

BOARD DECREES SYNCHRONIZED WAVES FAILURE

Washington

Synchronization of high-powered stations, as exemplified by the matched crystal control of WEA-F-WTIC and of WJZ-WBAL, has failed, the Federal Radio Commission announced, after holding a hearing on the application of the stations for permission to continue the experiment beyond June 15th. Permission was denied.

WEAF, New York, has been synchronized for more than a year with WTIC, Hartford, and there have been conflicting reports as to the effectiveness of the experiment, the same being true of WJZ, New York, and WBAL, Baltimore, although interference was less, due to greater geographical separation. The New York stations are owned and operated by the National Broadcasting Company, while the tied-in stations have their independent frequency, which they used during hours of non-synchronization.

Impairment, Says Board

With low-powered stations better results might be obtained, the Commission found, but with high-powered ones the disadvantages far outweighed the advantages. A statement by the Commission set forth:

"The experiments have resulted in impairment and reduction of a substantial portion of the good broadcast service otherwise received in the service areas.

"Synchronous operation of broadcast stations is in a preliminary stage," the decision pointed out, "and it appears that experiments seeking its successful conclusion could be conducted with advantage over lower-powered stations with more flexible installations, and so located as to result in a minimum of inconvenience to radio listeners."

Both WBAL and WTIC are clear-channel stations, the Board finds, saying that it does not appear that anything is gained by synchronizing stations that in themselves have an excellent service area in densely populated territory. Such stations, it is held, should not be used for synchronization experiments.

No Solution in Sight

While the synchronization was not regarded by the stations themselves as perfect it was deemed to be sufficiently good to warrant further time and expense, and a plan was afoot to improve the transmitters and the synchronizing method so that the ideal would be more nearly approached.

"Even were the proposed equipment to function perfectly, serious and objectionable interference will still exist, since the solution of several of the causes for the interference arising from the synchronous operation of these stations has neither been found nor contemplated," said the Board.

Other stations were anxious to try a similar experiment. WBBM, Chicago, and KFAB, Lincoln, Nebr., were two of them. Besides, various other stations have had experience with synchronization, using different methods. Independent crystal control of the stations with a synchronizing Monitor between has been tried, also land wire synchronization, by sending a synchronizing frequency over the wire, as in the case of the WBZ-WBZA experiment.

It is expected that the WBBM-KFAB application will be denied.

Regional Stations' End is Foreseen

Washington.

It is the opinion of Commissioner Harold A. Lafount, of the Federal Radio Commission, that there are too many local stations, and that the number is bound to be reduced, as well as the number of regional stations, until there are few regional stations left, except in the sparsely populated regions.

Power of 250 to 1,000 watts characterizes regional stations, of which there are 285 on six frequencies, whereas there is about the same number of local stations on four frequencies, the power of locals being less than 250 watts.

Small stations now sharing time will consolidate, the Commissioner believes.

CHANGE IN PLAN OF RADIO CITY

Premier Mussolini's attention to detail was proved again recently when he studied the plans for Radio City, the great amusement and business center now erecting in midtown New York City.

A group of Italian business interests had favored taking occupancy of a nine-story building on the Fifth Avenue side, at Fifty-second Street. A delegation went to Rome to obtain the premier's approval. In this delegation were Hugh S. Robertson and Douglas S. Gibbs, representing John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who is financing the entire project through one of his corporations and Rinaldo Stroppa-Quaglia, representing the Italian business interests in New York. The delegation took with them a letter from Mr. Rockefeller to Il Duce explaining the whole project.

Premier Mussolini after studying the plan carefully expressed complete approval, and the delegation returned to New York for completion of the details of signing the lease.

The nine-story structure will be known as the Italian Building. It will be one of twin structures, the other to be known as the German building, leases for occupancy of which are now being signed.

A four-story arcade, fashioned after the arcades of Milan and Rome, will separate the twin buildings.

The twin buildings represent a change in plans, as originally a single large office building was to occupy this part of the 12-acre site. A tall office building will occupy the Fiftieth and Fifty-first Street frontage on Fifth Avenue.

Negotiations are still under way with the Metropolitan Opera Company for inclusion of the Opera House on this site, to replace the old building at Broadway and Thirty-ninth Street.

The entire development has been known as Radio City, but lately is being referred to as the Rockefeller Center, as the majority of the activities will not concern radio, although the tallest building, on the Sixth Avenue side, will be the RCA Building, in which RCA, the National Broadcasting Company, RKO and other similar undertakings will be housed.

The plans, except for the opera possibility, are now regarded as in final form.

ONE-SIXTH FOR TAXES

H. B. Richmond, of General Radio Co., Cambridge, Mass., points out that about one-sixth of the revenue of business concerns and individuals is paid out in taxes, directly or indirectly.

MONOPOLY SUIT GOES TO TRIAL OCTOBER 10th

Washington.

Warner Olney, Jr., special assistant to the Attorney-General, made a motion before Judge Niels in the U. S. District Court to have a trial date set for the government's monopoly case against Radio Corporation of America, General Electric Company, Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Company, and others. As a result the court fixed Monday, October 10th, when both sides will have to be ready to proceed.

The complaint has been filed and amended, and the answer has been put in.

The government charges the defendants with violation of the Clayton act in that by patent cross-licenses among themselves they have instituted a monopoly in restraint of trade, including the field of commercial communication by radio, set manufacturing and tube manufacturing.

Question To Be Decided

The question to be decided is whether the acts of the defendants are a violation of the law, in view of the licensing by the defendants of others to engage in the branches of radio business in which it is claimed a monopoly was created, and in further view of their ownership of some 4,000 patents, the result of their own development work and of purchase.

The defendants have denied the charges and have pointed out their minority share of the business transacted in the radio field, including set-manufacturing and selling, tube manufacturing and selling, and broadcasting.

The case is considered of vast importance to the radio industry, including broadcasting, for set and tube licensees desire the patents held by one group, otherwise they would have to deal with an assortment of owners. Radio Manufacturers Association, Inc., recently took the stand that the court should administer the patents, to protect present licensees and safeguard against the issue of more licenses than the field will tolerate, even if legislation is required to insure such protection, and independent of the outcome of the case.

Cites Official Incentive

The National Broadcasting Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of RCA, recently escaped penalty when the Federal Radio Commission decided that the clause in prior contracts with set manufacturers, requiring the makers to equip their sets initially with only RCA tubes, did not invoke the penalty of the Radio law whereby reissue of station licenses would be denied to NBC. The eight stations concerned were among the most important ones in the country.

The defendants have denied the monopoly charge and have set forth their specific reasons in detail, including as a defense that a representative of the United States government suggested the formation of a group to maintain a strong commercial position by an American radio concern for domestic and foreign activities.

VISION LICENSE DISFAVORED

Washington.

Denial of the application of the Shreveport Broadcasting Company, Shreveport, La., for a television transmitting license, was recommended to the Federal Radio Commission by one of its own examiners on the ground of failure to establish financial and technical equipment for such operation.