

Part II

The Billboard



NETWORK PROGRAM Reviews & Analyses

Rating figures used are supplied by the C. E. Hooper organization. Data concerning advertiser expenditures, campaign themes, etc., is compiled by interviews with agencies and advertisers and is based on latest available information.



Mayor of the Town

Reviewed November 19, 1947

NOXZEMA CHEMICAL COMPANY

Raymond F. Sullivan, Adv. Mgr.

Thru Sullivan, Stauffer, Colwell & Bayles, Inc.

Mary Andrews Ayres, Acct. Exec.

Via ABC

Wednesdays, 8-8:30 p.m.

Estimated Talent Cost: \$7,500; producer-director, Harold Weeding; writers, Charles Tazewell and Leonard St. Clair; announcer, Frank Martin; music, Bernard Katz and his orchestra; cast, Lionel Barrymore (the mayor), Agnes Moorehead (Marilly) and Conrad Binyon (Butch).

Current Hooperating of the program..... 6.6

Average Hooperating for shows of this type (Dramatic)..... 9.3

Current Hooperating of show preceding ("Lone Ranger")..... 8.1

Current Hooperating of show following ("Vox Pop")..... 5.0

CURRENT HOOPERATING OF SHOWS ON OPPOSITION NETWORKS

CBS: "American Melody Hour"..... 6.5

MBS: Sustaining..... None

NBC: Dennis Day..... 10.8

ABOUT THE ADVERTISER

Radio commands by a wide margin most of Noxzema's advertising budget, which itself, as far as national radio accounts go, is on the small side. For the past three years, around \$450,000 has gone into radio time, with magazines averaging around \$120,000 annually. In 1945 the magazine budget fell considerably below—sinking to a reported \$60,000. Additional expenditures go for retail store promotion, but the extent is not known.

Mayor of the Town is the sort of radio venture which can, and undoubtedly will, go on for years, altho in doing so it adds lustre to none of the participants concerned. The sole exception to this, obviously, would appear to the Noxzema sales record, which, in view of the years the program has been sponsored by the same manufacturer, must be showing satisfactory results. This can be the only excuse for the program; it is therwise devoid of merit.

The entire affair on the evening caught was distressing, painfully so, and it is lamentable to observe the talents of a Lionel Barrymore (the mayor) and that sterling character actress, Agnes Moorehead (Marilly) being frittered away in so disgraceful a manner. From its very inception, almost every phase of Mayor of the Town is the most palpable of contrivance; stock characters, stock plot and the lowest grade of corn. Corn has never been a barrier to satisfactory programing, but when it gets as bad as this, it's inexcusable.

Skimpy Plot

The plot had to do with the mayor's reluctance to kill Horace, the family's pet turkey (dear, loveable creatures, turkeys) for Thanksgiving. Marilly wants him to; he's loath to. Then, because a seamstress at the local dry goods store has refused to make alterations on a dress Marilly bought somewhere else, Marilly has her fired. The mayor arranges to start the seamstress off on writing a book about the apparel foibles of some of the local charac-

Bouquet of Music

Ferd. Mulhens, Inc.

Richard Stern, Pres., Adv. Mgr.

Thru Kelly, Nason, Inc.

Vincent Galbo, Acct. Exec.

Via Partial ABC Network In New York, on WJZ

On WJZ, Saturdays, 10:30-10:45 p.m. Estimated Talent Cost: \$1,000; producer, Vincent J. Dalbo; director, Tom DeHuff; announcer, Gene Kirby; music director, William Brailowsky.

ABOUT THE ADVERTISER

This sponsor, manufacturer of "Sir" and "4711" toilet accessories for men, has not previously been known as a major national advertiser. Last year the firm spent slightly under \$20,000 for magazine advertising. In sponsoring "Bouquet of Music," Ferd. Mulhens, Inc., is using the owned and operated stations of American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and six of the web's affiliates.

An all-string orchestra, batoned by William Brailowsky, plucked and bowed its way thru a series of popular and light classical numbers on behalf of two men's toilet preparations, in a new series titled Bouquet of Music. While the program itself is relaxing listening, the arrangements sprightly and imaginative, it seems a peculiar choice of programing, titling and arranging to make inroads into the competitive male cosmetic market.

The scripting, too, showed a lack of appreciation of this subtle psychological barrier. Intro to Stardust talked about getting the show underway "on a heavenly note." Commercial, about halfway thru, talked about "six delightful scents," certainly not the kind of pep talk likely to make new customers out of listeners who have all their hormones. The pitch also seemed too long, and made corny use of harp behind the inevitable "remember the name."

Musically, the program does a better than average job. Numbers on the show caught included, besides Stardust, Orchids in the Moonlight, I've Told Every Little Star, Baracarolle and Begin the Beguine, the last-named used as a theme.

Sam Chase.

ters, including Marilly. Marilly repents and has the seamstress reinstated, but it looks as tho Horace is headed for the guillotine. Both as written and as played, the story was even more transparent than the synopsis would indicate.

Miss Moorehead, who has given memorable performances both in radio and films, plays Marilly with a leaden hand; the character emerges as a shrew and a harpy, with a grating, irritating nasal voice. Presumably the character was envisioned as a small town spinster with that old heart of gold, but it is presented devoid of any softness. As the mayor, Barrymore plays his part down his nose, as usual.

Commercials aren't overly obtrusive, dealing with the skin aid the product can offer, and are presented at opening, close and midway.

Jerry Franken.

The Dick Haymes Show

Reviewed October 23, 1947

THE ELECTRIC AUTO LITE COMPANY

H. D. Bissell, Adv. Mgr.

Thru Ruthrauff & Ryan, Inc.

Tod Reed, Acct. Exec.

Via CBS

Thursdays, 9-9:30 p.m.

Estimated Talent Cost: \$7,500; producer-director, Sam Pierce; writers, Tom Adair, Richard Conway; music director, Gordon Jenkins; announcer, Frank Martin; cast, Dick Haymes, Lina Romay, Cliff Arquette, Four Hits and a Miss.

Current Hooperating for the program... 7.1

Average Hooperating for shows of this type (Popular Music)..... 8.0

Current Hooperating of show preceding ("Mr. Keen")..... 9.8

Current Hooperating of show following ("Crime Photographer")..... 10.8

OCTOBER 13 HOOPERATING OF SHOWS ON OPPOSITION NETWORKS

ABC: "Willie Piper"..... 4.3

MBS: Gabriel Heatter (9:9:15)..... 4.1

"Real Stories" (9:15-9:30)..... 3.3

NBC: Al Jolson..... 18.8

ABOUT THE ADVERTISER

Electric Auto-Lite Company's radio budget has shown a steady, tho modest, increase in the last few years. In 1946 the figure amounted to close to \$900,000, as against approximately \$770,000 in 1945 and \$625,000 in 1944. Company's magazine budget is considerably less than the radio outlay, totaling about \$350,000 in 1946. The 1946 figure represents a drop of about \$45,000 from 1945 and 1944. In 1943, Auto-Lite spent about \$450,000 in mags. According to these figures, indications are that radio is doing a better job for the company than space. With automobile production gradually getting back to normal, it is felt that Auto-Lite might increase its radio budget measurably to keep pace of the expanding market.

Auto-Lite's half-hour variety show is a good, if routine, offering, providing pleasant musical moments by Haymes, Lina Romay, Four Hits and a Miss, and Gordon Jenkins orchestra, and fair comedy sketches with Cliff Arquette, all backed by a strong tho not obtrusive commercial pattern. That's about the size of it. Haymes struck this reviewer as more polished in his delivery than he was last year. Lina Romay, who always has appeared to better advantage in clubs than via the air, scored well on this show. Her tune was a lilting folk song, sung in Portugese.

One of the more titillating musical numbers on the show was the oldie, Vincent Youman's Hallelujah, from Hit the Deck. It was hauntingly done by the Four Hits and a Miss. Cliff Arquette drew a fair score of laughs with his trick vocal delivery.

Commercial copy on Thursday's session plugged various products, including batteries and spark plugs, with the latter getting the heavier play. Chief copy themes were "Switch to Auto Lite... the lifeline of your car," and the recurring blurb relative to the spark plugs being "ignition-engineered." It all involved repetition, but not an undue amount. At the close of the program there was a singing commercial with a very fetching lyric. It might, in fact, be advantageous to use this more often in the commercial pattern.

Paul Ackerman.

You and the Russians

Reviewed November 20, 1947

Sustaining Via CBS

Monday thru Friday, November 17-21 only, 6:15-6:30 p.m.

Producer and script editor, Dr. George Crothers; supervisor, Robert B. Hudson, CBS dir. of education; interviewer, Lyman Bryson. Guests: Ernest J. Simmons, Cyril E. Black, Percy E. Corbett, Philip E. Mosely and Walter Millis.

A laudable effort to clear some of the haze which has settled over Russo-American relations has been undertaken by Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in this week-long series titled You and the Russians. Of all the questions requiring a clear outlook today, probably none takes precedence over this one.

Each of the five programs of the series, conducted by Lyman Bryson, CBS counsellor on public affairs, had as guest speaker an expert in some phase of Russian life. The interviewees, in quite, non-inflammatory terms, set about, under Bryson's expert questioning, to clarify the culture, history, aspirations and strategy of the Russians. Admittedly, this is a task which should take considerably more than five 15-minute periods, at an hour which is not of the best for gaining the largest national audience. But the fact that a sober estimate even was undertaken during a period of near-hysteria makes the series unique and especially notable. Again, while greatest popular listenership could not be expected to be attracted to unadorned discussions of a problem which occasions screaming headlines in the daily press, those listeners who did turn on the CBS programs undoubtedly found them to have a calming effect.

Analysis of the Russians and their ideas maintained the American viewpoint thruout in definitions of liberty, freedom and other terms, semantics of which are causing international debates. But the absence of name-calling in the CBS series was conspicuous and constructive. On the Thursday program, for example, Russian strategy was examined by Bryson and Philip E. Mosely, professor of international relations at Columbia University. Mosely opined that Russian verbiage directed at American personalities or policies was a carryover of a technique used successfully at home to get jobs done, by alarming the people about a situation and solidifying them to rectify it. He gauged Russian leaders as feeling relatively secure from immediate military attack from this country, and using propaganda to eliminate complacency from their own people.

On the other hand, Mosely also pointed out that American reports of Russia's so-called dictation to her "satellites" can be over-exaggerated from day to day. He indicated that the leaders of those countries are friendly to Russian objectives and undoubtedly are formulating cooperative policies without prodding. In conclusion, Mosely said the Soviet leaders feel securely in command of their domestic situation, sincerely believe they have the formula to correct the problems of the world, and are not working on any "timetable" of conquest.

More programs along the same constructive line definitely are the order of the day. To make the points more clear and more popular, however, they could well take a more dramatic form. A better time slot, also, might help to bring this most important of all messages to a significant number of listeners.

Sam Chase.