

Civil Group Plans Newspaper Study

FCC Inquiry Remains Quiet, No Hearings on Schedule

WHILE the newspaper-ownership inquiry remains in a state of suspended animation, with no further hearings scheduled since the brief appearance of Comdr. James G. Stahlman Feb. 12, and with every indication pointing to its actual termination at that time [BROADCASTING, Feb. 6], the board of directors of the American Civil Liberties Union announced last Friday it is making a study of radio station ownership by newspapers.

At the FCC it was indicated further hearings may not be necessary, though the record is still open for possible additional or revised exhibits. As soon as the hearing phase is formally closed, the record will be subject to study by the members of the Commission. This is expected to take at least several months. No decision of policy with respect to newspaper ownership is anticipated until late spring or summer, though in the meantime Orders 79 and 79-A continue in force.

Divergent Views

The Civil Liberties Union announced its own study because of the divergent personal views concerning the issue expressed by Morris L. Ernst and Arthur Garfield Hays, both general counsel of the Union, in their testimony at the FCC hearings. Mr. Ernst favored the proposed restrictions on newspaper-ownership whereas Mr. Hays took a position against the projected rules [BROADCASTING, Feb. 2].

"The public policy involved in the ownership of radio stations by newspapers," said the Friday statement by the ACLU board, "is being examined by a committee of the American Civil Liberties Union under the chairmanship of Quincy Howe, and its recommendations will be submitted to the board of directors shortly. The Union will examine it solely from the point of view of the effect of ownership on freedom of opinion. The Union has already commended the FCC for its order refusing to grant new licenses to newspapers during its current study."

Sues for J-E-L-L-O

SUIT by Don Bestor, orchestra leader, seeking injunction and \$50,000 damages, was filed last week in New York Supreme Court against Jeck Benny, NBC, General Foods Corp., and Young & Rubicam. Bestor claims to have originated the "musical" J-E-L-L-O, and alleges that the defendants converted the idea to their own use without his consent.

BLUE MIKE FOR FDR New Network Gets Place In White House

FOUR sets of network microphones instead of the usual three will face President Roosevelt when he broadcasts to the country Monday night. For the first time Blue Network will be represented as a separate entity, with Don Fischer assigned as presidential announcer.

Each of the other networks will have their usual setups and announcers on the job, with NBC-Red operating entirely independently of the recently separated Blue. Arrangements for the Blue operation were completed last week with Steve Early, White House secretary, by G. W. Johnstone, recently named director of news and special events of the Blue Network, and Kenneth Berkeley, NBC's manager of WRC, Washington.

White Suggests Stations Record President's Talk

ALL 127 affiliated stations of CBS last Friday received a message from Paul White, CBS director of public affairs, urging that they record President Roosevelt's Monday night talk, and all others of similar importance, for playbacks in case emergencies such as blackouts require them to sign off while such talks are on the air.

"Suggest that all stations," read Mr. White's message, "particularly those in coastal areas, where transmitters may be silenced by blackouts, should make preparations to record President Roosevelt's talk Monday night, and similar important talks in the future. Upon return to the air, stations could then play the recordings and thus perform a considerable public service."

Grant to Enter Army

PETER GRANT, chief of the WLW-WSAI staff of announcers in Cincinnati, and dean of news commentators in the Midwest, has been called to the Army March 9. Grant, whose real name is Melvin Meredith McGinn has been a member of the organization for the last nine years, coming to Cincinnati from St. Louis where he entered radio work after his graduation from Washington U Law School.

Mrs. Bowen Heads WIBX

MRS. MARGARET BOWEN, wife of the late Scott Howe Bowen, last week became president and treasurer of WIBX Inc., Utica, N. Y. Mr. Bowen, founder of commercial spot broadcasting, died at his West Palm Beach home last Dec. 22. A board of directors meeting to elect officers will be held in the near future. Elliott Stewart will continue as executive vice-president. The policy of WIBX will be similar to that established by Mr. Bowen, the new president said.

Rowe Is Honored By Radio Veterans

Pan-American Union Director, Bailey Among Recipients

IN RECOGNITION of the increasing use of wireless communication by the Latin American Republics, the Veteran Wireless Operators Assn., at its 17th Anniversary Dinner Cruise at the Hotel Astor, New York, Feb. 21, presented its Marconi Memorial Service Award to the Pan American Union as the representative of all Central and South American Republics. Presentation of the award plaque was made by William J. McGonigle, president of the VWOA, to Leo S. Rowe, director-general of the Union and guest of honor at the dinner.

Presidents Honored

Medallions, replicas of the main theme of the service award, were presented to the presidents of each of the 20 Latin American countries. Ceremonies were broadcast by NBC, which also recorded them for rebroadcasting to Central and South America. Dr. Rowe spoke in both Spanish and Portuguese for the transcription.

Honoring the thousands of radio amateurs now serving the United States, the Marconi Memorial Service Medal was presented to George W. Bailey, president of the American Radio Relay League and the International Amateur Radio Union. Other awards made at the dinner included the presentation of Marconi Memorial scrolls of honor to Robert Leslie Thorp, radio officer of the torpedoed freighter *San Gil*; Jack Berenbaum, radio officer of the tanker *Malay*, which was shelled and torpedoed but managed to reach port under its own power, and Staff Sergeant Larue Lockard, U. S. Army, who, endeavoring in his own time to increase his skill in using the radio locator, first detected the approach of Japanese planes to Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7.

Ted McElroy, world's champion radio telegraphist, with a record of 77 words a minute, received a Marconi Memorial Award. Dick Nebel, paralysis victim since the age of three, who last year received the VWOA scroll of honor, was awarded the Marconi Memorial Scholarship, covering the course in practical radio engineering given by the home study division of the Capitol Radio Engineering Institute.

Major General Dawson Olmstead, Chief Signal Officer of the Army; Dr. Rowe and William A. Ready, president of the National Company, were made honorary members of the VWOA.

CONSOLIDATED DRUG Trade Products, Chicago (proprietary), has started five-weekly half-hour transcribed hillbilly music on WENR, Chicago, 4:30-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Benson & Dall, Chicago, is agency.