can and cannot regulate. We must not have a radio traffic cop, whether it be an individual or a commission, with power to exercise personal discretion with regard to what is considered proper traffic on the air waves.

Congress should quickly act to set up safeguards, in the light of the May 10 decision of the Court, to be sure that private excesses of radio are not replaced by governmental censorship of nonmilitary broadcasts.

Regulations can and should be established which are clear to all, which operate equally in the interests of all, which will remove radio from all fear of governmental crack-downs, and which will conform with the principle that in this Government of laws and not of men the only rightful traffic cop of the air must be a code of prescribed behavior compiled in written form and free from any perversions by power-loving men, be they radio commentators, radio-management officials, members of the Federal Communications Commission, or members of the executive or legislative branches of our Government. Only thus can we realistically enjoy genuine freedom of expression for all alike over the radio networks of this country.