

N - A - E - B NEWS - LETTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTERS

Edited by Harold A. Engel, President
Station WHA, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin

March 1, 1947

FCC RELEASES NEW RULES

The Federal Communications Commission on February 14 adopted for release new sections of its rules governing Non-Commercial Educational FM Broadcast Stations, to become effective on April 1, 1947.

Sections 3.501 to 3.591 are new embodying essentially the recommendations made after considerations by NAEB at the 1946 Convention at Michigan State College.

NEW FM FILM

The General Electric Company is about to release a new film entitled, "Naturally-- It's FM". This 16 mm. sound film in color should be useful in promotion campaigns as in the earlier version called "The Story of FM". It is to be available through the company's district offices and through film libraries.

POLITICS AND THE FCC

Sports prognosticating has nothing on the activities of the radio trade press in starting and spiking rumors about prospective FCC appointments. Were it not for the importance of the job, the satire involved would be appreciated.

In a single issue of Broadcasting Magazine (February 3) these comments in different stories appear: "----Charles R. Denny will recommend----Wakefield---be named to succeed himself. Confirmation is far from automatic since new Republican majority in Senate isn't at all satisfied with Republican appointments-----".

"-----comes word that Thad Brown, Jr.----will be urged for Wakefield post by regular Republican stalwarts. Like his father he is an Ohio Republican and his mother is most active in Republican Committee circles."

"-----a political deal was concocted and almost jelled, for appointment of Marion E. Martin, ex-assistant chairman of Republican National Committee to the Porter vacancy."

Basic qualifications and performance "in the public interest convenience and necessity" might be given some consideration---rather than political services rendered---or subservience to the wishes of those who under the banner of "The American way" place their own interests above those of the public.

M E M B E R S H I P I N V I T A T I O N

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters invites to membership institutions and agencies operating broadcasting stations or carrying on an educational program over stations not their own. This includes city, county and state educational bodies engaging in FM operations as well as colleges and universities.

Associate Membership is open to individuals and institutions interested in the field of public service broadcasting.

Write for further information and membership application blank.

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Executive Secretary
M. S. Novik
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, N. Y.

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CALIFORNIA BROADCASTERS OPPOSE EDUCATIONAL RADIO

Trade magazines have reported activity on the part of both the Northern and the Southern California Broadcasters Associations to stifle in its initial stages a proposal of the University of California for a state-wide network of educational FM stations.

Whether or not the information was supposed to have been released to the public is not known; but it has stirred to action those who see better things ahead for radio and its listeners. NAEB members are particularly concerned over the implications of the situation. If it can happen in California, it could happen elsewhere----though it is expected that commercial broadcasters in other states have less greed and more faith in themselves than displayed by their California brethren.....

In reply to an inquiry on the matter from your President, the following letter was received from FCC Commissioner Paul A. Walker:

February 12, 1947

Dear Mr. Engel:

I have your letter of the 5th instant calling my attention to an article in Broadcasting Magazine of February 3, 1947, entitled "Seeks State FM." This article states that "The University of California is aiming at formation of an FM network controlled by the State's Department of Education, and is seeking an appropriation of \$1,750,000 for that purpose." It then adds this significant sentence:

"Conscious of this threat to freedom of expression, as well as implied competition, both Northern and Southern California Broadcasters Associations are preparing strategy."

Our attention has also been called to an article in the February 5, 1947 issue of Variety entitled, "California Broadcasters Oppose Planned State-School FM Chain." This article carries a Hollywood, Feb. 4 date line and recites:

"California broadcasters today (Tues.) took their initial step at thwarting the creation here of a state-financed and school-controlled FM station chain.

"An immediate investigation will be launched into the whys, wherefors and hows of the plan before it gets into bill form for presentation to the current legislature in Sacramento. With the necessary information in hand, the broadcasters will then seek to organize a united front of commercial station operators and devise the means to combat the powerful and wealthy academic-political lobby fathering the plan.

"Broadcasters are determined not to leave the threat on its own in the hope that it will not get through or, perhaps, be stymied by some existing State or Federal laws prohibiting such operations. Once before a similar bill was in the making, but it never got to the presentation stage. No such chance will be taken on the newcomer.

"Planners of the FM chain here state that no commercial operation is interded. However, commercial or non-commercial, broadcasters want no part of what they feel will be definite competition for audiences."

These two articles present the tragedy of the situation.

In its June, 1945 allocations, the Federal Communications Commission set aside 20 channels for non-commercial education FM broadcasting and has consistently refrained from licensing commercial stations in these channels.

State educational networks offer an effective means of carrying educational programs to schools and communities throughout the states. Such educational networks would supplement the work of the individual educational stations by making it possible for these stations to exchange information and programs and thus fill out a well-rounded schedule of programs throughout the maximum hours of the day. Such educational networks would not only offer a way for the educational broadcasting stations to supplement the programs of each other, and thereby provide a statewide coverage for many excellent programs which could be heard in schools not equipped with their own educational broadcast stations or facilities.

Accordingly, we have encouraged, through our own efforts and through cooperation with the Departments of Education and others, the setting up of such educational networks. It has never occurred to us that educational stations could be, in any way, a threat to commercial broadcasting. In fact, it is my personal opinion that educational broadcasting stations would be a tremendous impetus to broadcasting generally and would encourage and assist commercial stations through developing listening habits and greater audiences.

To my way of thinking, the opposition indicated to the California Educational Network by current stories in the press, is exceedingly ill-advised and short-sighted. I sincerely hope that these articles do not represent either the attitude of the California commercial broadcasters or of the commercial broadcasters generally.

I appreciate your calling this matter to our attention.

Sincerely yours,

Paul A. Walker
Commissioner

JETT CONCURS

Commissioner E. K. Jett comments on Commissioner Walker's letter and says, "I concur with his views".

AER TAKES STAND

In the March 1947 issue of the AER Journal the lead article entitled, "Is This Cooperation, Mr. Broadcaster?" by Editor Tracy F. Tyler, is devoted to the situation--quoting from it:

"It is hard to believe that any member of the commercial radio industry would have any other feelings than those of gratitude to find educators, showing such a deep interest in radio and its non-commercial, educational, and public service possibilities. Especially should they welcome the entrance into the radio field of the public educational authorities. Yet BROADCASTING February 3 (page 61), reports that Northern and Southern California Broadcasters Associations are opposing the entrance of California into FM. The reason for this reported opposition, according to BROADCASTING, is because broadcasters are 'conscious of this threat to freedom of expression as well as implied competition.'

"Surely commercial broadcasting in California is not in such a precarious position as to cause any of its members to fear networks operated by the public educational authorities. (Can it be that education is a threat to business? When have educators been convicted of suppressing free speech?)

Yet such opposition can lead only to the conclusion that California broadcasters are suffering from fear---have developed feelings of insecurity, of inadequacy.

"In any event, it is to be hoped that the officers of the National Association of Broadcasters will take cognizance of this unfortunate move on the part of the California radio industry. An NAB investigation should result in an official statement immediately in full support of California's proposed state educational FM project. Only in that way can the NAB convince American educators of commercial radio's sincerity in its professions of friendliness.

"Is there an ulterior motive behind this commercial opposition? Could it be the hope that if states are prevented from establishing educational FM stations, the twenty channels would be thrown open to commercial exploitation? Perhaps an FCC investigation might bring to light some interesting data. It is conceivable that, if the facts warranted, a public statement of the findings might be released widely for public consumption. The least that could be done by the FCC would be to issue an official statement deploring the irresponsible attitudes which the article in BROADCASTING reports, and to make sure that this statement received wide publicity." -----Tracy F. Tyler, Editor.

This will bear watching. Members are urged to make known any information they may obtain which has a bearing on the matter.

NEUTRAL, SAY BROADCASTERS

In a wire to NABE, Hale Sparks, Director of Radio at the University of California, says (Feb.24): "OFFICIALS BOTH NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN DISTRICTS NAB INSIST THEIR POSITION NEUTRAL. PROSPECTS FOR FM BILL HARD TO ESTIMATE NOW----- "

The apparent anonymity of the news releases is confusing to Sparks, who follows his wire with a letter saying, "----I was trying to run down the source of the blasts in both Variety and Broadcasting, but got nowhere----It was like shadow-boxing-----."

Someone may have spoken out of turn. At best, this provides an excellent opportunity for those broadcasters to demonstrate in a practical way whether public interest or private advantage dictates their actions.

HITS AND MISSES

HEADLINE OF THE WEEK

"Soap Operas Fare Poorly in Butte, Des Moines Surveys"---Variety, Feb.22, 1947. Confession is good for the soul!

"It's (radio's) prime ingredients should be intelligence and respect. There is still considerable room in radio for both elements". --

.....The Saturday Review of Literature

Commenting on the storm of protests on the Blue Book by certain broadcasters, FM BUSINESS (February,1947) says, "Significantly, however, no broadcaster has challenged the Commission's right to look into program structure".

.....
A bill introduced in Congress by Representative Hoffman(R. Michigan) would make it a criminal offense to interfere with the production or transmission of broadcasts. Fines and imprisonment are specified for violations interfering with "the freedom of speech and a free press". Where does interference begin?----with the writer, sponsor, director?

GUESTITORIAL

SOME FACTS AND FANCIES ABOUT THE FCC

During recent months a grave and dangerous situation has developed in American broadcasting. The implications, which are not well understood, are serious, not only for the sound future of American radio (commercial and educational) but for the basic liberties of the people.

The National Association of Broadcasters, under the shrewd leadership of Justin Miller, has been conducting a carefully-planned attack on the Federal Communications Commission for the alleged purpose of protecting free speech and free enterprise in American radio. Since these are obviously excellent goals, and since the average American citizen has little knowledge of the structure and personnel of the broadcasting industry, the whole endeavor has sounded reasonable and has met with considerable success.

Mr. Miller has stumped the country, speaking at luncheon clubs, broadcast meetings, enlisting the sympathy of political figures. The trade papers have carried news about "ripper bills" designed to cripple or replace the FCC. Colliers magazine has taken up the cudgel for "free" radio. A new Washington newsletter, Capitol Radio Reporter, furnishing its readers with "inside news", warns continually against the threat (a carefully-nurtured myth) of "government radio ownership" and points out that radio, like the press, must fight to retain its freedom.

The average citizen (and legislator) does not know that American radio has been profitable beyond the wildest dreams of its pioneers. He does not know that only 1000-odd AM radio channel assignments exist in the U.S. and that no more are available. He does not know that broadcasting frequencies are so valuable that stations have been selling for 10 and 21 times their net worth.

The average citizen does not know that about 30 clear channel stations and 4 networks dominate the radio scene, nor does he know that 40,000-odd individuals in the broadcast industry and a handful of major advertisers now have almost uninhibited control over the most powerful emotional force with which the public mind has ever been faced. Naturally, they resist any change in the status quo.

Center of much of the current storm is the FCC report on the "Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees". It is the "Blue Book" - which sets up tentative standards whereby station program operation might be reviewed and evaluated at license renewal time. This publication was greeted with the familiar cries of "government domination", "censorship", "left-wing nonsense" and was construed by the NAB as a step in the direction of federal control of radio. Many individual station operators do subscribe to the FCC policy and views. But the official point of view is the view of the NAB leadership, which hopes to use the headman's axe.

The handwriting is clear--the conflict is essentially that of special privilege against the public interest. The danger is political--the new Congress is understandably intent on a certain amount of "house-cleaning". It is our hope that they will understand the NAB interest goes deeper and has other objectives than "free speech" and "free enterprise". Every member of the Senate and the House in every state should be advised that this is more than a question of bureaucracy, and that the broadcaster has responsibilities which extend beyond insuring the stockholder's annual dividend.

--RICHARD B. HULL, Radio WOI, Iowa State College

Next month's guestitorialist: M. C. Jensen

THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

From: Radio City

Where Do We Go From Here?
Do We Fold Up or Grow Up?

Recently, over 200 FM enthusiasts -- operators, engineers, manufacturers -- gathered at the Hotel Statler in Washington, D.C. to talk about FM, to exhibit FM models and to hear Charles Denny, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, in the presence of the full Commission, reiterate his support of FM and assure the group of complete support and recognition by the Commission.

The meeting was important and interesting to me because, for the first time at any meeting of broadcasters, one was able to speak with people who were really excited about the future of FM; some actually were planning programs to compete with AM.

The Washington meeting was the first public one since a Steering Committee was organized at last fall's NAB session in Chicago. The spark plug behind the whole idea was Judge Roy Hofheinz, owner of KOPY in Houston, Texas, a station that has been giving the big fellow plenty of competition. The meeting moved at a fast pace; there were a few invited speakers, and by and large, they were all timely and to the point. Before the day was up, the plans of the Steering Committee were accepted and Frequency Modulation Association - FMA - was organized. Roy Hofheinz was elected President, and Bill Bailey of Broadcasting, was elected the full time, paid, Executive Secretary, to operate from new offices in Washington.

FMA has decided on an elaborate campaign of promoting FM, and more important, they seem very anxious to help new FM station operators. If they did nothing else but made it possible for new stations to benefit by the promotional experience of the other fellows, it would be well worth the dues of \$100 a year. Of course, they propose to do more than just that, and that is where NAEB comes in.

Where do we go from here? What should we advise the new educational groups which have received licenses or filed applications? Do we recommend FMA and then try to get a lower rate, or do we set up our own organization?

Ronnie Lowdermilk is reported in the trade press as having met with the FMA people and urged them to set up a special rate of \$25.00 a year for educational groups. I would take Ronnie's opinion, hands down, on anything that has to do with engineering. He certainly has been plugging at the U.S. Office of Education long and hard. But I am not sure whether that is the way out for us, and just because I am not sure, I'm putting it right on the line for the rest of you to think about.

Most of you have had much more contact with educational groups than I have. Do you think they would have the same freedom in a strictly promotional organization, or not? If the answer is no, then certainly NAEB, rather than a new FM educational organization. If this is correct, then it seems to me we must come to the conclusion that NAEB line up, as soon as possible, a meeting of the key educational people who are interested in FM or who have already filed for FM stations.

February 25, 1947
Room 5052
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York

Morris S. Novik
Executive Secretary

STATION REPORTS

WNYC----New York City.

Seymour Siegel has just guided his station through an 11-day American Music Festival. This is an annual event between Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays which focuses on America's musical heritage. In addition to well-known music, the works of new composers and artists were performed. New York's foremost musical organizations participated in specially arranged programs.

Using land lines between the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and New York, WNYC is planning for an exchange of programs. CBS has been using the lines for United Nations reporting, and an exchange of four programs each way is reported in the planning stage.

KWSC----Washington State College, Pullman.

A dynamic noise suppressor has been procured. "We heard about it in October," Fred Hayward said, "just about the time that maintenance of high program standards without frequent repetition of preferred transcriptions was proving a real problem to us, as to many broadcast stations. The problem had been "solved" in the past at KWSC through the frequent use of commercial phonograph records, but unfortunately even the best of such records are characterized by a high background noise level; this is particularly apparent on high-grade receiving sets. KWSC was particularly interested, consequently, "Hayward declared, "in a demonstration on December 22 of a 'Dynamic Noise Suppressor' which promised to eliminate all surface scratching and remove the usual hollow base distortion without any sacrifice to the high frequencies.

KWSC announces a policy of feeding its best personnel into commercial radio. "We will have KWSC graduates contact the commercial stations; we will know the men and women well enough to give any manager a clear appraisal beforehand of the applicant's ability. Each one will have won an A.B. degree and have had a four-year college education. Farming out to commercial stations during summers, practical work engineering, working in music, traffic or production, announcing, newscasting on a regional, and intensive study under a commercially-backgrounded staff- these things will give interested trainees, we think, the showmanship and know-how which has made radio, cultured or not, the great force it has become. It will not harm, and it may help.".....says the manager.

WBKY----University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Elmer Sulzer, after reading the report last month says: "Don't you know that WBKY was never an FM station at Beadttville and ceased operating there completely three years ago, moved to the University campus in Lexington and started there as an FM station in March 1945? Tsch, Tsch." (Sorry, Elmer, your Editor was away those days.)

A teaching department headed by Sulzer lists courses as Radio Today, Radio Announcing, Radio Drama, Radio Regulations, and Advanced Radio Announcing. Courses in script writing and production are contemplated for next year.

WHA-FM----University of Wisconsin, Madison.

The first transmitter in the state-wide network of FM stations being set up under the auspices of the Wisconsin State Radio Council will go on the air at 12:00 o'clock noon on March 30. It will be located on the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison and will use 3 Kw. power on the 91.5 Mc. frequency.

WHA-FM will operate in close conjunction with WHA from the Radio Hall studios. A regular schedule of broadcasting beginning in the late-afternoon and continuing throughout the evening will be maintained. The late-afternoon programs will be carried simultaneously on AM and FM, until WHA is obliged to leave the air at sundown. This will provide an opportunity for a comparison of quality and coverage.

GOOD-WILL PLUS SERVICE

WOSU is setting a pattern which more of us might do well to follow. As the only institution of higher learning in the state which possesses educational broadcasting facilities, it is sharing what it has with its colleagues in the field.

In a program "College Cavalcade" twenty-one institutions are cooperating to tell this story. All colleges in the state were invited to participate. The format will be a brief round-up of the week's top news from as many colleges as can be covered in the weekly 15-minute show. The Ohio State University public relations office gathers the material for the broadcast and aids in publicizing the program throughout the state.

The "have-not" institutions---as far as radio is concerned---sometimes feel left out and perhaps a bit jealous of the schools which have their own stations. This is a chance to improve relations and an understanding of the job to be done. After all----no one institution has a monopoly on program talent.

PROPAGANDA ANALYSIS

From long experience they know how to do it! Spokesmen for the "industry" can concoct potions which make the late Herr Goebbels' efforts look puny. A recent speech on censorship-threats by one of them includes these: "The American tenet---un-American approach---alien outcroppings---bombastic individuals---smugly unconcerned."

Why not a few lessons in propaganda recognition---as we had it during the war?

FACILITIES AND THE FCC

WOI----- (Ames, Iowa) application granted for special service authorization to operate from 6:00 AM to local sunrise. (Feb.20, 1947)

Trustees of Indiana University--- (Bloomington, Ind.) Application accepted for CP for new 10 Kw. non-commercial educational station amended to use channel #220, 91.9 Mc. (January 28)

Tech. High School---- (Dade County, Miami, Fla.) applied for CP for new non-commercial educational FM station, 91.9 Mc. 250 watts (January 29)

Junto, Inc.---- (Philadelphia, Pa.) application for new non-commercial educational FM station amended to 90.1 Mc. 20 Kw. Accepted for filing (Feb.12, 1947)

WIUC----- University of Illinois (Urbana, Ill.) applications for CP to change frequency from 42.9 to 91.5 Mc. and install new FM transmitter and antenna system. (Feb. 18, 1947)

KSUI----- University of Iowa (Iowa City, Ia.) application for modification of CP for new non-commercial educational FM station to install new transmitter and increase power from 1 Kw. to 3 Kw. and make changes in antenna system. (Feb.18, 1947)

Board of Education----- (Toledo, Ohio) applied for new non-commercial educational FM station 250 watt power.

WNAD----- University of Oklahoma (Norman, Okla.) applied for CP to increase power from 1 Kw. to 5 Kw., DA, and mount FM antenna on tower. Make transmitter and studio changes. (Feb. 20, 1947)

WPTL----- (Providence, R.I.) application for extension of time for beginning operations of new non-commercial educational FM station. (Feb; 20, 1947)

Scanned from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters Records
at the Wisconsin Historical Society as part of
"Unlocking the Airwaves: Revitalizing an Early Public and Educational Radio Collection."



A collaboration among the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities,
University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Communication Arts,
and Wisconsin Historical Society.

Supported by a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from
the National Endowment for the Humanities



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