

Open Mike

(Continued from page 38)

In the particular case, Judge Conger did hold the defamation to be slander *per se*, and hence within the exception to the rule requiring proof of special damage, but that charge and had nothing to do with was because of the nature of the its having been televised.

Of course, the case had nothing to do with political broadcasts either.

The courts have not held that radio is exempt from state law insofar as liability for defamation is concerned. A dozen states have passed legislation in this field. Whether Congress could constitutionally legislate on the matter of defamation by radio or television is not clear.

John W. Willis
Fischer, Willis & Panzer
Dupont Circle Bldg.
Washington

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Our attorneys tell us that Barrister Willis is probably right. Our purpose was not to argue the laws of slander and libel, but rather to point up the need for uniform legislation which would safeguard the broadcaster and telecaster. Whether Congress can constitutionally legislate in this field ultimately must be determined by Congress and the Supreme Court.]

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Doodle Contest

EDITOR, BROADCASTING:

... The idea occurred to us that there are many exceptional doodlers in this vast radio field. So,



The winning "doodle" in a contest conducted by WEOA.

why not give these frustrated "Dalis" a chance to compete in what could be a very enjoyable contest. . . .

Elliot Warren
Promotion Director
WEOA Evansville, Ind.

Editorial Gets Hay

EDITOR, BROADCASTING:

... Editorializing has its hazards. One morning recently I said on my observations on the news that to my knowledge our paid County Fire Department had not saved so much as a bale of hay in its costly three years of existence.

The county department provides a dozen political jobs for patron-



Mr. Oberlin and his bale of hay.

age, and has been embroiled with volunteer fire departments of Jefferson County since it was established. The volunteers have proven efficient enough, as a matter of fact, to win fire insurance rate reductions. Pretty sizable ones.

So, the next day at noon there was delivered to my office a bale of hay with this note attached:

"This is the bale of hay you said the County Fire Department didn't save. And there is still more for you. You can use this hay to feed that bull you put on the radio every morning."

It was signed, "Mr. Tax Payer's (sic.)"

After discussing the care and feeding of ether wave bulls with Farm Coordinator Frank Cooley the following morning, the hay was put out to pasture.

Richard Oberlin
News Director
WHAS Louisville

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TV's 'Hurting' Power

EDITOR, BROADCASTING:

Television hurts AM.

Television hurts FM.
Television hurts movies.
Television hurts legitimate theatres.

Television hurts baseball.
Television hurts football.
Television hurts basketball.
Television hurts wrestling.
Television hurts boxing.
Television hurts the family dinner.
Television hurts the pocket-book.
Television hurts the eyes (and sometimes the ears).

And now television hurts the trolley car business! (local transport company cites television as reason for decreased patronage and losses in seeking to increase rates!). . . .

Why in blazes do you and Arthur Godfrey persist in promoting television? You're driving the country to the dogs faster than the Comies.

H. Charles Kaetel
Chief Engineer
WAUX Waukesha, Wis.

GDYNIA LINES

Justice Replies to O'Connor

REQUEST of a Congressional subcommittee that the Justice Dept. investigate radio propaganda activities of the Gdynia America Shipping Lines drew a mildly responsive reply from a high department official Dec. 29.

Peyton Ford, assistant to the Attorney General, wrote Sen. Herbert R. O'Connor (D-Md.), chairman of a Senate Judiciary Immigration subcommittee, that the shipping line and Dr. Zenon Kosidowski, who prepared and edited radio scripts for Polish programs, are registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Dr. Kosidowski is an agent of the Polish research and information service.

Sen. O'Connor's group charged that the line has used facilities of American stations "for the purpose of engaging in Communist propaganda . . . far beyond the scope of legitimate business enterprise" and called on Justice Dept. and FCC to probe its activities. Programs were aired on WHBI Newark, N. J., and WEDC Chicago [BROADCASTING, Dec. 26, 1949]. No reply has been received from FCC, spokesmen said. Meanwhile WHBI has dropped the broadcasts.

The Justice Dept. made no mention of initiating a probe, and pointed out that registration statements and exhibits are recorded in the public file. Included is a detailed statement on the shipline's activities and descriptions of the broadcasts, it added.

FORMERLY heard on WJR Detroit for period of 14 years, *The Hermit's Cave* returns to station, Sunday, 10:30-11 p.m.



ABERLE STORY

KELS Uses Local Sense

KELS Kelso, Wash., only eight-weeks old, was out in front with the news that 16 year-old Ruth Aberle, lost four days in a densely-wooded area, was safe. Credited with sound reasoning which won the day for KELS, is Manager Claire Banks.

Mr. Banks, already faced with problems typical to a brand new 250 w independent outlet, used some fast thinking and knowledge of the local scene to compete with the area's major newspapers and stations. He reasoned that since the long search had not brought results, the teen-age girl probably would be found away from the concentrated search area. His hunch proved to be correct when Ruth was found by ranchers 11 miles from the combed region.

Break for KELS came when the sheriff's secretary, who received the first call of the news, remembered the station's staff members who had kept in close contact. She telephoned Announcer Russ Conrad,



Don Bailey, of KELS, interviews Ruth at the hospital.

who in turn signaled Chief Engineer Johnny Holmes to put the telephone conversation on the transmitter. Later, interviews with Ruth and the ranchers were recorded. At noon the next day, the whole town turned out to hear *The Aberle Story*, half-hour show made up from highlights of the week's tapes, and picked-up by receivers in Kelso's radio shops.

SESAC Inc., New York, has recorded large number of selections by Trinity choir of St. Paul's Chapel, New York. Discs will be distributed to SESAC subscribers.



FARM STATION?

Yes! For almost a quarter-century our entertainment and services have been planned for farmers in Kansas and adjoining states.

WIBW The Voice of Kansas
in TOPEKA