

Washington Report

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters

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MAGNUSON BILL HEARINGS

On March 1 and 2 a varied group of witnesses drawn from commercial broadcasting, educational broadcasting, formal education, and the general public appeared before the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee to testify in support of the Magnuson Bill. Since identical legislation had been given hearings at previous sessions, effort was made to add to this record by bringing in those who could testify from first-hand knowledge of the difference federal funds for capital outlay would make as to whether channels in their areas became activated or continued to lie fallow.

Witnesses expected to testify on behalf of the legislation included:

John Burns, President of RCA

Mrs. Edmund Campbell, President, Greater Washington ETV Association

Donald McGannon, President, Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., Inc.

Mrs. Robert Hornung, President, Greater Cleveland TV Education Association

George Brain, Superintendent, Baltimore City Schools

Bernard Everett, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Newton, Massachusetts

Loren Stone, Manager, Station KCTS-TV, Seattle, Washington

John Schwarzwald, Manager, Station KTCA-TV, St. Paul-Minneapolis

Erling Jorgenson, Director, Montana ETV Project

FCC ITEMS

By the time you read this, the FCC may, at long last, have done something about the clear channel issue which has been an issue for 15 years. A decision is expected shortly on duplicating 12 of 24 clear channels or providing for selective breakdown of all 24. Several educational radio station operators are interested in the outcome as possibilities for improving their AM services. NAEB has repeatedly admonished the FCC that if a breakdown is made, two frequencies - one in the east, one in the west - should be set aside for educational use. This would permit addition of at least 50 or more educational outlets.

TITLE III

As a follow-up to the item last month re the MPATI-NAEB request for broadened interpretation of admissible TV receiving equipment, the USOE has added to the receiver and antenna used primarily to strengthen instruction in science, mathematics, or modern foreign language. "In those receiving areas and installations where connectors, amplifiers and inter-connecting co-axial cables are required, we will interpret these as extensions of the classroom receivers when acquired under approved projects....In those cases where separate receivers are required for other instructional areas along with science, mathematics or modern foreign language, the cost of such accessories...(including their installation) should be pro-rated in terms of the number of sets contemplated for purchase under approved projects."

Antenna towers and masts are not considered to come within the authorization for federal financial participation.

FCC APPLICATIONS AND ACTIONS

Recent filings before the FCC indicate a tendency on the part of the commercial interests to improve their technical positions by moving to lower channels, frequently at the expense of the educational reservations. As a result of petitions by

commercial broadcasters, reserved Ch 48 in State College, Pa., was exchanged for Ch 69 and reserved Ch 24 in Baltimore was exchanged for Ch 66. In Columbia, S. C., reserved Ch 19 was exchanged for Ch 31.

The Nebraska Council for Educational Television has asked the FCC to allocate Ch 4, 3, and 8 to Kearney, Bassett, and Albion respectively and reserve them for education, and in addition to reserve Ch 13 and 9 in Alliance and North Platte. This schedule is essential to their state ETV plan, which has been carefully engineered. Commercial interests have filed counter-proposals.

Ogden, Utah, which is now operating on ETV Ch 18, has requested Ch 24 for additional ETV service.

WHYY, the ETV operation in Philadelphia, which is competing in an assignment hearing with several commercial interests for Ch 12 Wilmington, won an important point this past week. The FCC ruled that "WHYY should be afforded an opportunity to show that the area to be served has need for a specific type of programming; that such need is not being met by the programming of existing stations; and that it would serve such need better than the other applicants." This, in effect, recognizes at long last that the educational and cultural needs of the community are on a par with the entertainment needs!

NEW COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

The new Commissioner of Education, Sterling M. McMurrin, is a firm believer in federal aid to education and has been a good friend of educational television. As vice-president of academic affairs at the University of Utah he has been the administrative officer to whom Keith Engar, manager of Station KUED, reports, and he has shown a sympathetic interest in the university's television development. McMurrin, a philosopher by profession, served as a consultant to the Fund for the Advancement of Education in 1958.

JOINT to JCEB

At a meeting here (Feb. 2) of the Board, the reorganized and reconstituted Joint Council added educational radio to its concern for ETV and adopted the new name of Joint Council on Educational Broadcasting. David Stewart, formerly Executive Director of JCEB, was named Secretary of JCEB.

Under the new arrangement the JCEB will continue to represent the educational establishment in policy determinations relating to educational broadcasting but, other than a secretary, will have no staff. Staff functions are being assumed in a cooperative arrangement by the Washington offices of the NAEB and NETRC.

JCEB members are the American Association of School Administrators, American Association of Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities, American Council on Education, Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Educational Broadcasters, National Educational Television and Radio Center, National Education Association, and State Universities Association.

WASHINGTON NETWORK ACTIVITY

See story elsewhere in this Newsletter. We welcome suggestions for developing the tremendous potential here. Your perspective out there will frequently be better than ours here.

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