TIME FOR REASON about Radio

by Lyman Bryson

LYMAN BRYSON
CBS Counsellor on Public Affairs

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"TIME FOR REASON—ABOUT RADIO"

Here is the book, written from the broadcaster's point of view, about which I wrote you recently. I believe you will find it a valuable reference volume to add to your radio collection.

FRANK STANTON
President

THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM

TIME FOR REASON

About Radio

From a Series of Broadcasts on CBS

by

LYMAN BRYSON

CBS Counsellor on Public Affairs

Edited for Publication
by William C. Ackerman

A RADIO HOUSE BOOK

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TIME FOR REASON

—About Radio

RADIO HOUSE SERIES

1. *Who, What, Why is Radio?* by Robert J. Landry
2. *All Children Listen* by Dorothy Gordon
3. *The Radio Station: Management, Functions, Future* by Jerome Sill
4. *Time For Reason—About Radio* by Lyman Bryson

FOREWORD

ON DECEMBER 1, 1946, the Columbia Broadcasting System began a series of informal talks that were unique in the history of American radio.

It was the first time that a major network had used its own facilities to tell listeners, in an extended series of talks and discussions, about the problems and possibilities of radio in America as broadcasters themselves see them. Here was one of the major networks recognizing public confusion and criticism about radio, and trying to do something about it by discussing broadcasting as a public question.

The series occupied the Sunday afternoon "Time for Reason" period which Lyman Bryson, CBS Counsellor on Public Affairs, had filled for more than a year with his discussions of postwar political problems. Mr. Bryson was asked to convert "Time for Reason" into "Time for Reason—*About Radio.*" This he did for twenty-seven Sunday afternoons, until June 8, 1947, when he left for Europe and resumed his earlier discussions of political questions on "Time for Reason."

The idea of such a series about radio was proposed in the address which William S. Paley, Chairman of the Board of CBS, had made before the National Association of Broadcasters a few months earlier. Mr. Paley asked for more intelligent criticism *of* the industry, and for more activity *by* the industry in helping to provide the necessary background information for such intelligent criticism.

Appearing with Lyman Bryson on the opening broadcast of the series, Mr. Paley said in part:

> We have thought for a long time at CBS that the general public, the listening public for whom we do our work, does not really know very much about what we call the American system of broadcasting and that it is our own fault because we do not talk enough about our own enterprise.

The idea was well received by the critics, judging from their comments in newspapers and magazines, and by the general public, judging from the letters that CBS received. Continuing interest in the content of the series, on the part of many people both within the broadcasting industry and outside, has led to the production of this volume.

As developed by Mr. Bryson, the series was not an attempt to cover the whole wide range of radio broadcasting and its problems. The talks did try, in an informal way, to light up a good many of the more significant areas which listeners often ask about.

Mr. Bryson naturally drew most of his examples, regarding both programs and policies, from his long experience with CBS. Some of the chapters in large part reflect Columbia's approach to a particular subject, and not always the general practice of the industry. Such a subject, for example, is "Documentary and Actuality Programs," an area in which CBS has acquired special experience through the productions of its Documentary Unit and through other broadcasts of this general type.

Similarly, the series gave more time to problems and practices of *network* operation than it did to those of *station* operation. But the student of radio will find ample fact and comment applicable to stations and networks alike. The editor's pencil has not greatly altered the structure or the content of the series as it was broadcast, other than to try to make material which was intended for the ear a little easier for the eye.

The program made room for the appearance of several guests, to make certain that the series as a whole would achieve a full and proper balance of points of view. These guests included such representatives of advertising as Atherton W. Hobler, Paul West and Howard Chase; and such critics of radio as Charles A. Siepmann, Dr. Robert D. Leigh and John Crosby. Their remarks are well represented in these pages.

The measure of the success of this program, so far as CBS is concerned, has been the public response and the guidance obtained from listeners. CBS said, when it started the series, that broadcasting is a business controlled in its ultimate decisions by the people themselves. This book will make these talks and discussions available to many people, some of whom heard only a few of them, others of whom heard none of them, when they were on the air. Like the broadcast series itself, the book invites readers to join in the intelligent criticism and comment with which it is concerned.

WILLIAM C. ACKERMAN,
Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

New York, N. Y.
January, 1948

CONTENTS

Chapter I

AMERICAN RADIO: PROBLEMS AND ORGANIZATION

Broadcasting as a Public Question: Introduction to the Series

by William S. Paley

On the first broadcast, Mr. Paley set forth, in somewhat briefer form, the analysis of radio and its critics which he made in his address before the National Association of Broadcasters at Chicago in October, 1946.

Much more than academic interest attaches to this earlier address and, similarly, to the remarks which follow. For Mr. Paley's statement called upon the broadcasting industry to write a new code of program standards, and led directly to the formulation of new "Standards of Practice" by the National Association of Broadcasters less than a year later. These standards were under discussion by the industry, as of the end of 1947.

"Mr. Paley became the president of the Columbia Broadcasting System back in 1928, when CBS was made up of 20 stations," Mr. Bryson said, in introducing Mr. Paley. "Today, this system reaches 95 per cent of the people of these United States, broadcasting daily over 161 stations in almost every important community of the country. With his years of experience and his intimate knowledge of radio in all its phases, Mr. Paley—who now serves CBS as Chairman of the Board—will tell you why this series of broadcasts is being presented."

We have thought for a long time at CBS that the general public, the listening public for whom we do our work, does not really know very much about what we call the American system of broadcasting, and that it is our own fault because we do not talk enough about our own enter-

prise. This new series of talks on "Time for Reason" is one of the things we are doing about it, and for several months we have been planning this and other ways of getting the facts before the public.

Recently, the National Opinion Research Center conducted an independent survey. They were trying to find out what the listener thinks of radio. This survey, which was scientific and comprehensive, indicated that 82 per cent of the American people believe radio is doing a good or an excellent job. The churches, as a social institution, ranked next in public approbation, with 76 per cent of the people believing that they do a good or an excellent job, while the newspapers scored 68 per cent. The public school systems, on this same scale, scored only 62 per cent, and local governments only 45 per cent.[1]

Broadcasting is evidently an industry with a fine record of public endorsement. At the same time, broadcasting is an industry that suffers from a good deal of public criticism. Much of this criticism is marked by superficial generality, endlessly repeated cliché and snap judgment. Such is too often the technique of those who listen to only one or two programs and then set themselves up as radio experts. On the other hand, much of the criticism is honest and sincere. Taken all together, however, there is a volume of unfriendly comment which is disturbing the great body of radio broadcasters. How does it happen that an industry that has done so much for public service can nevertheless be under so much fire?

I believe that much of the answer lies in one of our special problems—a problem which confronts no other business, no other medium of information, no other medium of entertainment in America. It stems from the basic, extraordinary fact that private broadcasting in America must be two things at the same time.

First, and primarily, radio is a mass medium that must serve the masses. Next, and secondarily, it is a medium

[1] Results of the second NORC radio survey, conducted in 1947, are discussed briefly in a footnote on page 37.

that must also serve the specialized needs of minority groups. I said *secondarily,* and I mean exactly that. Yet we must recognize that the needs and claims of smaller groups upon our time have risen steadily with the growth and power of radio.

Now, as to our primary job, I think we broadcasters can be *militant,* not *defensive,* about it. Here I want to hold up to candid inspection one of the fundamental premises upon which many of our detractors stand. I do not think they have reasoned it out, and yet from it springs a whole battery of charges against radio. This premise is usually expressed in some such terms as these: "Radio is supported by advertising—advertisers want only mass circulation—that is the reason why most radio programs ignore the interests of smaller groups and are aimed only at reaching audiences measured in the millions."

This premise simply will not stand the light of day. It is both specious and dangerous. Let us leave the advertiser out of it entirely for a moment. Let us remember that we exist to serve the people. Is it conceivable that in a democracy governed by the will of the majority of the people, broadcasting should not be responsive to the popular will —the will of the majority? To me it's as unthinkable as that the owners of American baseball should eliminate the sport of millions and substitute cricket matches or chess games!

We can—and this is my point—be proud, not defensive, on that vital issue. Let me make very clear what I mean. First, we have an obligation to give most of the people what they want most of the time. Second, our clients, as advertisers, need to reach most of the people most of the time. This is not perverted or inverted cause and effect, as our attackers claim. It is one of the great strengths of our kind of broadcasting that the advertiser's desire to sell his product to the largest cross section of the public coincides with our obligation to serve the largest cross section of our audience.

Now what about the minority groups? I believe we

should be just as honest in recognizing and serving their *secondary* claims upon our time. I am no political philosopher, but we all recognize the simple truth that you cannot have a healthy democracy without minorities. You cannot even have democracy. The vigorous existence of minorities is not only inevitable, it is necessary to the democratic process. Deny them or suppress them, and you have dictatorship.

This is not to say that I have the slightest sympathy with some of our critics who apparently want public discussion programs, political talks, symposiums, social controversy, and so on, to take the place of popular entertainment. Those critics condemn us for "catering to the masses." They ignore the common-sense fact that people will not listen to programs which they do not want, and sometimes do not understand, any more than they will buy a magazine or a newspaper which is unintelligible or foreign to their tastes.

When I offer this as an explanation of our situation and suggest that it meets some of the criticism, I do not want anyone to think that I believe that all is well in radio, and that no criticism levelled against our practices and our record is justified; or that we should cater to the lower levels of taste. I believe a part of the criticism *is* justified, and that it is both a responsibility and just good business to maintain the highest levels of taste in all our programming, whether it be addressed to the largest or to the smallest groups.

I have not been speaking, you see, against critics and criticism as such. Criticisms are useful to us in doing our work. In a democracy, we not only expect but encourage the citizens to express dissenting views, and Americans need little encouragement. Essentially that is healthy. So I am not complaining against complaint. I am asking, however, for something more. We need listeners who can discriminate.

I want to emphasize as strongly as I can the importance of intelligent discrimination. I should like to see people

angry, when they are angry, at *particular* stations, *particular* programs, *particular* offenders, and not at all radio. When a citizen cancels his subscription to a yellow journal, he does not condemn all journalism. Instead, he switches to a more responsible sheet. That is intelligent discrimination, and that is what is often lacking in radio criticism.

Some of our intellectual critics become abusive if they turn on their radio and do not find their current intellectual enthusiasm being debated at the moment. They apparently see no reason to inform themselves about radio programs, although they go to great lengths to inform themselves about offerings in other fields.

I believe that much of our trouble comes from the fact that radio is so convenient, and that it costs the listener nothing to listen. As a result, he often fails to appreciate the worth of what he is getting, and his demands become unreasonable. The music lover who will queue up for five hours to get a gallery seat for an opera or a concert is likely to be the very one who will attack radio because Toscanini or Rodzinski are not standing by in the radio station to begin waving their batons the minute he flicks his radio on. If minority groups would take one-tenth as much trouble getting what they want from the radio schedule as they willingly take in getting what they want from magazines, newspapers and books—as well as from concerts and lectures—I believe we should be applauded rather than criticized.

I want to make it clear that we welcome fair, informed, discriminating criticism. At the same time, we fear any changes in the present American system of broadcasting that will make anybody but the listener himself the judge of what he is to hear on the air. There has been much talk recently about the danger to freedom of the air that might develop out of government censorship of radio programs. There are too many examples of this sort of thing in the world today, and in the world of recent years, for us to think it could not happen to us, also.

But government program censorship can never occur

without the consent of the American people. Therein lies our real court of appeal, as well as our ultimate source of confidence. It is equally true that a *free* radio cannot survive without public consent and approval. Such consent and approval can be seriously endangered—in my opinion, are being endangered today—by valid criticism which goes unheeded, by malicious criticism which goes unanswered, and by lack of information.

Recently in Chicago, before the convention of the National Association of Broadcasters, I expressed my belief that a part of the current criticism of radio is justified, including advertising excesses. At that time, I recommended that the industry create and enforce a new Code of Program Standards. A code of this nature should be applied to all broadcasting, and should prohibit those practices which are detrimental to radio as a whole. Not a code that would limit or narrow, but one that would stimulate and encourage the whole industry to broader accomplishments on a still higher plane. It should enhance all stations subscribing to it and raise serious questions about the stations which offend against it.

On the other hand, we want intelligent thinking about radio from all the kinds of listeners there are in the American public, because we try to serve you all in so far as that is possible. But we want you to know what you are talking about; we want you to know more about this business of broadcasting. You can then make your judgments on the facts. So we have asked Lyman Bryson, CBS Counsellor on Public Affairs, to devote this program, "Time for Reason," for a period of several months to broadcasting as a public question. Mr. Bryson will give you what he and all of us at CBS think is the pertinent information. We will welcome your letters and comments. We believe that the ultimate decisions about radio will be given through the informed opinion of the people themselves.

General Considerations

by LYMAN BRYSON

For some time now, as Mr. Paley told you, I am going to talk about broadcasting. It has been my work to talk of public problems, especially about questions of international politics, and I am going to turn for a while to broadcasting because it is a public concern of a special kind in which great things are at stake. Of all the ways of communicating ideas and emotions and information to great numbers of people that modern engineering has made possible, broadcasting reaches the most people most quickly. By radio one voice, one sound, can reach many millions at the same moment. President Roosevelt once spoke to sixty-two million people in one broadcast, probably the greatest single audience any man ever had.

By the sound of one voice a country or a great part of the world can be bound into a unified brotherhood. In fact, the enormous single countries that now exist, of which the United States is an example, probably could not exist as political units if modern transportation and modern communications had not been developed while they were spreading. The ancient empires, sooner or later, fell apart for lack of communication, among other reasons, but a modern nation like this America, three thousand miles across and a thousand miles from north to south, can be more closely united, can move more swiftly and effectively as one mass of one hundred forty million people, than even small states could a hundred years ago.

The telegraph, the telephone, the railroad, the automobile, the airplane, and cheap print all helped to link localities together and make the great community possible. Broadcasting is the latest link in that binding chain.

So broadcasting is important because it is a vivid and swift means of communicating to a whole country and tends to make a whole country one feeling and thinking unit. But it is important, also, because it is potentially dangerous as well as useful. The gadget in front of a

broadcaster, this small microphone here before my face, that brings my words to your home, is after all just a gadget. It is without judgment. It has no morals. It will transmit hatred and lies as swiftly and accurately as it will communicate any truth or wisdom that may be available.

Thus the microphone may be dangerous because a neutral machine, by which one man can speak to millions, can get into the *hands* and carry the *words* of the wrong man. That has happened. Hitler might never have been set up as dictator of Germany if he had not made effective use of broadcasting. Nobody can say that even here in America every word that has been spoken into this neutral machine has been wise and helpful.

On the other hand, broadcasting can do immense good because it can bring men together and make a great country greater; but it can do that only if it is rightly used. That makes it a *public* problem. It is a *private* problem also, of course, because it is a business. Most of the machines are privately owned. There are stations owned by educational institutions and by cities. They will be discussed later. Most of the stations in the United States are the privately owned commercial stations that I am now talking about.

Radio waves, however, cross over state boundaries and span the entire country, so the government regulates radio broadcasting as it does other means of interstate communication or interstate commerce. By this regulation each broadcaster is assigned a position on the dial and is limited to a certain transmitting power, because otherwise there would be intolerable interference between various broadcasting stations. In fact, we had this kind of interference before 1927. In that year the first Radio Act was adopted by Congress. One of the tests laid down by Congress for radio broadcasting is that it must be operated in the public interest. Both the public and the private nature of broadcasting must be taken into account, if we are really to understand the American system of broadcasting. It is the

kind of enterprise that is to be carried on in the public interest.

There are, of course, other ways of managing broadcasting. In some countries, the government completely controls the air. In many of these countries, the radio carries only official propaganda, and opposing viewpoints are kept off the air. In other countries, both public and private stations and networks appeal to the listener. Our first task is to understand our own system: private management under public license.

Up to now, the men who manage the business of broadcasting have, with only occasional exceptions, declined to use their own facilities for the discussion of broadcasting problems. Other channels of public communication have fought their fights with one another, or with the government, or with some segment of the public, or even with individuals, by the use of their own facilities. Newspapers and magazines have fought for the freedom of the press and against competition in their own columns, and publishers of books have used books and pamphlets to tell their story. The freedom of the pulpit is preached from the pulpit itself, and the scholar defends his academic freedom and fights his academic battles in the classroom if he chooses to. Broadcasters have not used broadcasting as a medium for similar purposes of their own. There has been no law against their doing so. It has simply been the custom to fight their fight by other means.

This series that I am beginning today is not really a break in that custom. It is not going to be a series of apologies for broadcasting nor for the record and intentions of CBS. But it will, I hope, give to anyone who cares to listen the facts that will make it possible for him to make up his mind for himself about what should be done with this great and potentially dangerous invention. To accomplish the purpose, it will be necessary to tell what certain policies are and the reasons for them. I will talk about some of our problems at CBS and what we are trying to do.

There are several questions that have been discussed, pro and con, almost since the beginning of broadcasting, twenty-five years ago. First, there is the problem of taste. By taste, we mean the whole range of preferences in music, stories, drama, humor, and even in argument. What do people want? Do they want what is good for them? Who, besides the people themselves, has any right to say what is good for them? Has broadcasting had generally a good or a bad effect on taste in drama? In music? In humor?

I think it is important to say, as I shall say at much greater length later on, that broadcasters know a great deal about what their listeners like and do not like. They can make mistakes in judgment, no doubt—all human beings do—but broadcasting is a modern form of communication, a modern institution, and it has learned from the beginning to use practically every modern device that anybody has been able to invent to determine just what its audience is listening to, and why. More of that later.

A second problem is the use of broadcasting to help a free self-governing people to govern themselves with more intelligence and success. Does broadcasting give the people who listen enough information, and the right kind of information? Does discussion on the air make issues more clearly understood or more confused? Do we choose the right spokesmen for important causes, and do all the really important causes get a chance? We know that listeners are concerned about these problems of taste and of enlightenment, because they write letters, thousands of them, praising us, blaming us, asking us why we do not do something that would better meet the preference of the writers or would be good, they think, for the general public.

A third basic problem that seems to broadcasters to have the greatest possible importance is the problem of freedom. Who should decide what goes on the air, and how should that judgment be exercised? Many broadcasters think this problem is more important than the general public realizes. That is not really surprising, since freedom of the press is discussed and thought about mostly

by editors of newspapers. Freedom of the pulpit is the concern of preachers. Freedom of the classroom is the business of those who teach. To many of you, the freedom of broadcasting may be a new question, not precisely like any of these other kinds of freedom, but in its effect on our civilization it may well prove to be one of the most important of all the problems we shall have to face. If we are going to find an answer to the problem, it must be freely talked about.

The first fact to be put down as a basis for the consideration of these problems has already been stated. Broadcasting in the United States is a business, and it has a total of net sales, to the agencies and advertisers who buy time on the air, more than $300,000,000 a year.

What do broadcasters make, or buy and sell? In the first place, broadcasting deals entirely in sounds. There are sounds beautiful, or ugly, or merely indifferent; sounds enticing, or stirring, or reassuring, or inspiring, or amusing. But always, sounds. This microphone, as we now use it, cannot convey any visions to the eye or appeal directly to any other sense than the sense of hearing. Later on will come widespread popular use of television, and what we have learned in dealing with broadcasting sound will help us to put sound and sight on the air together.

These sounds that come from our studios over air waves into your homes and motor cars, or wherever else you set up a receiving set, are devised to hold your interest and, if possible, to capture your responsive loyalty; and the bills are paid by advertisers who want you to buy something. If listeners did not buy what is advertised on the air, the American broadcasting system would soon collapse. By merely stating this fact, I have made it evident that problems of all kinds are involved. I hope to take them up, one at a time. The listeners in 35 million homes that have radios have paid many millions of dollars for their sets but, of course, that money does not go to the broadcasting companies. It goes to the manufacturers and distributors of radios. The programs are paid for by advertising.

But the financial questions are not the only ones. They may not even be the most important. How the use of sound for conveying ideas and emotions affects art forms and intellectual habits is another problem—or set of problems. What is the effect on a drama when you can hear, but cannot see, the characters? What is the effect on the discussion of a controversial question when the arguments are presented by disembodied voices to which you listen in the familiar surroundings of your own living room? The merchant of sounds, the broadcaster, must study these effects because he cannot afford to bore or displease too many people. He has no hold whatever on his listeners except the interest he can arouse by these broadcast sounds. It is very easy to switch a dial and tune us out.

The broadcaster is in the business of purveying sounds that will discharge his public responsibility, in the public interest, convenience and necessity, and, if a large number of people listen, he is a successful business man as well as the faithful steward of a public trust. Is that the only criterion of his success then: the number of people he can get to listen? We at CBS do not think so, for reasons to come later, but it is obvious that radio is a mass medium and should be used generally, if not always, only for those kinds of programs that large numbers of people want to hear. What is a large number of people? The most unashamedly highbrow program on the air, our "Invitation to Learning," a discussion of the world's greatest books by distinguished scholars and critics, has over a million listeners. There are popular programs on CBS that have more than twenty times as many.

How do we judge between a million and twenty million? We do not try to judge between them. We try to meet the preferences of both groups, because both groups are important. But it is still necessary to remember that mass communication is not the best nor the only instrument for conveying messages to a few. There are other ways of meeting those needs. For this, as for many other reasons, all forms of broadcasting are democratic art and cannot, under present conditions, be anything else.

By purveying the sounds that millions want to hear, the broadcasters have built up in one generation a great American business. How big? If you measure it by the number of dollars the broadcasters take in each year, it is large, but not one of the giants of American industry. The annual sales of two big department stores in New York City, added together, make more than the total receipts of the entire broadcasting industry. If you measure it by the number of people employed, it is rather small.

If, however, you measure this broadcasting business by its importance and influence in American life, it may well be the most important business we have. It is certainly worth talking about and thinking about and, as we go on in this series, we hope to give you the equipment of facts by which your thinking on this subject can become better informed. Out of that thinking the broadcasters can hope to get the public response and the public guidance which they need when they try to run a system which is controlled, in its final decisions, by the people themselves.

Networks and Stations

Turning to more detailed discussions, Mr. Bryson began with the predominant pattern of American radio, that of network and station relationships.

This is fundamental information on which later discussions rest. While the chapter lights up many facets of the affiliation of stations with networks, it gives special emphasis to one subject: the responsibility of the local station owner in determining what the listeners to his station may hear.

The man who just opened this broadcast was my friend, Joe King. As a network announcer, it is his business to greet you and, later on, to tell you what you have been listening to. Just ahead of us you probably heard an announcer say something about CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System, and someone told you the call letters, the name of the station in your own community to which you are listening. These words and letters are signals to engi-

neers, to a whole staff of engineers scattered all over the country to pull the switches and change the programs. The announcers have also identified the network and the station, the network which originated the program, and the local station which brought it to you.

Few people outside the business know what a network is, or anything about the relations between networks and stations. But it is impossible to understand broadcasting in the United States without knowing something—at least a few facts—about the networks and the stations that make them up and also, of course, about the other stations that are outside the network organizations.

There are more than 900[2] commercial broadcasting stations now licensed and working in the United States. Some of them are owned by individuals; some by newspapers. Some of them are owned in small groups by corporations formed for the purpose of running broadcasting stations. The individual station, however, is the responsible agent for what it puts out on the air, no matter what business affiliations it may have or who owns it. The station to which you are listening is responsible for what you hear.

It is important to keep clearly in mind this matter of individual responsibility because, in its editorial responsibility, a local broadcasting station is somewhat like a newspaper. The publisher of a newspaper, for example, is responsible for what he prints, no matter who wrote it or where he got it. He may get a story from a correspondent abroad, from a columnist, from a syndicate, or from a press service like the Associated Press, but *he* is still the person who publishes it. He makes it public. In the same way the station owner may broadcast something he gets from a network, or from a local speaker, or from a local advertiser, or from some national organization, or from the government, but *he* is still the person responsible for making it public, responsible to you, his own listeners. No one can take away his obligation to serve you and to respond, as well as he knows how, to your demands.

[2] More than 1600 by the end of 1947.

All this is important in discussing the arrangements of stations and networks, because the networks are often blamed or given credit for something for which the station owner should take the bow or the brickbat, as the case may be. For example, you can hear me now only if the manager of this station has decided that he wants "TIME FOR REASON —About Radio" heard in your town. If he decides that some local news event, or some local entertainment program, a speech by a local politician, or a health talk by a local doctor is more important, he can cut me off. In the same way, he can broadcast from his station any other educational or public-affairs program that he gets from the network or he can substitute something else. If he puts on a local program, the network has no responsibility, nor can it take any credit. If he puts on a network program, the network can be praised or blamed for creating it; he still is responsible for broadcasting it to his own audience.

Of the commercial stations, more than two-thirds are affiliated with the networks. The others are independent. The independents range from powerful stations, like WNEW in New York or KMPC in Los Angeles, to very small stations in sparsely settled communities. Most of the big stations are affiliated with the networks. What, then, is a network? We all know the names of the four national networks, NBC, ABC, Mutual and CBS, but the network's function and the limits of its operation are not so well known.

If the general public knew more of what we mean by a network, they would not write so many letters demanding that a network do this or do that and "make" the stations carry something some person wants to hear, when actually, the networks have no power and no means of persuasion to compel a station owner to carry anything. There is no reason why they should have any such control. The station owner does not have to account to the network for making his own editorial choice. He is still responsible only to his own home-town listeners.

In the early days of radio, the first stations were set up by companies that were interested in selling receiving sets. When they realized that nobody would buy receiving sets if there was nothing on the air worth listening to, they began to figure out ways of getting brighter and better programs. Moreover, programs had to be not only created but also distributed. A man in Boston, John Shepard III, had the great idea that was needed. On January 4, 1923, for the first time in history, the same program was heard over two stations at the same time. WEAF in New York and WNAC in Boston were connected by telephone lines, and for five minutes—five whole minutes—the same program was broadcast from both. It was a saxophone solo, a silly, romantic tune, and probably not many people were listening, but out of that five-minute period of popular music came the whole development of the networks. The National Broadcasting Company was incorporated in 1926; the money was put up by electrical interests that were manufacturing receiving sets.

A year later, the Columbia Broadcasting System began as the enterprise of a group of men who had no interest in the manufacture or sale of receiving sets, but who believed they could create programs. The American Broadcasting Co., growing out of the original "Blue Network" of NBC, changed ownership in 1942 and took its present name in 1945. The Mutual Broadcasting System began operations in 1934.

Each network today is a company, a business corporation that may own a group of radio stations. CBS owns only seven stations of the 161 which carry its programs. That is all, seven stations, but they reach by direct broadcast the territories around seven great cities. In those seven areas, they can appeal to many millions of listeners. But when you hear the network identification, "CBS, the Columbia Broadcasting System," that does not mean necessarily that you are listening to one of these seven stations that Columbia owns. It may mean that you are hearing a program which is carried by your local station because

that station is an *affiliate*[8] of CBS, that is, a member of the CBS national organization. Owned stations and affiliates both carry the programs that CBS creates.

Two other networks have similar organizations. The National Broadcasting Company also owns and manages a group of local stations, and so does the American Broadcasting Company, and both have their affiliated stations. The Mutual Broadcasting System does not own any stations. It is organized on a different basis, as a mutual program producing combination of independent affiliated stations.

The three networks that do own stations, by government license, manage them as does any other owner. They are responsible to the local constituency, the local listeners of each one; they try to understand and serve the local audience, remembering, as all good broadcasters do, that each local audience is two things at the same time. It is a local community, with its own preferences and prejudices and tastes, and at the same time a segment of the great national audience that wants to know about national and world events, and wants to hear programs of national popularity.

The network organization can do a number of things for its affiliates that they could not do so well for themselves. It is useful even to the largest affiliated stations, although they are powerful business units and can create outstanding programs on their own. The affiliated stations produce some of their own programs using local talent, putting local leaders on the air, discussing local problems, interpreting the news of the world in terms of the community as well as giving the news of the commu-

[8] An affiliate is an independent station which has contracted with a network to carry programs offered by the network within certain time periods. Compensation to the affiliate is an agreed portion of the station's rate for national network commercial programs, plus sustaining program service provided by the network.

"Sustaining program service" means the *unsponsored* programs which a network produces and furnishes to its affiliates for such hours as they may wish to fill in this way, rather than by locally-produced sustaining or sponsored features.

nity that is interesting to the people there. A good broadcasting station is a live and leading part of its home town.

It is the people in all the home towns together, however, every home town everywhere, big and little, that make up the American nation, and nothing can be of national importance that is not heard in these communities. The other side of the responsibility of a broadcasting station, therefore, is that it bring into its community the voices of the outside world, and for that more than two-thirds of the local stations have the help of a national network. If we had no national organization, such as the network provides, the President of the United States, for example, would be heard only in Washington, unless he toured the country. The great entertainment programs would be impossible. There would literally be no national radio audience.

A primary service of the network to its members, then, is to provide them with programs of national reputation and national or world-wide interest. The programs that are piped from network to local stations are actually carried on telephone lines, leased for that purpose, and it would be quite accurate to say that a broadcasting network is a network of telephone connections across the continent along which travels a constant stream of news, and drama, and music, and excitement, and laughter, and sober talk.

It will be very important to remember that, later on, when we begin to talk about how much broadcasting costs, and who pays for it, and how much better or worse they do it in other countries. We do have a costly system and a considerable share of that cost is paid out to buy the best, which is very likely to be the *costliest,* kinds of entertainment. Everyone remembers that part of it. But there are also enormous costs that are the inescapable result of the size of our country and of the attempt we make to bring the same national programs to all parts of the nation simultaneously by networks.

The networks operate across 3000 miles of the continent, so that they are compelled to broadcast in four time zones,

by four different clocks. It takes the sun three hours to get from New York to Los Angeles, but it does not take my voice that long. In fact, when it travels along the telephone wires from the master control room here in New York to the broadcasting stations anywhere along the route, it is heard practically at the same second, wherever it is broadcast. But as I speak here in New York at 1:30 on a Sunday afternoon, it is, at this moment, an hour earlier in Chicago, an hour earlier than that farther west, and still an hour earlier on the west coast. These conditions make difficulties.

Some network programs, like this one for example, may be transcribed by a station and played from a "platter," or record, later on at a more convenient hour. A popular variety program that appeals to a very large audience, a program in which large sums of money have been invested for writers and actors and musicians, is often broadcast twice, once early in the evening for the eastern part of the United States, and later for the West, so that each part of the national audience will get it at a reasonably good hour. This may be done either by a "repeat" broadcast with live talent, or by a transcription made at the time of the earlier program.

Not all broadcasting in the United States is done by commercial stations. Of the standard licenses now in use in the continental United States, at least twenty are granted to educational institutions, and a few more are held by church organizations and cities. The chief group outside the networks and the independent stations that are not supported by advertising are the university and college stations. Some of them, like those in the state universities of Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota and Michigan, have long and honorable histories of broadcasting programs conducted for the benefit of their territories. They are widely effective instruments of college extension. All these educational broadcasters are, of course, subject to licensing controls, under the regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, just as are the men who

run commercial stations. Moreover, they are like all other operators in being legally and morally responsible for what they put on the air. They are run on rather small budgets, and are paid for out of tax money or private endowments. Their achievements are the result of the personal skill and devotion of the men and women who manage them and put on their programs. There are, however, only 33 such stations now operating in the United States. They reach only a small part of the total radio audience.

There are more than 100 million [4] people in the United States who listen regularly to radio. Many of these millions scarcely know that the college stations exist, and most of these people listen to the stations which sell time for advertising. These are, therefore, the ones I am talking about. These are the independents which provide their local or regional services, and the many network affiliates which can link the remote listener with the chief centers for the production of programs. Washington is, of course, the center for important national and international news and for a good deal of political discussion. The network staff that CBS maintains there, for example, is large and highly trained, especially in the technique of public affairs broadcasts. Hollywood is the center not only of movie making but also a great center of music and drama and the other arts. Many of the radio shows that have the largest audiences are produced in the broadcasting studios there and are "fed" from there to local stations throughout the nation. But Hollywood, like Washington and New York and other cities, is also a center of thought and public affairs, where the network organization produces, besides entertainment, commentaries and documentaries. The network organization in Chicago, too, contributes to national program production. Those are the three centers outside of New York that do most of the producing of programs for the nation: Washington, Hollywood and Chicago.

[4] Almost 100,000,000 on CBS alone.

The number of affiliates has grown greatly in 25 years of radio history, not only because the total number of stations has increased, as the government has granted more licenses, but also because more and more stations have decided it was desirable to secure a network affiliation. It is the ambition of the industry, an ambition encouraged by the government, to give national programs to as large a part of the nation as possible.

This discussion should not be understood as overlooking the important role in American radio of independent stations, i.e., stations that are independent of network affiliation or ownership. Particularly in our larger cities, such stations have been able to establish distinguished programming services that have won the appreciative support of substantial listening audiences. Relations among networks and their affiliates are emphasized, however, as the predominant pattern of radio in this country.

Affiliation with a national system does not keep any station from going ahead with its responsibility to be the voice of the best and most interesting and most exciting events and people in its own home town. Affiliation does not make the station any less useful to its local community, as it brings into the homes of that town the music of the great orchestras, the laughter of famous comics, and the messages of the heads of governments and world-wide institutions.

Many programs produced by networks do not carry advertising of any kind and can be broadcast by the affiliated stations, as we have seen, as part of a network's sustaining service. This talk to which you are now listening is an example. A considerable part of the music and news and entertainment that you get is also sustaining service from the network. By their own choice, many affiliates carry sustaining programs in order to enlarge the extent and improve the quality of service to their listeners. One of the CBS sustaining shows, by way of example, is carried on 142 stations of the 155 affiliates to which it is available.

Another was carried last month by 128 stations. On more than one hundred stations, 6 or 7 network sustainers are heard every week.

In another sense, of course, it should not be forgotten that in carrying a public-affairs program of this sort the station may be paying substantially for it in another way. It may be true, and it often happens, that a local station will turn down some profitable local advertising, in order to carry a national public-affairs program; or it may make a very real sacrifice of another sort, even if it does not involve cash income: the local station may forego a chance to carry some local program which would not bring in any advertising revenue but would be of real service to the local community because it was for and about local citizens. To choose among the possibilities as a network affiliate is the station operator's problem. He asked for the privilege and the responsibility of exercising that kind of editorial choice when he set up his station, and he has to judge his success by the response and approval of his own home-town listeners.

From the standpoint of the network, the advantage of adding a new station as an affiliate lies almost entirely in the circumstances that determine what we call the station's coverage. What does it cover? In other words, what listeners now listen to it, or can be persuaded to do so? Its coverage is determined, of course, by the answers to three questions: Where is it located? How much power does it have? At what point on the dial does it broadcast? Some stations have machinery capable of sending a program out to only a small bit of territory, or perhaps to an area which is of great extent in square miles, but in which there are almost no people. Another station may be small, but located in a big city. Another may have a fifty-thousand watt apparatus and be able to be heard on a clear, cold night for a thousand miles. A new station is asked to join a network if through its broadcasting the network can send its programs to a substantial number of new listeners.

Some Notes on Advertising

The relationship of networks and affiliates, which brings national advertising revenue to a large number of local stations, leads directly to a more general discussion of advertising in radio.

This chapter shows the function of the network as an advertising agent for its affiliates; advertising as the support of the American system of radio; and how listeners look at this system.

Later chapters devoted to discussions with guest participants present the points of view of representatives of advertising and of leading critics.

A network also makes a station affiliated with it a part of a chain of local outlets through which a national advertiser can offer a program and sell his goods.

Each unit of time on each station is worth a certain price for advertising purposes. Radio time is usually divided according to the quarter-hour system. Programs may, for example, be fifteen minutes or half an hour, somewhat rarely three quarters of an hour, and sometimes a whole hour. The program offered by an advertiser is judged by the network headquarters on the basis of quality and probable popularity. If the network wants to carry the program, that is, wants to offer it to its member stations, the network is then, as I said, the agent whereby the national advertising campaign, which is part of the program, is distributed around the country to local audiences.

So the network, depending on its contract arrangements with its member stations, can say to an advertiser, "If you want to put such and such a program on the air, together with your advertising, and provided, of course, that you are willing to abide by the program rules and policies of the network, then we can negotiate for you with such and such stations or groups of stations, in all parts of the country, and, since prices at which these stations will sell their time have been fixed, here is what it will cost you to put your program on the air." Such transactions involve a variety of business arrangements with advertising agencies,

as well as with writers and actors and musicians and trade unions. A company that wants to sponsor a national network advertising campaign can, therefore, through its advertising agency, arrange for time on a hundred or more stations by negotiation with a single network.

A program that carries advertising and sells goods is, then, called a *sponsored* program, and the company whose products are thus offered for sale is called its sponsor. A program that is carried at the expense of the network or the local station is called a *sustaining* program.

A considerable part of each week's broadcasting time is not offered for sale and cannot be used for advertising. It is kept for sustaining use. The proportion of CBS network time given over to commercial programs, for example, is generally less than 50 per cent of the program time in any given week. This network, including all its operations across the country, is putting 23 hours of broadcast programs on the air every day, which amounts to 160 hours a week. Of those 160 hours, about 71 hours are commercial and 89 hours are sustaining. This is less than 45 per cent of the time given to programs that carry advertising.

A sponsored program may be entertainment, or music, or drama, or news, or talk, or sports, something that is intended to be good to listen to. It may be prepared by the network or by an advertising agency employed by the sponsor to handle his radio activities. At the beginning and the end of its time period, and sometimes in the middle, also, there is what we call a "commercial," advertising the sponsor's product.

The commercial sponsor pays for the whole time period: fifteen minutes, or half an hour, or an hour. This money from the national advertiser goes to the network and the network, which has to maintain most of the cost of leased telephone lines that make the national audience possible, divides it with the local stations that do the actual broadcasting. On the full CBS network, by way of example, a fifteen-minute period will cost the sponsor, for every broadcast, a price somewhere between $2,660 and $7,320, ac-

cording to the time of day when the broadcast is made. Naturally, a nighttime spot costs more, because more people then have their radios on. A half-hour on the full network at night costs $10,980. An hour costs $17,570.

The commercial sponsor also pays for talent. He pays the writers, the musicians, the actors, the announcers, the directors and all the other highly skilled people who make his show worth listening to, and if any of them are great stars, like Fred Allen, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Arthur Godfrey, or Jack Benny—I could go on over the familiar list of favorites—if he has one of these on his show, he pays a very large sum. The favorites come high. There are programs now on the air that cost more than $20,000 for talent alone, for each broadcast.

By buying the time on the stations and the services of talent, the sponsor can offer a show to which people will listen. For that, he gets the privilege of talking for a few moments about the goods he wants to sell. That privilege is allowed the advertiser only under certain conditions. One important limit is that he is not allowed to take more than a fixed part of the time for his advertising copy. On a 15-minute program on CBS, for example, he can take 3 minutes and 15 seconds if it is in the daytime, that is before 6 o'clock, but only 2½ minutes after six. In a half-hour program he can take 4½ minutes in the daytime, and 3 minutes after six. On an hour program, the advertising copy can take 9 minutes in the daytime and 6 minutes at night. On news programs it is less. The sponsors pay for the time and the entertainment to cover the whole period; they get what amounts overall to about 15 per cent of that time for their advertising copy. In actual practice, they take less, speaking again from CBS experience.

If you were listening this week only to our programs, more than half of them would be sustaining and would carry no commercial copy whatever. The rest of them would include an average of 2¾ minutes of commercial copy for each program. Of course, no station carries only network programs and the proportion of time given to

commercial shows, and to advertising copy on each show, differs from station to station. But on most stations the proportion of advertising will compare favorably with that of any newspaper or magazine; you can easily discover that for yourself. Try, for example, to find a newspaper that gives as little as 15 per cent of its total space to advertising —or 20 per cent or even not more than 40 per cent.

Those of us who work in broadcasting know that there are hot and frequent complaints about the commercials; and we know that there are good reasons for some of these complaints. The most common complaint, in all the letters that come in, is about some aspect of advertising on the air. A good many of our correspondents begin by saying that they know why we have advertising and realize that the costs of all broadcasting on the commercial stations of the country are paid out of advertising revenues. Some even say that they are grateful to the industries and business firms that bring them entertainment and ask only that their products get a hearing. But the advertising is objected to, nevertheless.

Of all the letters received recently by this program, a large sample was carefully studied by our research department, and it was found that 4 per cent said flatly that there was too much advertising on the air. Others were more specific—3 per cent singled out the singing commercials as especially objectionable. In fact, the singing commercials have become a scapegoat on which all the evils of commercialism and excessive advertising are heaped.

I have to confess that I do not altogether understand why the jingles arouse so much antagonism in their critics. The great majority of listeners seem to be mildly amused by them, and so far as my own listening tastes are concerned, I would rather listen to a jingle that tries to be amusing, even when it fails, than to a commercial that tries to be solemn and pretentious, even when it succeeds. But as we have all agreed long before this, there is no accounting for tastes. You cannot agree about tastes; you can only argue about them.

About 2 per cent of all the letters that have been studied complain that the commercials are too repetitious, and a smaller number say that we carry on the air advertising that makes dishonest claims. Two per cent say that broadcasters and advertisers both have too low an opinion of the listeners' intelligence.

It is important to remember, however, that the networks do not carry a very large total amount of advertising. That is a fact—and facts are what we are after, not just impressions. The quantity of broadcast advertising on network programs is reasonably small. The amount of advertising copy on each local commercial program is set by the local station for its local programs. If the station carries a larger proportion of advertising than the amount I have told you we carry on network programs, that is a matter of local responsibility and will have to be settled between the local station and its own listeners.

Sustaining programs—that is, programs that do not carry any advertising copy at all—have to be paid for. They do not have as many star performers, perhaps, but it takes writers and actors, and musicians, and announcers, and directors, and supervisors to put them on the air and keep them worth listening to. Some sustaining programs cost the networks thousands of dollars a week, not counting the value of the broadcasting time used. The "Columbia School of the Air," for example, on one hundred or more stations, costs this network, for program and administration, more than $7,000 dollars a week, over $200,000 for the half-year it is on the air. This is out-of-pocket expense.

Certain kinds of programs are not, as we put it, "for sale." We do not sell time for talks or discussions that have to do with controversial issues, or for religious programs.

To have *all* the costs of broadcasting paid for by advertising on *some* of the programs is a logical and efficient way to pay the bills. There are, however, other ways. There is the British method, for example, possible only in a country where radio is a government monopoly. If you lived in Britain you would pay a yearly tax for the privilege of

owning a radio. At the present time, the yearly amount paid as a tax by everyone who owns a radio—and the same amount, of course, for each radio owned—is one pound, approximately four dollars, a year. That is one way to do it. Or we could fix up your receiving set so that you could not get certain programs unless you put a nickel in the slot—"tax radio," or "slot-machine radio," as some say.

The method that got started in this country is the same method that we use in supporting our newspapers and magazines. When you buy one of those publications, you pay something for it—a few cents generally for a newspaper, a little more for a magazine, but in no case do you pay anything like the cost of getting the publication printed and into your hands. The cost, as we all know, is met through the advertising in the publication. Men who have things to sell pay substantial fees to have their advertising copy alongside the stories and pictures and articles in the magazine or newspaper. On advertising, the whole mass production and distribution system of the United States squarely rests.

Most of the people in the United States like this system —as a system. The investigations of the National Opinion Research Center that were mentioned by Mr. Paley in the first talk on this series, showed that only 35 per cent, or about 1 in 3 of the people queried, were interested in getting all their broadcast programs without commercials. A large majority (62 per cent) said they would *prefer* programs produced with advertising. Only 7 per cent said flatly that they wanted advertising taken off the air. But at the same time, those who did object to broadcast advertising objected very strenuously. The survey by the National Opinion Research Center included the results of more than 2500 interviews with different people, of all kinds, in many different parts of the country. They were all asked to state which of four alternative statements came closest to what they themselves thought about advertising on the radio. The four statements were as follows:

1. I am in favor of advertising on the radio, because it tells me about the things I want to buy.

   Twenty-three per cent marked this as the answer that expressed their own opinion. They liked advertising.
2. I do not particularly mind advertising on the radio. It does not interfere too much with my enjoyment of the program.

   To this answer 41 per cent agreed. This makes 64 per cent who accepted the first or the second answer; about two-thirds of the people liked advertising, or else did not care much one way or the other about it.
3. I do not like advertising on the radio but I'll put up with it.

   To this answer, 26 per cent of the people agreed. They merely tolerated the commercials, and, to those of us who work in broadcasting, even 26 per cent seems to be an uncomfortably large number.
4. I think all advertising should be taken off the air.

   To this 7 per cent agreed, and 3 per cent said they had no opinion.

According to the most comprehensive and exhaustive survey we have, the number who object strongly to the advertising they now hear on the air is evidently not a very large share of the listening audience; but they feel very strongly about it.[5]

[5] These general results were confirmed in the second NORC radio survey, conducted in 1947. But percentages varied, as between the two surveys, on some points. For example, the percentage of overall public approval of radio's performance was somewhat lower, in the second survey, although exceeded only by "churches" among a list of five leading social institutions.

On the role of the government in relation to programming, new information was obtained by the use of a more detailed questionnaire in the second survey. The results showed a majority of listeners favoring control of programming by the industry itself, as against government supervision of certain proportions or types of program content.

Chapter II

PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

After discussing the organization of American radio and how it is financed, the series devoted a number of separate talks to some of the general considerations of taste in broadcasting, and also to specific areas of programming and to specific policies.

Between several of these broadcasts, Mr. Bryson devoted whole programs to reading and commenting on letters from his listeners, letters of complaint and letters of praise. Some of this material has been incorporated, where it adds further information to a subject which he had discussed.

The following chapters do not attempt to treat all the subjects that might be discussed in what has been called the "fascinating radio business." Nor do they attempt to treat exhaustively the particular subjects selected. But the range is wide enough to cover many important aspects of the broadcasting enterprise; and the talks are detailed enough, and informal enough, to make these subjects good reading, as they were good listening.

The Broadcaster and His Audience

THERE IS A GENERAL belief, far too general, that broadcasters are so anxious to have only very popular programs that we cater to what is known as the lowest taste. It also seems to be believed that this "lowest taste" is something peculiar to certain classes or kinds of people. This misunderstanding of our efforts to meet popular taste is sometimes reflected in the letters that are written in by those who are listening to this series of talks about radio. It was shown in a remark made, not long ago, by the president of a western university who introduced a speaker on the subject of broadcasting with this remark: "Every time we educators plan something really good for the radio, some-

body tells us we can't do it because we have forgotten a character called Sophie Glutz, and Sophie Glutz has to be pleased."

When the distinguished educator made that remark, he was meaning to be mildly funny, of course, but he also meant to indicate that the broadcasters plan radio programs for people who have pretty low tastes. I do not happen to know anyone named Sophie Glutz, and if there is anybody who happens to have that name, she is doubtless a very nice person, but we might look at the imaginary character to whom the educator referred. He meant to indicate someone who cannot appreciate good things in music or drama, who is not interested in news, who would be bored by a broadcast debate on politics. Are there many people like that? What programs do they like? Have they any right to their own preferences?

Such people do exist. My own experience would indicate, however, that there are not many of them. Most individuals—the great bulk of the American people—have tastes, or preferences, that are neither very high nor very low. So-called average people have average tastes. They may find very intricate and unfamiliar classical music a little hard to take, and tune it out. On the other hand, they do not find the latest popular tune wildly exciting forever, and they get bored with that, also, after a few repetitions. When they are in a gay mood, they do not want solemn, serious plays, but they will not often listen to a broadcast drama when it gets silly or trivial or dull.

Then, among these "average" people are a good many who are *not* average—who are, in fact, far above the average in some of their preferences, and far below in others. They may never listen to a symphony orchestra, but they would not miss one of the great forums of the air. There are others to whom radio means good music and practically only good music. There is more variety of tastes in the radio audience than any other audience, because radio offers the widest range of possible enjoyment.

When, however, we talk about the famous programs

that have millions of listeners, we are *not* speaking of a special group. We are speaking of such an overwhelming majority of possible listeners that we have to think of these audiences as representing practically the whole American people, people of every age, kind, and character.

Take, for example, the most popular dramatic program on the air, the "Lux Radio Theatre." It is also the most popular hour-long program on the air. When the "Lux Theatre" is playing on CBS on Monday night, more than half of all the radios in the United States that are tuned in at all are tuned to that show. When a great popular comedian like Bob Hope or Jack Benny puts on a half-hour of fun, his share of all the Americans who happen to be listening to the radio may run as high as two-thirds. Two out of three of all the people listening to anything will be listening to a favorite humorist. It must be evident that such an overwhelming following is made up of people of all kinds, "high-brows" and "low-brows" and a vast number of "middle-brows," just average people.

Apropos of the old saying that there is no disputing about tastes, already mentioned, the real disputes as to tastes begin when we get away from the programs that are widely and generally liked. What is the responsibility of the broadcaster, the program maker, in trying to meet all these different ideas of what makes good listening?

His first responsibility, surely, is to remember that listeners are not all alike, and that not all kinds of good things can be equally popular. So, even on some of the commercial programs which carry advertising, and which have to sell goods if they are to be considered really successful, we do not expect huge audiences like the audiences of the great comedians. Symphony orchestras like the New York Philharmonic, when they are on the air, do not attract two-thirds of all the listeners. They do well to get 15 per cent, or one-fifth as many. And yet several of the great orchestras are broadcast as commercial programs. It is evident that their sponsors think they have a value in prestige, in institutional reputation, in public service, that

cannot be measured merely by the number of people who are listening.

The sponsors and the broadcasters would like to have more people listen to these fine symphony programs, of course, but they are reasonably satisfied if they can attract most of the people who like symphonic music—and if they do something more. That is, they want also to increase steadily the number of people who do like the best music. This brings me to what I think is the most important point in this matter of the broadcaster's responsibility to satisfy the preferences of listeners.

I would say that he has responsibility not only to meet tastes as they are, but constantly to improve them. Let me hasten to say that this is not any claim that the broadcaster knows, or has any business pretending to know, what is good for people or what they ought to hear. It is something much more humble; in the long run, it may be more useful. The broadcaster does not depend on his own judgment—he has several things to work with.

In the first place, he can command the help, and advice, and performance of most of the best musicians and actors and writers in the world—practically all of them. They know, if anybody does, what is great and lasting and—in the long run—the most satisfying, in all the arts.

In the second place, the broadcaster has an opportunity in the fact that everybody who listens has not merely a single preference, but a *whole range* of tastes. The average listener, for example, likes not only one kind of music, but several kinds. If he hears more good music, music at the top of his own range of interests, he is very likely to want more of that kind.

In the third place, therefore, there is the fact that most good things, really great things in any art, if they are given a chance, will make their own way with normal people. When you say that someone does not like a symphonic orchestra, it is important to be quite sure that he has heard a fine orchestra, not merely once, but often enough to find out whether he really likes it or not.

Not very long ago, a writer on radio in a magazine said, with reckless generosity, that a certain good debate program would have one hundred times as many listeners if it could be put on at a good evening hour. We can pass over the fact that the most popular program on the air does not have one hundred times as many listeners as any other program. Radio audiences do not differ in size by that much. The lowest ranking network program—lowest, I mean, in size of audience—will nearly always have ratings of from one to two points. The highest ratings seldom go above thirty points. This is quite a stretch, from one to thirty, but it is not a hundred times. It represents, as a matter of fact, just about the same difference that you will find if you compare a weekly magazine that is given to serious discussion of current affairs, and literature, and ideas, with one of the popular weeklies that are full of pictures and stories and articles of a less serious sort.

It is the normal difference between anything that appeals to a few and what appeals to many. It goes without saying that the audiences for radio programs of all kinds are always much larger than the reader groups for magazines. A serious discussion program on the CBS network may have what is for radio a very modest following, say 500,000 to 1,000,000 people every week. Most serious weeklies of comment and information consider themselves successful if each weekly issue is read by 50,000 people, one-tenth of the radio audience for a serious radio program. A radio news analyst who has a following far smaller than the following of a famous comedian may still have more listeners than there are subscribers or purchasers for any weekly magazine, even one of the great ones. Probably no magazine or publication of any kind reaches as many people each week as those who listen to the most popular radio programs. Broadcasting always deals in big numbers.

This does not provide an answer, however, to those who say that the good things are never on the air when they want to listen. "Everybody," they say, "listens in the eve-

ning, and you put on a good many things that are intended for serious listeners in the daytime."

It is true that a good many of our serious programs—not all but a good many—are broadcast by the network in the daytime. But before you come to any conclusions about that it is again useful to look at the facts. Remember the time zones. A program broadcast in New York at six o'clock in the afternoon will reach Chicago and the Middle West at five, the Rocky Mountains at four, and the Pacific Coast at three. Local stations make all kinds of adjustments to this time difference. If a program which comes at an appropriate time in the East reaches the West Coast at a bad time, it may be transcribed and rebroadcast later or at an earlier hour on another day. But the amount of such readjustment that can be made is limited by the local interests of the broadcaster and the demands of his local audience. He cannot make everything come at nine o'clock in the evening of the best day in the week!

It is a mistake, also, to think that no one listens to the radio except in the evening. When the "People's Platform" discussion goes on the air in New York at one o'clock each Sunday, somewhat more than 20 per cent and less than 25 per cent of all the radio receiving sets in the United States are tuned in to some one of the many programs on the air at that time. Their owners are listening to something on the air. From that time, in the middle of the day on Sunday, the number of sets tuned in steadily increases until nine o'clock in the evening when it may go as high as 47 per cent. But note that it practically never goes to 50 per cent of all radio sets tuned in at the same time. On week days the variation is about the same. During the morning, about 15 per cent of all the sets in the country will be tuned in. During the middle of the afternoon, it may go up to 17 per cent—less, you see, than on Sunday afternoon. But by five o'clock it will be up to 20 per cent, and in the evening it will reach its nine o'clock peak, somewhere above 40 per cent. Saturday afternoon

will be like any other weekday, or better, especially when some big sports event is on the air.

I know that those figures are confusing, and I am offering them only to show that the serious programs do not get such bad treatment as is often complained of. We are often criticized in letters, and sometimes by newspaper critics, for putting a good serious program on our network when a popular entertainment show occupies the same time spot on a competing network.

This question does offer a tough dilemma. The broadcaster is going to get into trouble with the admirers of serious music or drama or discussion, whatever he does. If he puts the serious program on in the afternoon, he will be criticized for offering it when nobody—at least, not the group of people interested—is likely to be listening. If he puts it on in the evening, it will have to compete with popular entertainment, and will not have much chance. He tries it both ways, puts some serious programs on in the daytime, and puts some on in competition with popular entertainment on other networks, but he has to accept either one handicap or the other. There is no good evening time, when a large proportion of the radios are tuned in, that is not filled with popular entertainment shows on some or all the networks. There is no daytime spot when *everybody* can be enticed to listen to the radio.

I have tried both horns of this dilemma in my own broadcasting. I have gone on with serious political discussions in competition with one of the best of the great comedians, and I have done the same program at a number of different daytime hours. I could not see that there was much choice. Size of audience remained about the same. If there was any difference, it was in favor of the afternoon time. The afternoon spot seemed to get me a better audience than the first-rate commercial spot in the evening.

Some of our critics have suggested that, in this country, we should try something like the new experiment launched by the British Broadcasting Corporation. They have a new series of programs running through several

hours of evening time, containing nothing that is mere entertainment. They read novels, perform whole plays, even if they run for several hours, and do all the other things that require more sustained attention and more serious interest than most broadcasting usually does, either here in America or in Great Britain. It is still too early in the experiment to say whether or not a large number of British listeners are going to like it. Some Americans believe that we should have more stations—perhaps even a whole network—devoted to more serious broadcasting. This is the kind of question that the public has not only the right, but the responsibility, to decide.

American radio brings the great things of music and drama into the market place and gives everybody a chance to choose for himself. The result is not, of course, that the best music gets as big an audience as the best variety program. But it means that in America more people, people of all kinds, listen every week to the best music than ever before listened to similar music anywhere in the world. Still more important, that number steadily grows because great art, as I have emphasized before, does make its own way with most people, if it is given a chance.

The truth is that as you raise your level of taste in music, drama, literature, or any other art, you find that you demand more, your expectations move up. Your taste gets to be more and more like the preference of listeners who have had more experience and training. This happens, of course, only if you are exposed to good things, to fine music, to drama that is stirring and real, to talk that is logical and thoughtful. If you have a chance to find out what fine things are really like, and you are an average person with average responses, you will demand them for yourself. If nothing is on the air but what is dull to your ears, because you do not understand it and have not had a chance to get acquainted with it—if, in other words, it is outside your range of tastes, then you do not listen and you do not learn anything. You therefore do not get any-

thing to enjoy. Above all, everybody's tastes in all the arts must depend on his enjoyment.

Since this is so, and I believe it is, the broadcaster has a clear responsibility to keep music and drama and entertainment, of all the decent kinds there are, on the air all the time to meet all the different tastes.

Some of the most popular shows on the air seem to me, as one listener, to be just tiresome. Others are, to my taste, charming and funny and very good entertainment. I do not expect others to agree with me, necessarily, and it is not difficult to discover, by looking at the ratings that show the size of audiences, that a good many of my fellow citizens do not agree with me about either the big shows or the little ones. But if ten or twenty million people listen to one show, it is evident that people want it. So the broadcaster and the advertiser, if it is a commercial show, keep it on the air. On the other hand, if there are fine programs, with or without commercial support, that please only a small number of people, but please that small and discriminating group very much, they also should stay on.

The good broadcaster has faith in both art and people. He sees the high-brows laugh and believes that laughter is good for them. He also sees more and more people, year after year, discovering that fine music and fine drama and fine discussion are not as high-brow as they might have thought. He knows that people learn by experience to prefer the good to the second-rate. He does not believe in any imaginary character called Sophie Glutz who has low tastes and demands that all radio be brought down to her level. If he is generous and sensitive enough for his responsibility, he offers the broadest possible range of choices and he hopes and believes that listeners will compel him, as time goes on, to offer still better and better things.

Gauging Audience Size and Listener Tastes

How do we know what programs are popular? How dependable are the figures on listening audiences? It can be said at the beginning that we know a good deal about listeners. It is probably true that broadcasters know as much about their listeners as magazines or newspapers know about their readers or motion-picture companies know about their audiences. In fact, we probably know more. Practically all the devices and inventions that have been created for the purpose of studying public reactions and attitudes are currently used by the broadcasters.

At the same time, it has to be said that, inside the industry, there is constant hot dispute on this subject. Some broadcasters, some advertisers, will swear by one method of investigation. Another will stake his judgment, and often a large investment of money, on another method. Several general statements, I think, can be made on this subject. One is that estimates of listening audiences are accurate for practical purposes.

When I say that the "Lux Radio Theatre" has an audience that is, on the average, twice as large as the audience of some other very successful evening radio shows, that would be about right. Both "Lux Radio Theatre" and these other programs have millions of people listening to them—of that we are sure. But if I tried to estimate, on the basis of the reports we can get, the exact number of people listening to each one, I might be just guessing. The comparative size of the audiences, however, is quite accurately known. When I say that a popular forum or discussion has about half the number of listeners that a first-rate news analyst gets, I am again about right, proportionately.

In this way it is possible to rank programs roughly in the order of size of audience. That standard does not, of course, measure their quality or excellence, except in so far as all radio tries for large audiences. We would not expect a discussion of public affairs ever to get more than about

half the audience of a popular singer. No programs are ever planned to get a small audience. What I mean is that all programs are planned to get the largest audience possible—the largest number of the listeners who want that kind of program. Five million people listening to a symphony orchestra would be a great success for classical music—twice as great a success as that many listening to a comedian.

One of our chief sources of information is the surveys, by telephone, of radio listening. Most radio listeners, when told that audiences are estimated on the basis of telephone calls, are likely to remark with some skepticism that *they* have never been asked by telephone about their listening habits, so they cannot believe that the surveys are very thorough. But people *are* asked and *do* answer. One company that is in the business of thus estimating radio audiences has in the United States reporting units situated in 36 key cities. In each of these towns there is a staff of women trained to interview radio listeners by telephone, and they are busy from 8:00 in the morning to 11:00 at night. It is estimated that 60,000 telephone calls are made every day. The first question is usually: "Were you listening to the radio just now?" Some of the telephone surveys ask the listener what he was listening to at the moment he was called. Others ask listeners to try to remember what they have been listening to over a given period of time. Listeners are also sometimes asked to identify the name of the program with the name of the product advertised because, naturally, advertisers want to know whether or not the commercial message is getting across.

Sixty thousand telephone calls in a day are a good many, but there are more than 35,000,000 radio homes in this country and it may still seem that this is a flimsy and untrustworthy sample to use in estimating audiences. And small as it is, even this sampling is expensive. Advertisers and broadcasters have to pay for the information on listening, but the telephone-survey method does give us a usable measure of the relative popularity of radio programs, at

least among the listeners who live in large cities and have telephones.

What about the people who say that no surveys can be any good because *they* have never been called, or because the samples are small? Well, you know that there are several public-opinion polls, those managed by George Gallup, for example, and the *Fortune* polls directed by Elmo Roper, and the polls of the National Opinion Research Center. They are constantly asking all kinds of questions of the American people, on all kinds of controversial issues and public problems, and they can come very close to an exact picture of public opinion. The test of their accuracy is, of course, their ability to prophesy, and the fact that they can generally come within 2 per cent of estimating correctly the votes of the whole American population in an important national election shows how good they are! But they do not get those surprisingly accurate results by trying to ask everybody in the country the same question. The dependable estimates that you often see printed in the newspapers or hear referred to in radio debates are based on quite small, but very carefully chosen, samples. An expert prediction on what the American people—the whole body of American citizens—think about some public question is often based on a survey of the opinions of not more than 3500 persons, but they are persons typical of a great many others. So surveys that are based on samples of the population *can* be reliable.

Another method of estimating popularity of programs is coming into use and may be much depended on in the future. This is a mechanical device that records what you do with your radio—what programs you hear—and thus tells the truth about your listening, whether you like it or not. I hasten to say, however, that such a device cannot be put into your receiving set without your permission. It cannot be used unless you permit an investigator to come into the house about once a month to take out the tape on which the record has been registered.

There are about 1300 of these machines now installed,

and they are scattered around the country, in all sorts of homes. The recording machines are put in many different kinds of homes, so as to get a picture of listening by the average American family. Unfortunately, such a machine cannot tell whether or not people are paying attention to a broadcast; it can only record that the radio is turned on.

These and similar devices give us a basis for estimating the size of audiences in relative terms. Of course, we want to know, and can find out, much more about the audiences than just their relative numbers. We want to know as much as we can about the way listeners tune in and out of programs, "shopping around" from one point on the dial to another. When a program has a good audience, how much is that the result of the fact that it follows immediately after another program that is well established in the affections of a great number of people? Do listeners remember the name of the product advertised on a commercial program, or do they only recall the names of the stars? When they listen to a discussion program, are they more interested in the subject, or in the people who are carrying on the debate, or in the liveliness of the arguments?

Broadcasting is a highly competitive business, and everything that happens is watched constantly by all those who are responsible for its programs and its policies. They want to know whether or not they are pleasing listeners and, if possible, they want to discover ways to make listeners both discriminating about programs and loyal to the stations that give them what they enjoy.

We have other ways of finding out not only how much a typical audience likes a particular program, but also what parts of any program a typical group will like or dislike. This is done here at CBS with the Stanton-Lazarsfeld Program Analyzer, a machine invented and developed by Dr. Frank Stanton, President of the Columbia Broadcasting System, and Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, Professor of Sociology at Columbia University. The machine has been built in two sizes, one for a selected panel of about a dozen listeners

at a time, and a much larger one, affectionately known in our Research Department as "Big Annie."

If you offered to sit in on one of these program-judging sessions, you would be placed at a table and would hold two buttons on the ends of electric wires, one button in each hand. The one in your right hand would be marked green, which means good, and the one in your left hand would be red, which means "I don't like it." You would listen with a dozen or so other listeners and keep your hands under the table, so that no one would know what you and the others were registering on the buttons. Then a phonograph record of a radio program would be played. You would be told not to push either button, if you were indifferent to a passage in the program, but to register whatever likes and dislikes you had, for any kind of reason, by pushing red or green.

Then you would see a chart of the program you had just heard put up on the wall, and it would show red and green lines that would trace the opinion of everybody present for each part of the program.[1] You would talk it all over, under the guidance of a skilled psychologist who would try to find out why you pushed red, and why you pushed green, and why you sometimes just sat there.

The research experts can then put on the desk of a program executive, or a producer, or an advertising sponsor, a program analysis that shows in general how good that program was, and just where it was good or bad.

Much useful information can be secured by playing a recording to ten or a dozen panels, making in all about a hundred people of various tastes and kinds. Or "Big Annie" can register the opinions of such a group of a hundred at one time. In the hands of a trained investigator, a machine of this kind reveals the tastes and preferences and prejudices and desires of typical listeners and of listeners of special kinds.

There are other ways, of course, of finding out the facts. We get thousands of letters every week, about all our pro-

[1] New refinements have since been made in some of these procedures.

grams and about programs in general. It is no longer considered safe, however, to guess at the popularity of a program by the volume of mail. For one thing, it seems to be true that people who like a program *moderately* will just listen. People who do *not* like it, *may* write letters, but it is certain that only those who feel strongly for or against *will* take the trouble to write. Some very good programs of a serious nature have been taken off the air, because nobody who liked them took the trouble to show any interest. But we do learn from letters.

We learn something too, from what we hear people say, although from experience we know better than to feel sure of the popularity of a program just because we hear our friends say they like it. We advise those who are critical of radio, or who are much interested in broadcasting, not to take the opinions of their friends as a trustworthy guide to public opinion. It is quite likely that most of the people you know are people much like yourself, and that they would naturally like the same kind of radio entertainment. There are many other people, however, whom you do not know, and they may like something else. The broadcaster should try every device he can think of to find out as much as he can about everybody because, if possible, everybody should be pleased by being able to find a satisfactory variety of programs on the air.

Editing and Policies

Nobody can buy time on the air from a network or a station and use it to please himself, either for entertainment or for advertising purposes. As I have been saying, whatever is broadcast is the responsibility of some local station. The network affiliate, for example, has legal responsibility for all the programs it carries, and must of course be responsible for the operations of editing and policy enforcement on its own local programs.

But what is offered through the networks to the stations for local broadcast must first pass through the network's

editorial control. The typical case is the program for an advertiser, produced by the staff of an advertising agency and then put on the schedule of a network in a time period for which the sponsor pays. Before it ever goes out from network headquarters to the stations for actual broadcast, it is carefully edited by the network staff. Not only the general idea, but each particular program is subject to network editorial control.

The advertising agencies, in these cases, often create the idea or the program, and hire the writers, the actors, the musicians, the announcers and everybody else who contributes to the show. That is, they can do this on CBS except in the case of news. News programs on Columbia are always produced entirely by the network staff. The advertising agencies act for the sponsor in dickering with the stations, through the network, for "a favorable spot," a good time on the air. But the show itself, the program, or series of programs, must pass through the network editing department.

There are four chief points on which the editors, acting for the network, may question a program offered by a sponsor or his agent: (1) The network, through their watchful readers, may refuse to carry the program, no matter how good it is, because it advertises something which the network believes should not be talked about on the air; (2) The network may refuse the program because of its character, for a good many different kinds of reasons; (3) It may refuse a program because the advertising copy, the commercials, are objectionable; (4) It may turn down a program because the commercials are too long. The length of the commercials is set by the network and the rules are enforced by the editing staff. In the same way, of course, independent stations set their conditions for the acceptance of programs and advertising, and network affiliates prescribe their standards on their own local programs.

Columbia will not advertise a laxative. A single example of many such programs refused by CBS would have added

over $500,000 to the annual revenue of the network and its affiliated stations. It was refused because it would have carried the advertising of a laxative. There is nothing wrong, legally or morally, with the business which that company carries on. There is no criticism of it implied in the refusal by CBS to carry its advertising. The decision, which is our continuing network policy, is only a matter of what we consider good taste, in relation to messages delivered in the living rooms of the nation by a human voice. We think good taste forbids the discussion of some subjects on the air. Other networks carry advertising of that kind and so do many independent stations and network affiliates.

The men who have charge of passing on advertising programs for CBS, for example, do not think of themselves as infallible in matters of taste or anything else. Matters of good taste are sometimes extremely hard to decide, and mistakes will always be made. But a network is an organization with a responsibility, and one of the ways to render an accounting to the public is to tell what the standards are by which such difficult matters are settled. For that reason I am stating the rules.

There are other things for which CBS will not carry advertising. Here are a few specific examples: None of our network programs will carry advertising for preparations to remove hair, or for deodorants, even though they may be effective and harmless; or any *drug* that authorities declare would be dangerous in general use; or any medicine that makes extravagant or impossible claims to cure disease. These restrictions are partly to protect listeners, partly a matter of good taste. We take no advertisements for hard liquors, such as whiskey or rum, and naturally CBS takes no advertising that deals in speculation, or gambling, or fortune telling. It might be well to note that matrimonial agencies are forbidden, for similar reasons.

There are still other things which this network will not advertise, although there is plenty of money, millions of

dollars, to be made by accepting them. Every network and every station has its own list of what it will take and what it will refuse. The lists of articles that are considered unsuitable for discussion and "plugging" on the air are somewhat different for each network, although they have many factors in common. The individual stations differ over a much wider range.

There are two other things, not goods to be sold, but valuable services to the listening public, for which CBS will not *sell* time. They are controversy and religion. This network believes that controversy and religion, enlightening debate about matters of current political and social interest, and church services should all be on the air in generous measure. As a matter of fact, they are generously represented on our network schedules, but on *free time,* not on time that has been bought.

Controversy, with one exception, is confined to the free discussion periods on sustaining time, because it is the belief of CBS that if time could be *bought* for argument, then the people who have the most money would inevitably dominate the arguments. As for church services, CBS believes that religion has a claim on a free and a fair division of time. The exception I mentioned is that, during a political campaign, time is sold to parties and candidates who have been duly nominated because they require, and should have, more time during these months than we can afford to give away. Otherwise, we do not sell time for controversy. And when we state this principle, we are asked at once whether big advertisers who have bought time for selling goods could not, if they wanted to, insinuate political or economic arguments into their shows and thus get across in subtle fashion the ideas they want people to believe. The answer to that is No, because editing control makes it practically impossible. The fact is, the advertisers almost never try it.

This subject of controversy comes under the heading of a network's editorial control over a program itself, irrespective of what is advertised. The advertising copy, as I

have explained, takes only a small part of the program time, 10 per cent or less in the big nighttime shows. The rest of the program, the drama or music or comedy, or whatever it is, could easily carry a message. How is it kept from taking a slant in favor of, or against, some proposition that is a matter of general public interest?

So far as is humanly possible, the network editors keep it free of bias, either intended or unconscious. Sponsors can buy time to sell goods, but they are not allowed to sell viewpoints on controversial questions. Nobody could be perfect in such a job of editing. The CBS editors certainly do not claim to be. It *has* happened that an advertiser, with a program on the network, has wanted to put a speaker into his show with the frank intention of stating the company's side, the sponsor's side, of some exciting issue. The speaker might be an eminent person, even a public official. He has a right to his opinions, a right to speak, and a right to be heard. So has the business man. But on time that has been purchased for the advertising of goods or services—the only things for which a commercial sponsor can buy time on CBS—neither the accompanying entertainment nor the sales message may be used for telling anybody's side of any case.

Sponsors have offered speakers or program material on taxation, on labor disputes, on legislation. In such cases, which are not frequent, the sponsor is told that he cannot do that on his commercial program, but, if the issue is of general public interest, then a representative spokesman may be invited by Columbia to present his viewpoint on free, i.e., sustaining, time. If he speaks on sustaining time, he may be answered by someone from another point of view. Free time can be kept reasonably well balanced between both sides of controversial questions.

The editing department is responsible, also, for keeping comedians from cracking impolite and suggestive jokes. Being funny is a tough business. Comedians and their writers are sometimes badly up against it for a laugh. The network wants them to be funny, because it wants them

to be popular. Their popularity is network gain. But the network editors have a more important responsibility, which is to keep radio wholesome so that anybody can listen to it, to keep it clean without making it either childish or stuffy. In this region of dispute there are many pitfalls and frequent disasters.

It goes without saying that libel and slander are kept off the air. It might not be so evident that it is necessary for the editors to examine all program material to guard against its taking what might be unwarranted or even dangerous advantage of listeners' emotions or credulity. Some material has to be turned down because—often without knowing it—writers have written lines or created situations that might be offensive to some religion, or race, or color, or group. This is a country of many different faiths and races and groups. They have a right to their own peculiarities and their own beliefs, and broadcasters have a duty to respect their differences.

A point that sometimes causes arguments between editors and advertisers is the list of claims made for a product. If it is a medicine, and it is claimed that the medicine will cure specific diseases, that advertising copy may be automatically ruled off the air. Other questions are not so easy to decide. What is a fair claim? What is a fair statement to make about a product as compared with its competitors? Remarks that are intended to disparage or run down the product of some other company are quite as objectionable as excessive claims for the particular product in question.

The sponsor wants to sell goods. The broadcasters want him to succeed. The broadcasters, however, have to think also of the listeners; they have to see that he continues to listen, and that he is protected. The staff members of the CBS Editing Department, who keep watch over these matters, have agreed after long experience that most advertisers can see their own long-run advantage in playing fair with the listener. If they claim too much, they risk disappointment and unpopularity. It is a sound principle,

pretty well understood in the radio business, that what is not good listening, is not good advertising.

The bill for time for national network advertising in the year 1945, on all our networks combined, was $190,747,000[1] and a little more in the year 1946. The advertisers accepted the rules, not always, of course, without argument, but almost invariably with understanding and as a necessary condition of reaching the national radio audience. Who were those advertisers? In 1945, for example, they had billings on CBS alone of $65,724,851.[2] This is a large sum of money, and broadcasting is a large business enterprise. But it is not, as I have said before, one of the giant industries of America. Some other industries, like railroads, telephone companies, and merchandising concerns, deal in much larger figures. Now, what kinds of business were the principal sponsors on CBS? Seven kinds of goods were advertised to the extent of well over $2,000,000 each.

First: Drugs and toilet goods	$20,800,000
Second: Foods and food beverages	$14,000,000
Third: Laundry soap and household supplies	$ 5,500,000
Fourth: Cigars, cigarettes and tobacco	$ 5,000,000
Fifth: Automotive products	$ 3,100,000
Sixth: House furnishings	$ 2,800,000
Seventh: Confectionery and soft drinks	$ 2,350,000

The other kinds of advertising scatter out in smaller amounts. The kinds of things that are usually sold in drug stores make up almost one-third of the total of CBS network advertising. Soap accounts for about one dollar in twelve, and tobacco for a little less.

In the setting of standards of program material and commercial copy the advertisers and the broadcasters both benefit, for they are seeking the approval of the listener, both as a listener and as a consumer of the goods advertised.

[2] Before certain discounts. These figures are known as "Gross Billings" and are substantially in excess of actual cash received. But they are commonly used to provide a similar base for comparisons with other media.

News on the Air

From the very beginning of broadcasting, there was news on the air. In fact, the first broadcasts ever made were of news events. It has always been evident that the radio, covering the world like a flash of light, is doing one of the most important parts of its job when it is telling people all over the earth what is new and interesting anywhere, almost as soon as it happens. CBS was the first to establish its own news bureau. It now has a news room with teletype machines clicking away the messages from correspondents and news services; with a switchboard that makes it possible for the Director of News Broadcasts, Mr. Wells Church, to sit at his desk and talk to CBS reporters all over the world; and with microphones that can be opened at any moment, cutting off another program that is on the air, to bring any piece of information that is important enough to be given to the listeners immediately.

There have been times when a radio reporter has "scooped" the world, as one day in 1936 when Cesar Saerchinger, then representing Columbia in London, sat at a microphone through which he could speak directly to the master control room in New York. There in London he got a signal from Parliament that Prime Minister Baldwin was beginning to read the message announcing the abdication from the throne of Edward the Eighth, and within a few seconds Saerchinger was telling that news to the network's millions of listeners in America.

Radio news cannot be as lengthy and detailed as news in the papers. In general, it sticks more closely to events of importance, like political happenings, or events of great popular interest, like sports. Most of the news is carried as sustaining service. On the CBS network about two-thirds of the news is sustaining; about one-third of the network news programs carry advertising under network rules.

Broadcast news always ranks high in the list of preferred programs, when listeners are asked what they like best on

the air. But news programs are a controversial question. Is the news unbiased? Are the commentators, or as we call them on CBS, the "news analysts," informed and fair? Should advertising be permitted on news programs?

Radio news has had a quarter-century of development, a brief but exciting history. In the beginning, in the 1920's, the newspapers and the news services turned over the news of the day to the radio broadcasters, and many a news reporter on the air had to do nothing more than read the latest editions of the papers and tell over the air what he had read. Listeners grew in numbers, and broadcasting became a more and more successful business, actually competing with the newspapers for the advertiser's money, as well as in getting news out to the public. In 1933, the newspapers and the news organizations stopped giving or selling news to radio stations.

It was then that Columbia set up its own news service and began to hire and train the reporting staff which has included, since then, some famous men. The regular news-gathering agencies, however, did not want broadcast competition on a warlike basis. For two years, several adjustments were tried out, but at the end of that time, in 1935, it was evident that radio stations and radio networks had about the same position, and ought to have about the same privileges, as newspapers or magazines or any other institutions by which the public was to be informed.

They could have their own reporters and did. They could, as in the case of the networks, send men abroad, as foreign correspondents; cover sports events directly; and watch politics and public events for chances to use their own special techniques such as an on-the-spot broadcast, which is not a record of what has already happened, but which gives the public an actual chance to listen in while an event occurs. The great news-gathering agencies decided to change the rules again and sell their information to broadcasters.

While this adjustment was being made, the listeners'

appetite for news was increasing, and the time given over to the news on network and local station schedules grew swiftly. In 1935, the proportion of CBS network time given to news was 3 per cent. In 1939, before the outbreak of World War II, it had increased to 8 per cent. At the peak of war interest, CBS was devoting 16 per cent of all its broadcast time to news, both sponsored and sustaining. Those were the days when the great tragic and triumphant stories of the war were being told by men who spoke within sound of the guns or from the planes over burning cities.

For the year 1946, the average broadcast time devoted to news on the network was approximately 15 per cent. This type is only network news. Affiliate stations carry some part of this, which they get either as a sustaining service or as part of a commercial contract. They often add news programs of their own. They may add accounts of events in their own territory; or they may have their own newscasters, who are liked and trusted by the audience of the station, and who give both local and national news.

This tremendous interest in radio reporting was expected to fall off as soon as the war was over. As a matter of fact, for the first year, the contrary happened; interest in radio news actually increased. There is less news on the air now, but many millions of Americans still want radio news, and will go on wanting it in a quieter, more peaceable world. The problem has changed. The broadcaster of any kind of news, nowadays, has a harder task than he had in 1942 or 1943. Wells Church, CBS news chief, puts it this way: "Postwar coverage of the news is complicated. There were great problems in covering World War II, with the sweep of armies across conquered nations, but the sheer work involved in fair, accurate coverage of the current labor-management differences of opinion, is much greater.

Whereas a man covering an advance of the front, during the war, had only to get his names straight and weigh

accurately the actual advantage gained, the same man today," Mr. Church points out, "must spend hours studying economic and political history to assure balance to his broadcast. During the war, there was but one side in the contest, so far as broadcasts were concerned—our side—whereas in peace reporting, be it domestic or international, there are *always* at least two sides."

Mr. Church is right. The reporting of political and economic events, the things that happen here and abroad that are full of meaning and, on that account, full of controversy, is a difficult business. It is easier to report who won a battle than to give the news of political debate—and this leads directly to the most important question in news broadcasting. How can he be fair to all sides of every question, or come as near to that ideal as is humanly possible?

[*This discussion of news will largely follow CBS practice and experience, which, in several important respects, are not representative of the industry as a whole. Mr. Bryson's statement can, however, readily be compared with the news policies and practices of other networks and of stations, as they are known to listeners. The reader can evaluate for himself the CBS approach to news, from his own experience as a listener, just as he does regularly in his own selection of news programs on the air.*]

Let me clear up one point at the beginning of the discussion of opinion and the news. CBS does accept advertising to go on a news program. An acceptable advertiser is allowed to buy the time and pay the costs of a news program and put his commercial copy into it but, because of the special nature of these programs, he must abide by additional restrictions even beyond those enforced in dealing with advertisers sponsoring other network programs. He is not allowed to produce, or influence, or have anything whatever to say about the news itself. News programs on Columbia are written and edited by the network staff, and no sponsor can change them in any way.

This principle is thoroughly understood by the adver-

tisers who buy time on Columbia. All sponsors of news programs sign a contract with the network which includes a careful statement of the policy. In the contract, we state the restrictions under which news programs can be sponsored, and in the following words we state the network's reason for offering news. This is a quotation from the standard contract:

> Columbia broadcasts news programs solely for the purpose of enabling the listeners thereto to know facts so far as they are ascertainable and so to elucidate, illuminate and explain facts and situations as fairly to enable the listener to weigh and judge for himself.

The advertiser has less time on a CBS news program than he would have on a drama or a musical or comedy show. His opening commercial can be only 25 seconds long on a 5-minute program. This rule is enforced, in order that the news reporter may get quickly into the news. The listener is not asked to sit through the reading of a long advertisement before learning what has happened. In a 5-minute daytime newscast, he can have a total of only 68 seconds, altogether, for his commercial; and on a 15-minute daytime program, 2 minutes and 36 seconds. After 6 o'clock, a 15-minute news broadcast cannot include a total of more than 2 minutes of advertising copy. We try to keep factual, accurate and fair both the news and the on-the-spot broadcasts of special events.

We also have news *analysis* on the network. We have broadcasters who tell not only what has happened, but what the events mean to trained observers. It is their business to make events clearer and more significant and in that way—but only in that way—to help American citizens make up their own minds.

In addition, we have a number of programs, none of which is sponsored, given over entirely to the freest possible discussion of controversial questions. On these discussion programs the speakers are invited guests, not the men who are hired to report or analyze the news. They

are qualified spokesmen for causes, for ideas, for important segments of American public opinion.

It is necessary to keep those three things straight: *news, news analysis,* and *free discussion.* We treat them differently, and expect them to accomplish different purposes.

The men who write the news and read it on the air are expected to be interested only in facts. They are expected to tell what happened. They are expected to select the news that is most likely to be considered important and interesting to listeners. They are reporters, men like Bill Henry, Bill Downs, Don Pryor and Larry Lesueur.

The news *analysts,* on the other hand, while they have the same responsibility of reporting the facts as have the newsmen, are not on the air primarily or only for the purpose of telling what has happened. They are to tell, if they can, why it happened the way it did, and what is to be expected next, and what well-informed and intelligent and representative people are saying and thinking about what has happened. This, you will see at once, is not the same as expressing their individual editorial opinions about what ought to happen. They avoid, in so far as possible, the expression of personal opinion and the recommendation of any kind of action.

The news analysts on CBS are not called "commentators," as those who talk about public affairs are called on many stations and networks, because it is CBS policy to ask them to give analysis instead of comment. This policy has been much debated during the past few years, often among people who have not thoroughly understood the purpose of Columbia. CBS does not wish, nor intend, to try to prevent spokesmen on talks or discussion programs from speaking their minds or enjoying freedom of speech; it is, however, contrary to our policy to permit a CBS news analyst to use his reputation, and the sympathy which his personality and his knowledge of events have created for him, as a means of getting listeners to take his opinions as facts. He is hired to be a news analyst, not a special pleader. The names of men who have made their reputa-

tions on CBS programs . . . men like Edward R. Murrow, Quincy Howe, Eric Sevareid and Joseph C. Harsch . . . are enough to answer anyone who thinks that this policy prevents vigorous and honest men from bringing timely discussions of current controversies to their listeners.

There are plenty of such honest and dependable analysts on other networks also, of course, and many of them on local stations. Some of the best have been at one time or another on our staff. All they were ever asked to do here, according to this network policy, was to analyze the facts, not try to influence public opinion.

So men who appear regularly on our news and news analysis programs, all of them members of the network staff, are instructed and expected to be balanced and fair and moderate. And they are. They are not less popular or helpful to a thinking public on that account. It is believed by Columbia, after a good deal of experience, that our policy in this respect best serves the public. We ask reporters who are giving the news not to take sides in controversial issues, but we believe quite as much as anybody in freedom of speech. We believe that controversy between protagonists of different points of view has a definite place on the air, and we provide for this in our discussion programs.

Talks and Discussions on the Air

News programs state the facts. The news analysts undertake to tell what the facts mean. The talks and discussion programs give spokesmen from the general public the chance to say what the people think. By this combination of three kinds of programs, a network like CBS tries to meet one of its chief responsibilities, the responsibility to enlighten and inform and to provide the channels by means of which Americans can compare opinions, study their problems, and make up their own minds.

This is the reason for the fact that the spokesmen for conflicting opinions on our discussion programs have very

seldom been employees of CBS; they are almost always invited guests. It is the reason, too, why we do not, except during a political campaign, sell time for controversial discussion. We think that a fair balance among different points of view can be maintained only if we do not allow anybody to buy time for controversy and thus possibly, as remarked earlier, to dominate the arguments. Time is sold for advertising, not for dispute.

I said that there was one exception. A word more about that. During a political campaign, the candidates and parties quite properly believe that the listening public will have more interest in political arguments than they have at other times. For the same reason, the political parties think they should have a chance to use more air time in the evening than is generally given to discussion, because it is in the evening that most people are listening. So they are allowed to buy these evening spots at the usual commercial rates. Also, during campaigns, we make large amounts of sustaining time available, even if we have to cancel commercial programs. When we are not immediately approaching an election, politicians and public officials get their reasonable share of free time for the discussion of public questions, and are invited as we would invite any other spokesmen for causes and ideas.

The President of the United States has always been given the full radio facilities of the country, if he asked for them to make an official statement. That is, of course, when the President is acting as head of the state, and not when he is speaking as a candidate for office. He is sometimes heard on all four networks at the same time. It is very rarely that anybody else is carried on all the networks and all the stations at the same time.

When the President speaks, at a time agreed upon with the networks involved, the programs normally heard at that time are cancelled. The network and its affiliated stations give up the revenue which they would have received for the advertising that has been cancelled. More than that—the network also in many cases pays the full

wages of all the persons involved in the program who did not get their chance to earn their pay, including the musicians, the actors, the announcers—all the talent. This is a real contribution to public service in money, as well as in time.

There are many other occasions, also, when the networks and affiliated stations sacrifice revenue for the sake of some public event of importance. In a time of intense public discussion of an issue, a single speech, carried by the network and offered to all of the affiliates who wish to carry it, will, on occasion, cost the network ten or fifteen thousand dollars, by cancellation of advertising and by payments to talent, as well as the cost of the special program produced to cover the event. The contribution of the networks and the stations made in this way, in connection with a great event like an armistice or the death of a leading statesman, may cost the broadcasting industry many hundreds of thousands of dollars in a few days of special programs. I am not giving you these facts and figures as any claim upon the sympathy or concern of the listening public. These are facts, that is all, and they are related to this subject of public information.

CBS sets aside a certain number of regular periods for speeches and discussions arranged by the Talks and the Education Divisions of the Program Department. We also stand ready to cancel any commercial or sustaining program, for the opportunity to bring to listeners some word of the utmost importance from an important speaker.

These, however, are the occasional events. More important is the steady maintenance of regular discussion. The Talks division—using CBS examples and experience—is directed on the theory that there are at least three kinds of speakers who ought to be heard. First, there is the public official who has an important announcement to make like, for example, the Secretary of State. Second, there is the qualified person who knows a good deal concerning something the public wants to know about and ought to know about—like Ira Hirschmann, for example, whom we

asked to talk about his mission to Europe for UNRRA. Third, there is the spokesman for an active group that is trying to sway public opinion on behalf of some worthy cause, like R. O'Hara Lanier, whom we asked to talk about Negro youth in the United States. Whenever any one of these speakers is put on the air, of course, we accept a further obligation toward public information. If his subject or his presentation of it is controversial, we undertake to provide comparable time, in so far as this is possible, for presentation of other viewpoints, and try to get for them the same audiences as were reached by the original speech.

Then, each week, we have five regular programs at which two or more invited speakers—not CBS staff members, but guests—debate the issues of the day. One of these, "People's Platform," once had four guests, as a rule. Now, for the sake of clearness in thought and forceful difference in debate, it generally has only two. Generally, also, the men and women who speak are freshly in the public eye as the spokesmen for differing points of view on questions that matter to everybody. Robert Nathan, who estimated the business future for C.I.O. and announced that industry could pay higher wages and still make a profit, was confronted on "People's Platform" by Ralph Robey, economist for the National Association of Manufacturers, who denied the practical soundness of Mr. Nathan's recommendations. On that same platform have been cabinet ministers and a Vice President of the United States, judges and legislators, foreign statesmen and diplomats, cab drivers and carpenters, housewives, students, soldiers and business men. We try to get spokesmen who express opinions that are representative of some important section of American thinking, spokesmen who will talk freely and effectively but who will at the same time follow the rules of fair give and take.

There are broadcasters who believe that a radio debate should be lively, even if it has to be vicious. They generally use the word "showmanship" to justify turning a discussion into a battle between personalities. Sometimes

they are able to point to good listening audiences and reputations as their reward. I can remember the office conference, more than six years ago, at which the management of Columbia decided that noise and angry words did not settle questions wisely, and that, for the sake of enlightenment, we should give up that kind of showmanship. We decided we were willing to lose listeners, if we had to, in order to do more in clearing up the thinking of those who stayed with us. The interesting result of that decision was that our discussion programs did not lose any audience, so far as we could find out, and the programs were much more useful.

It is not always possible, in days of tension and hatred, when public questions are so dangerous and confused, to keep anger and the wrong kind of excitement out of these debates. But our guests have always been told that we want to help people to think, not to put on a gladiator's show, and we have even said that we have no objection to a general agreement. In fact, we welcome agreement, if our guests discover that they can all come together on some conclusion. Millions of people still listen to our discussion programs.

On the other hand, we have never believed that debates which are too full-dress and formal—too much "produced," in the broadcaster's term—will stir up much real thinking. Moreover, I think it should be stated, in so many words, that our discussion programs are not expected to settle, finally and forever, the questions discussed. They are designed for a different purpose, a purpose which we hope will eventually lead to the wise solution of these problems, for the discussions themselves are intended and designed to help listeners to think for themselves. They are planned to help those who listen to understand what the important problems are and why they are important, to learn what solutions are currently suggested and what arguments can be offered to back them. In short, the discussion programs are aimed to assist in the most important process in

the whole business of democratic government, to help make an informed and vigorous public opinion.

My own experience with talks and discussion programs would lead me to believe that in single talks the listeners are likely to be persuaded to listen mostly by the reputation of the person who makes the speech. That is, they find out that they enjoy listening to some speaker, sometimes for no reason that they can express; or they want to hear what some famous person has to say, no matter what he talks about. But when it comes to discussions and radio debates, they seem to care most about the subject of the argument.

In the United States there are three or four million people who are what might be called debate fans. They are likely to follow all the important radio forums, week after week. They like argument and they like to learn. They believe that their own thinking is made better by hearing what opposing spokesmen have to say. Then there is an additional audience of a few million others who may listen if the subject discussed is of great interest to them—otherwise not. This, I am sure, is the way it should be, because radio discussions are not entertainment primarily. They are not intellectual prize fights—or they should not be. They are serious—but not solemn—attempts to help the processes of deliberation.

We know, of course, that there are some listeners who do not enjoy deliberation. They do not like the kind of talk that raises doubts in their minds. They are likely to say that discussion programs—on the air or anywhere else —only cause confusion. The idea behind our program of controversial talks and debates, the ideal for which we work, is that there shall not be confusion—but not dogmatic declarations, either. We try for stimulation, which is different from both confusion and dogmatism.

That is one of the reasons why discussion programs on this network are all managed by the network staff. The opinions are expressed by invited guests, carefully chosen as representative and articulate leaders of public opinion.

The selection of subjects and speakers and the rules of the game are the responsibility of the network.

Many of the discussions on other networks and independent stations—in fact, most of the debate programs—are organized and carried on by outside institutions, by universities, civic organizations, foundations of one sort or another, all of them agencies devoted to public service.

That is a legitimate way of providing for the airing of opinions. It is not our way, however, because we do not believe that these programs can be delegated to someone outside the network any more than we can delegate the management of any other sustaining service. We provide for the spokesmen of important causes on our talks programs, for speakers with important messages, and for speakers who are themselves so important that anything they may say will be important. When invited, they have free and unrestrained use of the air, subject only to the ordinary rules of decency and libel and to the provision that, if they raise challenging issues, someone else will be invited to reply. Moreover, we provide for a full range of discussions which are lively and untrammeled, and these in so far as can be realized, are not mere debating shows but friendly searches after truth. We have found that such discussions not only are enlightening, but are welcomed in the homes of millions of listeners.

Documentary and Actuality Programs

In talking about news, I spoke of the kind of program called a special-events broadcast, in which a crew of engineers will set up movable equipment at the scene of some important event and, with a reporter's comment, bring the very sound of it, as is happens, to the listener. We are so used to that, in the covering of sports, that we take it for granted. We expect to have the cheering of the baseball or the football stands brought into the living room along with the quick, exciting running account of a sports announcer. Some of the men who announce and describe

our favorite sports, on-the-spot, are among the best known performers in radio, men like Red Barber, Ted Husing, Harry Wismer, and Bill Stern. Less well known, perhaps, are the news and special-events men, who may tell what is happening at the inauguration of a president or a governor, at the opening of Congress, or at the launching of a ship.

Those are special news events. There are other kinds of programs in which not announcers, or reporters, or commentators, but ordinary people are heard talking about things that interest them, talking directly to the radio listeners. Some of these audience-participation shows are produced for laughing purposes only. They are entertainment. They sometimes advertise goods; they have a good deal of fun with the guests. These shows are often amusing and one of the responsibilities of the broadcasters is to provide amusement. But I am, for the moment, concerned with a more serious purpose: public information and enlightenment. There is a kind of broadcast in which real people talk in their real characters. Such a program is offered as a realistic "slice" of life. When it is successful, it gives to the listener a wider and deeper understanding of the world around him.

Many of you must have heard, for example, a program we used to carry on CBS, called "Trans-Atlantic Call—People to People." It was on the network from January 6, 1943, to April 21, 1946, and the programs were heard in Great Britain and in Canada, as well as in the United States. A program would originate one week in this country, the next week in Britain—sometimes half of each show would come from each country. It was a wartime gesture of friendship, a friendship that we count on for the future. Also, it was a good example of how much broadcasting can do to broaden human sympathies and bring all kinds of people together in friendly understanding.

In an international program like "Trans-Atlantic Call," the people of Britain learned something about Americans, and we learned something about the British. But we

learned a good deal about other Americans, too, Americans we had never really heard much about. Americans in the hills of the South talked on one program to fellow Americans in other parts of this country and to friendly British people, sang their songs, told their stories, and helped a reporter give word pictures of the way they lived. Wheat farmers of the Dakotas, lumberjacks of Oregon, and Indians of New Mexico, all did the same thing. From the other side of the Atlantic, came stories of the docks of Liverpool, and the villages of Cornwall, and the farms of Scotland. These were all real people talking, not actors. They were their own selves using their own speech.

The way we did all this was to send out a crew of men skilled in finding typical and picturesque people and persuading them to talk, to rehearse them a little—not too much, not to make actors out of them—just enough to get them over their excitement and their nervousness before a "mike." The field workers wrote the script on the spot, put down on paper, in each person's own words, what he wanted to say, and they picked up the music, the typical sounds, the sound atmosphere of places and ways of life. "Trans-Atlantic Call," in the first part of the series was typical of what we call *actuality*, the program of real people talking about themselves or about something of great public concern. The later shows were produced with actors in studios, but they were always as true to life as we could make them.

We have a program much like this on the network now, called "Cross Section USA." It shows how various elements of our industrial structure, labor and management, owners and workers, who disagree among themselves, are finding out how to adjust their differences. We have had others done in collaboration with the labor unions. They have all been actualities, done with the people acting themselves. Now we have a special unit of the network program department, a unit of producers, researchers and writers who are preparing future documentary and actuality programs of this sort.

As we use the terms, we call a program, or part of a program, an *actuality* when it offers people speaking their own opinions, in their own character. We call a program a *documentary* when it deals with contemporary situations in terms of reality, but a documentary that is not an actuality may use actors as spokesmen for authentic and realistic reporting of real situations.

A model actuality could be found in a famous one-time broadcast that was called "Operation Crossroads." It was part of the effort of Columbia to make clear to the American people what the atom bomb really was, and what our possession of the secrets of atomic energy might mean for the future. Of course, we had also a number of discussions on that subject. There was one series of twenty fifteen-minute programs, five a week for four weeks, on which we interviewed all kinds of experts and representative people. We have had satisfactory evidence that this quiet and thoughtful presentation did its work.

There are great public questions—the proper use of atomic energy is one of them—that must be presented in all the effective ways to all kinds of listeners. "Operation Crossroads," the one great, hour-long study of public opinion on the atom bomb, was one of the most effective things we could do to bring home to a great popular audience the dangers and the hope that men could see in scientific discovery. So the writer who was assigned to this task began by studying, first, what questions were being asked and what answers were offered, what opinions were held by American citizens.

"Operation Crossroads" was produced by Robert Lewis Shayon. Mr. Shayon spent weeks traveling around the country to find what the American people were thinking and saying about the new discoveries in atomic energy, and what questions they were asking. When he felt quite sure that he had covered the range of typical opinion and typical curiosity, he went traveling again and sought out the men and women who might answer those questions. The people who asked the questions were representative of all

of us. The people who answered were those we thought everyone might be willing to listen to and to trust. By these inquiries, the producer was able to push aside the insignificant side issues and get down to what was really worrying people, the question of international organization and national sovereignty. Then, the answer to that question was put squarely up to the people themselves.

The "Operation Crossroads" broadcast was opened by Admiral Blandy, speaking from his flagship in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, on its way to a test explosion of atomic bombs. Then people speaking from different scattered points in the United States began asking questions: Why can't we invent a defense against atom bombs? Why can't we just keep the secret of the bombs and so be safe from attack because no other nation will ever know how to make them? Why can't we be safe by making more bombs than anybody else? Why can't we all promise not to use bombs in war?

You can see what kinds of questions were asked. The answers were given by people like these: Justice Douglas, of the United States Supreme Court; Senator Brien MacMahon and Representative Jerry Voorhis; Henry Wallace; Archibald MacLeish; Mrs. Wendell Willkie; two famous scientists, Albert Einstein and Harold Urey, and so on. This program, an hour long, was put on the air in the place of a cancelled entertainment program, a commercial program, in order to get the biggest possible audience. It was a piece of contemporary history and a record of contemporary anxieties. We believe that it helped people to think.

Other programs of this same sort are presented on subjects of similar significance. They follow in the tradition of "The Open Letter," in which Columbia, in July 1943, addressed a direct appeal to the people of America to face the dangers of race war. It was just after the riots in Detroit, and William N. Robson, who wrote and produced that documentary, showed how, in Detroit, the villain of the play, the evil thing, was violence itself. He showed

that both whites and Negroes are both heroic and cruel; that violence itself is the thing to be hated. In this program we used actors, speaking the lines that seemed to the writer to express what real people would have said.

In such programs, whether we are using people speaking in their own characters, or actors speaking realistic lines, although we are arousing the emotions of the listeners, we are still trying also to do the same thing that we try to do with discussion programs, namely, to stimulate thought.

We do not dramatize controversial issues. We will not allow others to use drama as a means of winning political fights or social and economic arguments. This is not an easy distinction to make, and it is a very difficult rule to enforce. What I am attempting to do now is to explain the theory behind a practice. We tell how a race riot happened in a Midwestern industrial city, in order to show that violence is a contagion in the heated minds of men and that all men of good will, on both sides of a heated question, have to set themselves against violence for the good of all on both sides. But we do *not* allow a political party to dramatize a political argument or to use an actor to express the opinion of an imaginary character. We invite real people to ask questions about a tremendously real and menacing problem, and we ask real people to give them the best possible answers. We do not allow dramatized versions of labor disputes or of tax arguments.

The reason for this policy, this principle, is that we know the power of drama to stir men and move them and sometimes to persuade them. We think that it is not only legitimate, but part of our responsibility, to use the persuasive powers of a dramatist and of skillful actors to show the listeners that race riots are horrible and must be stopped, to convince them that there are real answers to the paralyzing questions that rise in their hearts when they face great problems, to rouse them against crimes and warn them of great evils.

Those, in our best judgment, are not controversial ques-

tions. By reason of their importance to all of humanity, and the fundamental moral issues involved, these questions seem to us to lie outside the realm of controversy. Drama, which can call up men's emotions and move them to action, has a place here because it helps thoughtful citizens to see their opinions more vividly and to face desperate situations with more resolution and more strength. But when a question is really controversial, when honest and thoughtful and right-minded men can have two opinions about it, we think the side that can use drama has too big an advantage. Most—almost all—political questions are of this kind. They should be argued out. Listeners should not be swept into action by emotion, emotion that might prevent the necessary thinking.

Some people want someone to give them answers to the hard questions; or they want something to argue against. These people may not listen to a quiet discussion of issues that are really controversial. Nearly everybody, however—the thoughtful and the careless, the slow and the passionate, the hasty and the wise—will listen when a good reporter tells what typical people say and feel. On questions that seem to our best editorial judgment to be beyond discussion and difference of opinion, we use the stirring power of direct presentation.

We have launched an ambitious series—not a drama played by actors, but an actuality—the voices of real people speaking their own opinions all over the world. For that series, Norman Corwin, CBS dramatist and producer, received an award from Freedom House and the Common Council for American Unity. It was the "One World" award, in memory of Wendell Willkie, and it was a present of a trip around the world. Mr. Corwin flew the grand circuit in 19 weeks. He took with him a wire recorder, a very modern gadget that gets down the sounds of places and of people. He and Lee Bland, his assistant, talked to everybody—the simple, and profound, and gentle, and aggressive, and curious, and queer, and human people of the earth—and brought back enough recorded interviews to

stay on the air for 100 hours. Corwin is cutting that down to 13 half-hours and putting one of these half-hours on the air once a week, to give us the recorded voices of real people, the kind of people out of whom we shall hope to make "One World."

Children's Programs

The average child spends at least two hours every day listening to the radio. That is what the surveys show. No doubt, the children in your family are not "average." They may listen to broadcasts either more or less than this average child. Nevertheless, your child is growing up in a world of sounds. He takes the radio for granted. Adults in this country are said to spend more time listening to the radio than they do in any other way except working and sleeping. The children, as they grow up, are not likely to spend less time at the radio than their parents do now.

This question of children's programs is a difficult subject. Our mail is full of letters about it. We even get resolutions from worthy organizations, protesting to broadcasters against what they think radio does to children. To the professional broadcaster these complaints are impressive and disturbing. He might often take refuge from criticism behind arguments that are good, as arguments, but they are not a good enough answer when parents are genuinely upset by their children's listening habits.

The broadcaster might, if he were interested only in argument, say something about the curious helplessness of parents in regard to their children's listening. You do not, on the other hand, often hear a parent admit that he is completely helpless regarding a child's reading. In fact, you have probably never heard a parent say that somebody else—somebody outside the family—ought to manage Johnny's reading, unless it was some parent who admitted that Johnny had got completely out of control. Parents accept responsibility for what the child eats, and for where and how and with whom he plays, and a lot of other things

that are important in the formation of the child's character. Yet some of them will not take any responsibility at all for keeping that same child from listening to programs that are intended for adults, and are possibly not very good for him, or listening to programs which, for some reason or other, they, as adults, do not like. Who runs Johnny, anyway, the radio or the parent? If Johnny runs himself, regarding his radio programs or anything else, that seems not to be exactly the radio broadcaster's business. But all this would be only an argument. It does not really get at the root of the matter.

Further, the broadcaster might point out that much of the complaint against certain kinds of programs for children are exaggerated, since the blood and thunder they are complaining about is only a modern version of the ancient bloody fairy tales. "Jack, the Giant Killer" is not exactly a gentle story. But that, too, would be only an argument.

We get a little deeper into the real difficulty of the subject if we face the fact that parents and children, old folks and young folks, have always disagreed about what is funny, and what is legitimately exciting, and what is worth reading or listening to. Probably they always will disagree. Who, then, is to settle the question? Certainly not the broadcaster. It is, however, the broadcaster's business to see that nothing goes on the air that paints wickedness as attractive or heroic, that makes fun of the helpless or the weak, that shows scorn of any kind of honest people, of any race or creed or color—in other words, to see that whatever education a child may get by listening will be for his own good, and for the good of the rest of us.

For that reason there are some kinds of children's programs that we do not want, and do not have, on the Columbia network. In fact, there are children's programs which, because of this policy, we have refused to have on CBS even when they were offered to us. They may attract listening audiences but they do not, we think, give the listening child the right kind of excitement. Or they may

be objectionable because they tend to degrade the child's taste; they may be vulgar, which is nearly as bad as being vicious.

We do have on the network one of the most popular children's programs on the air, Nila Mack's "Let's Pretend," which has won practically all the prizes and awards it is eligible for, and many of them many times over. Since 1934, Miss Mack's boy and girl actors have been playing the charming fantasies and adventure stories that she has been writing for them. For years, the program was carried as a sustainer; now it has a sponsor on Saturday mornings, but it is the same program.

We have experimented also with other kinds of children's programs, especially in the line of adventure for youngsters a little older and more realistic in their tastes than those who listen to "Let's Pretend." There were "Wilderness Road," "Cimarron Tavern," and "The Sparrow and the Hawk." They will be remembered as adventurous episodes in program experiment. Every one of them was written under the most careful scrutiny for its psychological and emotional effect. The writers and directors were instructed to keep them swift, and colorful, and exciting, because children and young people—and their parents also, so far as that goes—want stories that way. But the writers were held to strict rules. The nature of those policy rules, published by CBS in May 1935, more than twelve years ago, may be indicated by several sentences of quotation:

> The Columbia Broadcasting System has no thought of setting itself up as an arbiter of what is proper for children to hear; but it does have an editorial responsibility to the community, in the interpretation of public wish and sentiment, which cannot be waived.
>
> In accordance with this responsibility, we list some specific themes and dramatic treatments which are not to be permitted in broadcasts for children.
>
> The exalting, as modern heroes, of gangsters, criminals and racketeers will not be allowed. Disrespect for either

parental or other proper authority must not be glorified or encouraged. Cruelty, greed and selfishness must not be presented as worthy motivations.

Programs that arouse harmful nervous reactions in the child must not be presented.

Conceit, smugness or an unwarranted sense of superiority over others less fortunate may not be presented as laudable.

Recklessness and abandon must not be falsely identified with a healthy spirit of adventure.

Unfair exploitation of others for personal gain must not be made praiseworthy.

Dishonesty and deceit are not to be made appealing or attractive to the child.

The policy statement goes on to say:

> In general, it is worth noting that the literature for children which continues to find their favor through many generations offers heroes worthy of the child's ready impulse to hero worship, and of his imitative urge to pattern himself after the hero model. Such literature, whether created 100 years ago or written today, succeeds in inspiring the child to socially useful and laudable ideals such as generosity, industry, kindness and respect for authority; it opens doors into wide worlds that may be reality or fantasy, but are in neither event ugly or repellent in aspect; it serves, in effect, as a useful adjunct to that education which the growing and impressionable child is absorbing during every moment of its waking day.

It is not enough, of course, for the broadcasters and educators and parents, working together, to keep the wrong kind of programs off the air. What about training the child, through pleasant experience, to listen to the right kind of program and to prefer it? Why not use broadcasting as a positive educational force? That idea occurred to the Program Department seventeen years ago, and Columbia's "American School of the Air" was founded in February 1930. It is now one of the biggest single program enterprises in the whole broadcasting industry. It is the largest block of programs planned as a unit months in advance. The "School of the Air" is a series of 5 half-hour

programs a week, for 30 weeks each year, from October to May.

It was originally thought of chiefly as a series for the classrooms of the schools all over the country. It had to be prepared a long time in advance, in order that teachers who were intending to work the broadcasts into their courses of study might plan to cooperate. Thousands of teachers still do cooperate by advising their pupils to listen, and by basing exercises on listening, but the broadcasts are no longer made during school hours for most regions in the United States. The "School of the Air" is now not so much part of the school curriculum as it is part of a schedule of family listening.

It had a long and honorable history as a program for school listening. As nearly as could be estimated by the investigators, there were some 5,000,000 children in the United States and Canada who, in those years, heard at least one of the five programs every week. The high-school students liked the discussion of public affairs and the explanations of science; the younger children liked the music and the stories. The National Education Association gave the program its professional blessing, and a board of distinguished educators kept a supervising eye on the educational content. For every area of interest—science, history, public affairs, music and literature—specialists were consulted. The programs are somewhat broader in appeal now, because the listening audience includes more than children and teachers; whole families are listening together.

It has been proved that it is not necessary to give youngsters hair-raising and incredible dramas to hold their interest, but that it is fun, too, to learn how to think for yourself, and live in the world of other nations, and understand what is going on. And when the young people grow up they will demand this kind of broadcasting and will provide a public for the best that can be produced on the air.

Daytime Serials

A while ago a letter came in from Buchanan, New York, complaining that there was too much misery in the daytime serial stories that fill part of the morning hours, and some of the afternoon hours, on the network. The writer, a woman, said:

> I wonder why there should be so much continual confusion in the various stories that go along smoothly—and all of a sudden mother-in-law trouble or a dispute, etc., which is not conducive to a completely happy life.

And then she went on to discuss some of the serial stories, which she enjoys, but which she said have tragic plots and she concluded by saying:

> More love and less misery on the air would be conducive to better thinking.

This letter was remarkable for several things, chiefly, however, because it was almost the only letter I have ever seen from a listener that offered a constructive suggestion about the daytime serial stories. Most of the people who write in about daytime stories simply say they do not like them. Very few of the large numbers of people who do listen to them, and like them, ever write us about them. Still fewer listeners ever say that they enjoy them but wish they could be somewhat different.

The listener just referred to likes the daytime stories but wishes they could be more cheerful. She may be right. But there are some reasons for thinking that the serial stories on the air would lose a good deal of their appeal if they were filled with nothing but light and happiness. In fact, it is practically impossible to produce any drama without conflict and trouble; that is what makes a story. And the story is what people are listening for.

The whole question of the daytime serials has been vexed and agitated for several years, so much so that CBS made a special study of the subject in 1945. We can dismiss the critics who say, "Well, of course, I never listen

to serials, but this is what is wrong with them." In fact, we can dismiss from all these discussions about what is good and what is not good on the air all those critics who begin what they have to say with the phrase, "Well, of course, I never listen to that kind of program . . . ," or even, "I never listen to radio, but . . . ," and then they are willing to tell everything that is wrong with it.

They are quite often people who take great pride in knowing all about books, or music, or the theater, or pictures, and would never think of saying, "Well, I never read a book but this is what is wrong with books." They are the critics who think "it pays to be ignorant." But there are other people who have listened to daytime serials enough to know that they are not all alike, that some of them are much better and some much worse than the average, and still they do not like any of them.

Who does listen to them, and why? The truth is that the kind of people, mostly women, who listen to the daytime serials are nearly all the kinds of women that there are in the United States—typical women.

The conclusions that I am now quoting were arrived at after careful study by a staff of researchers with the following as consultants: Dr. Raymond H. Franzen, psychologist and statistician; Dr. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, of Columbia University; Dr. Carl R. Rogers, of Ohio State University, who was at the time president of the American Association for Applied Psychology. So far as I know, the competence of this board of experts has not been questioned—nor their reliability.

The staff, under Elmo Roper's direction, talked to 6000 adult persons, carefully selected so as to include people of all ages, and all varieties of education, income level, place of residence, occupation, and so forth. Of the people talked to, only 5030 were regularly at home in the daytime, when daytime serials are on the air, so the actual sample was 5030. Conclusions about the listening habits of most of the women of the United States can be based —so the statisticians tell us—on what can be found out

about the listening habits of a well-chosen sample of that size.

Of all the women who were home in the daytime, more than half, 54 per cent, *did listen* to the daytime serials—not to all of them, of course, nor every day, but fairly often. They knew about them, knew most of the characters of the popular stories, and followed their adventures frequently enough to keep track of the plot.

It might be noted in passing that almost no one ever seemed to listen to every installment of a daytime serial. The regular listeners will skip a day or two and then find it convenient or interesting to tune in again. This helps to explain why, in each broadcast, a little time has to be taken up in telling you what has happened recently in the story. The purpose is to bring everybody up to date.

More than half of the women who were home listened to these stories, and some women of all kinds listened. Some kinds listened more than others. The women of the very highest income group, the women who have most to spend on other kinds of amusement, listen less than the average. About 35 per cent of these women of higher incomes, however, do follow the characters of these dramas. As you come down in the scale of income, and also in the scale of education, the number of listeners among each hundred women gets a little larger. But women who have been to college listen, too. In the sample of 5030, 40 per cent of all the college women were serial listeners. We have reason to believe that this proportion is typical. Thus, average numbers of average listeners in average proportions listen to the daytime serials. Why? We could ask the listeners that question; in fact, we did. But we can also look at what they are doing while they listen, because that will indicate what they want out of a radio broadcast. The average woman, according to these statistics, says that she does nothing but listen for 31 per cent, or about one-third, of the time that the stories are being acted on the air. But for more than two-thirds, or 69 per cent of the time, she is doing something else while she is listening,

doing things mostly that can go very well with listening, but would not go with reading.

For 20 per cent of the time that she is listening to the daytime stories, she is also working in the kitchen. For 26 per cent of the time, while she listens, she also does general housework. For 12 per cent of the time, she is sewing. For 6 per cent of the time, she is eating. For 2 per cent of the time, she is dressing. When women are doing these necessary tasks, happily undertaken, perhaps, but nevertheless drudgery for many housewives, they like to listen to what will make them think about something more interesting.

To go back to the complaint with which we began, for a moment, it may fairly be said, I think, that these stories do take a woman's mind off her own troubles. One quality that makes it possible for them to perform that beneficent job is that they tell a good deal about the imaginary troubles of imaginary but much beloved characters in the stories. Aristotle said something about that a good many hundred years ago, something about the curative effect of purging the emotions.

There still may be some, however, who would insist that the listeners to these stories, even though there are a good many of them, are somewhat different from people in general. It is true that they are mostly women. In fact, the daytime serial is a program devised for women, because an enormous proportion of the adults who can be home in the morning, and who want to listen to the radio while they are doing their work, are the housewives of the country. They are the housewives who buy the soap and the food and the cosmetics and the household goods that are generally advertised on these shows. But if you once describe them as women, grown up, working at household tasks, you have said all you can say about them because the psychologists who analyzed them, very carefully, could not find any significant differences between the listeners and those who did not listen.

Of the women listeners and nonlisteners on the same

general level of income and educational experience, about the same number of listeners and nonlisteners go to church, belong to women's clubs, take part in the civic activities, and read the same magazines and current books. Naturally, those who like serial stories on the air are a little more likely also to read serial stories in the magazines. But are they all equally happy?

There is a surprising and very long-lived fairy tale abroad about the daytime serials. They are supposed to make women unhappy, and they are supposed to be listened to mostly by unhappy women. So far as the investigators could find out by asking questions, the listeners were neither more nor less satisfied with their own lives than those who did not listen, but most of the women, a great majority, said anyhow that they were happy. They do have drudgery, however, and they do like to be lifted out of the routine of the kitchen, and following the imaginary adventures of these heroines of fiction helps them in that. They believe that listening to these stories helps them better to understand their own lives and to manage them more wisely. They believe, too, that the stories are true to life. The characters are very real, and the listeners follow their fortunes with real sympathy.

But the investigation from whose results I am quoting also found faults in the daytime serials. It found that many listeners are most interested in the characters of the stories and the development of the characters, and that these are often not well enough portrayed. On that account the stories should more often be written to bring out the traits of the characters, should be based on plausible motives, and should be made up of situations easily credible. No doubt, also, there is too much monotony of plot interest. True, the substance of novels and plays for centuries has been love, and unrequited love, and triangles of love, and love in the spring, and love in the autumn. It is always very interesting and will always be, no doubt, but it does get a little tiresome in the serials when no other themes get a chance. There are other interests and other things

that happen to everyday people that can make the stuff of drama. However, those who are critical, those who do *not* like the daytime stories, ought not to forget that their simple themes are still the stuff of human longing and human adventure.

The critics sometimes say the serial stories put an impossible task on the author. It is true that no one can possibly do good work when he has to write too much, and it is also true that the serials, like all radio, do use up literary material very rapidly. But there are many authors, producing magazine stories and novels, who write as much in an average week as the authors of the daytime serials. It is a kind of work that cannot be done by the writer who is slow and overcareful. It is a field for the writer who can tell a story mostly in dialogue, who has a strong grasp of character, and who can invent plot and incident easily and copiously. By writers of this sort it is being developed into an art form, not quite like anything else, having its own rules, its own kinds of excellence, and its own place.

The mistake, the really serious mistake, made by those critics of the daytime serials who never listen to them, is that they think the stories are all alike. As a matter of fact, there is as much variety of quality and kind in these stories as in magazine fiction, or in popular novels, or in the movies. They are good, and bad, and average, and some of them are admirable. At any rate, they fill a need for millions of listeners who want to get out of their own lives for a while and into the lives of people whose adventures are believable, and whose behavior can be sympathized with and admired. We have good reason to believe that these stories teach lessons in fortitude and understanding.

If listeners can develop a discriminating standard, giving their support to the stories that are true to life, and vigorous and courageous in telling how life's day-by-day problems can be met, then such stories will continue to have a place in radio and to give worth-while pleasure to their listeners.

CHAPTER III

OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

MR. BRYSON AND GUESTS

Leading representatives of different points of view appeared with Mr. Bryson on five programs. These discussions have been abbreviated, wherever possible, by eliminating dialog not essential to the principal points. But the more significant parts are left in conversation, to retain the values of the question-and-answer form.

American Radio and the Federal Communications Commission

With CHARLES A. SIEPMANN of New York University

Mr. Bryson.—Mr. Siepmann, I suppose it's fair to say that you have a reputation as being one of the most vigorous and, shall we say, aggressive critics of some of the practices of our broadcasting, and that your book [1] has laid down a program for reform of broadcasting practices. I think people listen to you partly because of your wide experience, partly because you have written a good book, partly because you are teaching people who may make the next generation of broadcasters. Of course, you have had experience in two countries, and you have worked for our government; you have been a consultant to the Federal Communications Commission. And I don't suppose it's any surprise to you, Mr. Siepmann, if I say that a lot of people who have read what you have said, and who have listened to you on the air, think that you don't believe in the American system of broadcasting at all.

[1] RADIO'S SECOND CHANCE, Little, Brown, 1946.

Mr. Siepmann.—Well, it is not a matter of surprise. It hurts, because it isn't true, and I'm very glad you've given me a chance to make my position clear on that point right at the outset. I'd like to go on record as in wholehearted support of our system. I want no other, and I think it's native to the country. I think it belongs. All I want is that our system shall work, and I hope that later on you'll give me some chance to give you reasons why I think the system as it is, and which I approve, is not working.

Mr. Bryson.—Do you think the American people are satisfied with the system as a system?

Mr. Siepmann.—Well, there again, yes. I think so—but I only *think*. What I *fear* is that the comparative judgment that people may make between our system and other systems isn't based on valid understanding of the differences between systems. Take, for instance, the fact that a recent survey showed that, when people were asked about different systems, only 22 per cent of the total poll were aware that our system is in any way different from that of the BBC. That surprised me and shocked me.

Mr. Bryson.—Do you think we would like the BBC system in this country?

Mr. Siepmann.—No, I don't. I don't think it's native; it springs from the soil of Britain and belongs there. I think it is sound there, and I think people like it there, but I wouldn't have it here at any price.

Mr. Bryson.—Do you think that people are as ignorant about other aspects of our system as they are about its nature as compared with the systems in other countries? Do people really know as much about it as they should, in your opinion?

Mr. Siepmann.—There again, no, and I think you share that opinion; you share that point of view and CBS does, or you wouldn't have launched this series. I think, indeed, that that's the purpose of the series, as defined by Mr. Paley in the first talk—to clarify our American broadcasting system—and therein lies its importance, and I think it's an importance that transcends radio itself. Democracy, as

we have it, and as we believe in it, won't work unless people's judgment rests on solid information. In just the same sense, our system of radio won't work if people's judgment of it doesn't rest on solid information.

Mr. Bryson.—More information than they have now?

Mr. Siepmann.—Far more than they have now—far more, I fear, Mr. Bryson, than I think you've given them in this series.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, I've been going only twenty weeks.

Mr. Siepmann.—And I've got this one fifteen-minute period in which to pick you up on twenty weeks of misdemeanor.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, I wouldn't say that. If you do well, we might ask you again. What are you going to do with these fifteen minutes? What do you think the series lacks most?

Mr. Siepmann.—Well, I'd like to say, first and foremost, that I think the series is immensely worth while. It's long overdue. It is the first time in twenty-five years that radio has been telling people about radio, and that's important in itself. But I think the series, if I may say so, has two basic defects. I think it is a little late in admitting a critic, as I am, to the series. You are dealing in facts, but facts themselves are controversial. I hope that later on you will have more critics, and have them at more frequent intervals.

Then, second, I'd say this: While I think you have given a great deal of very valuable information which many people must certainly not have possessed, I don't think you have given all the relevant facts. Indeed, I'd say this: I think you've shown us a fine, sleek, shining car; you've made it look almost perfect and you've failed, I think, in not taking us out for a trial ride to see that she is missing on several cylinders. And I think she is missing on one cylinder, above all others—and that is a subject upon which I feel that your emphasis has been least, and yet it's perhaps the most important problem of all.

Mr. Bryson.—What do you think the people most need to know about broadcasting that they know least about? What is the really difficult and important lack of information on the part of the people as a whole—in your opinion?

Mr. Siepmann.—Well, in my opinion it's this, and here in a sense I reflect on what you've done so far. You have talked a lot about networks and affiliates and all your difficulties, and as an old practitioner I think I understand them, but you have told us all too little about the system as it is. After all, Mr. Paley defined this series as being primarily devoted to that. I'd say this: three embarrassing letters have been conspicuously absent from all your talks —FCC, standing for the Federal Communications Commission.

It seems to me that you've said virtually nothing to suggest that this Commission has an essential part to play in making our system of broadcasting work. You've led listeners to believe, I think, that ours is a system of free competitive enterprise and that, once the FCC has allotted wavelengths to stations in the country, its job is virtually done. You know that that isn't so. You know, but you haven't said, that ours is a system of competitive enterprise within a framework of governmental regulation, that the FCC is the guardian of the people, that the airwaves belong to the people, and that the FCC is charged, under law, to grant and to renew licenses for a limited period of three years only, *and only on the condition* that the licensee has served the public interest, convenience and necessity. The airwaves belong to the people, and stations have only *temporary* and *conditional* access to them. And it seems to me that that's the way the people want it.

Let me quote from the public-opinion survey to which you and Mr. Paley have both referred. It tells us that 66 per cent of listeners want government to insure that radio's news broadcasts are truthful; 53 per cent want government to insure that stations regularly carry programs giving both sides of public issues; and 43 per cent—and that seems to me a surprisingly high figure—want the government, again,

to insure that every station broadcasts a certain number of educational programs.[2] Your virtual silence on this whole subject of government's role in radio has troubled me a little in this series.

Mr. Bryson.—In your opinion, the present communications law gives the FCC power to grant or withhold licenses according to whether or not the station owner has lived up to a program standard which is set by the Commission. Is that right?

Mr. Siepmann.—Yes.

Mr. Bryson.—That's your interpretation of the law?

Mr. Siepmann.—That's right.

Mr. Bryson.—Now, do you realize, or are you skipping over something here which you think is unimportant, but which I think is very important, that many broadcasters would flatly disagree with you on that interpretation of the law?

Mr. Siepmann.—Yes, I know the disagreement, and I still hold to my point of view, on the basis of the evidence as I read it.

Mr. Bryson.—You realize that many broadcasters disagree with you on this point. They say that there is a provision in the law, and you know where it is, that expressly forbids the Federal Communications Commission to exercise censorship of programs.

Mr. Siepmann.—Yes, let's tackle that one, but let's tackle the first point first. Take the FCC and its function. Let's remember that the FCC isn't a free agent, and it isn't an uncontrolled bureaucratic form of tyranny. This is a democracy, and federal agencies in a democracy are subject to the judgment of our courts of law, and appeals against FCC decisions on this very question of satisfactory program service have been carried to the courts, and the courts have again and again upheld the FCC and its judgments.

The Supreme Court itself has said that the FCC *has* to concern itself with a station's program service. How else

[2] Results of the second NORC radio survey, conducted in 1947, are discussed briefly in a footnote on page 37.

can it judge between competing applicants for a wave length if, on all other accounts, their qualifications are equal?

Mr. Bryson.—The only point I would make—and perhaps I am departing from my proper role of asking questions and trying to answer a few—is that there might possibly be a certain amount of confusion in the law as it now stands. Even Mr. Clifford Durr himself, who is one of the most vigorous critics of the present system of broadcasting, and who is a member of the Federal Communications Commission, has said that, so far as he can see, the law does not give the Commission any right whatever to judge programs on quality.

Mr. Siepmann.—Censorship, to me, means preventing you, CBS, from putting on a program, or saying something in a program, to which a censor objects. Now, the FCC can't do that, and it never has done that. I don't call it censorship if, and when, the FCC tells a station, *after* the event, that it has failed to render public service. It isn't censorship to keep a station *up* to its commitments to serve all sections of the public.

All this talk of censorship seems to me to point to a rather bad conscience on radio's part. If radio fully, and responsibly, and honestly served the public interest, the FCC would have virtually nothing to do with program service. In its famous "Blue Book," [8] published in 1946, it tried to define a few components of public service and, admittedly, that's difficult. For the first time in its history, it became constructive, it tried to clarify a very important question, and all it got from radio was abuse, and some of it rather unkind abuse.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, suppose that were all true, which I am not quite prepared to admit, what can the people do about it? You want the people to exercise their right which we all give them—everybody gives the people the right of

[8] PUBLIC SERVICE RESPONSIBILITY OF BROADCAST LICENSEES, Federal Communications Commission, 1946.

ultimate decision—but how would you say that the people should exercise that right of ultimate decision?

Mr. Siepmann.—Well, on that I'm very glad to have an opportunity to say something. There is a lot to be said against radio, the industry, and much against the FCC, but there is lots also to be said against the public, on the score of its default. In my judgment, there is unfinished business for the listener also to complete, and here I suspect that you *and* I are entirely at one. Minorities who claim that their needs remain unsatisfied have much to answer for themselves. How many of them actually listen to what's offered to them? What effort do they make to shape up audiences for such programs? How many of them correspond with you, either to say well done or to let you know that you did meet their needs? What—take my own profession—what have teachers done to use radio as a convenient frame of reference for the subjects and values they try to teach? How far have the schools tried to influence children's listening by subjecting them to critical examination in the classroom? What have they done as a profession to prepare a blueprint of subjects which, in their judgment, urgently need airing?

The whole future of radio seems to me to involve a divided responsibility. Yours is the major role, to lead, and to experiment, and to promote. It is for us to follow, and to participate, and to back you up. Radio under our system involves a triangular relationship, the industry, the public, and the FCC. Each has a part to play. You are helping us, in these talks, to understand the limits of the possible, our system being what it is, but you've lots more to tell us before most of us wake up, I think, to the fact that the wavelengths of the air are ours, and that our very future, maybe, depends on our insuring that you use them well on our behalf. There, I think, we have in some sense failed you, as you in some sense have failed us.

I think there is room for a housecleaning right through the whole business. I think the FCC is in some default in not fulfilling its role as guardian of the people, but the

major function, I believe, is with you—to give us the leadership, which I'm convinced we still lack, in realizing the potentialities of our own appreciation and understanding of things, which we don't too often get from you.

[*On a later program, Mr. Bryson discussed letters from listeners on his broadcast with Mr. Siepmann, and added the following remarks on new radio legislation to this discussion. Mr. Siepmann did not appear again on the series, and his own views on new radio legislation are therefore not included.*

The subject is so complex that it has not seemed practicable to extend this discussion by inviting additional comment from outside the series itself. It has, however, seemed important to include this mention of new legislation as a current industry problem, even though it was not a part of the give-and-take of discussion with Mr. Siepmann or with one of the other guest participants, who might have viewed the subject in a different light.]

Mr. Bryson.—Another point made by Mr. Siepmann and by other critics of radio is that broadcasters do not respond willingly to guidance from the Federal Communications Commission, the government agency charged with granting licenses to broadcasting stations. That is a problem of great complexity, and it would be quite impossible for any one broadcaster or any one network to speak for all the others. The one thing that broadcasters are generally agreed on, however, is that we need a new radio law. The law under which we are now operating has been on the statute books in its present form for thirteen years, and it is not necessary to indicate how much the broadcasting situation has changed in thirteen years. In fact, there has been no real change in the law in the last twenty years.

The broadcasters do not believe that they can either prosper best, or discharge their public responsibilities best, when there is continual dispute and uncertainty as to the powers of government officials and the privileges of those who hold the wavelengths. The new law seems to be needed more than ever now, and the owners and operators of the stations are agreed on that principle. One of the

radio trade magazines of wide circulation and influence, the weekly called *Broadcasting,* has been asking questions of the station managers. In a poll, the editors of *Broadcasting* discovered that 80 per cent of the radio managers want a new law.

They want a new law, with new rules, and, above all, a law that makes the rules plain so that everyone will know where he stands and what to expect. The managers want simpler and clearer rules so that they can know what they can do in discharging their clear obligation to manage their stations in the public "interest, convenience and necessity." About three out of four of them say they would like to have clear legal rights to conduct editorial columns on the air. This is a vexed question that needs much more discussion, but we can indicate the nature of it by saying that one of the current interpretations of the radio law is to this effect, that the manager of a station or a network is not permitted to use his facilities for the expression of his own opinion on any political or public question of a controversial nature, and, if he does, such action can be made a reason for the FCC to deny him a renewal of his license. Other authorities believe that this is not a proper interpretation of the law. About 77 per cent of the managers who have expressed an opinion would like to have Congress decide this question.

They would like also to have a better definition of public-service or public-interest programs, and some sort of rule by which a news program could be distinguished from comment or analysis. They do not want a rule making it compulsory that a certain fixed percentage of time be given to the discussion of controversial programs by invited speakers. They want help; they do not want censorship. Perhaps the fact that none of these matters can be clearly determined under the present law will indicate to the public why a new law is needed, and also why the present law has led to so much argument.

[*In June 1947, a subcommittee of the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee held hearings on S. 1333, a Bill*

to Amend the Communications Act of 1934. The authors are Senator Wallace H. White, of Maine, and Representative Charles A. Wolverton, of New Jersey. Further hearings have been announced by Senator White, to consider a revised version of the bill which would incorporate certain of the changes urged by various witnesses at the earlier hearings.

How much power should the Federal Communications Commission have? How shall its power be applied? How shall the people get what they want out of broadcasting? There will be vigorous and complicated discussions, no doubt, before a clearly stated government policy can emerge. The broadcasters will be listening with great concern to see how this debate develops. The American people would be doing a great service to themselves if they would give the proposed new law the same close attention.

Freedom and Responsibilities of American Broadcasting

With Dr. Robert D. Leigh, Director of the Commission on Freedom of the Press[4]

Mr. Bryson.—We have brought you here today, Dr. Leigh, because you have been the director of the most extensive study ever made of the American press—and broadcasting comes under your definition of the press, doesn't it?

Dr. Leigh.—I am glad you have explained in what capacity I am here. My relation to broadcasting is that of one of many millions of faithful listeners. But I have read too many audience surveys to attempt to cast myself as the average—or typical—listener. To perform that role conscientiously, I should have to impersonate at least three composite listeners. A first third of the time I should represent the people who like their radio pretty much as it is now, have nothing specific to criticize in the program fare, and like the advertising because it tells them about the things they want to buy.

[4] This commission made its reports and completed its work in 1947.

Then, for another third of my time, I should impersonate the people who take radio as it comes, who have some —but not sharp—criticism of programs; who may not like, but don't mind, advertising because they know it takes advertising to pay for the programs they do like.

For a final third of my time, if I could be this composite typical listener, I should speak for the sizable group that listens regularly but criticizes a lot, especially advertising. Speaking for them, I would give the complaints which you so fairly quoted from letters in another broadcast: too much advertising, singing commercials, selling slogans repeated *ad nauseam,* talking down to the listener, exaggerated claims for advertised products. In this role I should speak with vigor—I might use words that are taboo over the radio under the Federal Communications Act; my voice might rise to a shouting pitch; I might even reach angrily for the dial on the receiving set and snap it off. For me, this would be the most sympathetic of the three roles to play—the part of John Q. Citizen, with Q standing for Querulous.

I am here, however, as director of the Commission on Freedom of the Press to represent its thought regarding the freedom and the responsibilities of American radio-broadcasting.

"But before we begin," as announcers are fond of saying, "just a word" about our Commission's reports. Two of the seven discuss radio particularly. One is our general report, with the title, "A Free and Responsible Press." It deals with radio only as one of the five mass media: newspapers, radio, movies, magazines, and books. The other is the special report to the Commission, by Llewellyn White, entitled "The American Radio." Its first seven pages contain our Commission's specific diagnosis and prescription with regard to broadcasting.

Mr. Bryson.—Tell us what you said, and how it applies to broadcasting.

Dr. Leigh.—First, our Commission accepted wholeheartedly what is called the "American System" of press and

radio operation. The report says, "radio is and should remain a private business." To be maintained as such, the business must be run at a profit. In radio, advertising furnishes the sole income to support its operations. Therefore, the advertising must produce sales, in order to provide the profit margin necessary for maintenance of the broadcasting industry.

Our Commission accepted as necessary, or inevitable, that the press, including radio, is not only business, but, in large part, *big* business. We did not advocate monopoly in mass communication. We did not *find* monopoly, except in smaller places for local programs, and even here the speaker's platform and other informal discussion make the term monopoly not quite appropriate. But we did see difficulties of bigness—mainly that owners of large press enterprises, like college professors or trade union executives, share common experiences which develop common attitudes so that they tend to see public problems with a particular, limited view and emphasis. We did not, however, feel that government action to break up the big units was a proper remedy for the common biases of bigness. Rather, we sought means of self-correction of the bias.

The Commission accepted wholeheartedly, also, the constitutional framework in which the American press and radio operate. The reports state with precision the basic social purpose underlying these constitutional prohibitions: the guarantee that individual men with something to say shall be able to reach others with their ideas, without suppression from government or from other existing centers of social authority.

Mr. Bryson.—The government has a responsibility, then, to see that it does not destroy freedom?

Dr. Leigh.—We pointed out that government *and* press and radio network owners should act positively to provide the conditions under which the greatest freedom of individual expression will thrive.

Mr. Bryson.—And that includes radio?

Dr. Leigh.—The Commission specifically recommended

"that the constitutional guarantees of the freedom of the press be recognized as including radio." We recognized the need of governmental regulation in the case of radio, but felt that this could be conducted within the framework of the First Amendment as interpreted by the Supreme Court.

Mr. Bryson.—But we think of broadcasting, Dr. Leigh, as something more than news and discussion.

Dr. Leigh.—So did we. Our Commission accepted as desirable the omnibus character of the press and radio—something for everybody—with discussion of public affairs only a part of the total output of the communications industry. But our Commission's interest was centered in this one aspect only of mass communication: that of informing and enlightening people on public affairs.

We had to find out about freedom—freedom of the press as a means by which popular and unpopular ideas and information can flow freely and widely to people everywhere—and this within the framework of private business, primarily of big business, and through an omnibus agency serving the other varied and complex needs of a heterogeneous society. The two reports devote considerable space to pointing out defects of the radio, as well as newspapers and motion pictures, in the process of furnishing enlightenment on public affairs. They name very few names, and they don't condemn all the media for the glaring deficiencies of their less responsible members. But there isn't any emphasis, either, on giving Pulitzer or Peabody prizes or "Oscars" to the best performance.

Whatever the present level of excellence, the Commission was mainly interested in urging that it be higher. This is because "the urgent and perplexing issues which confront our country, the new fatefulness attaching to every step in foreign policy and to what the press publishes about it, make the preservation of democracy and perhaps of civilization itself depend upon a press which accepts the fullest responsibility for public enlightenment." We see the task as including these four things:

1. Furnishing a truthful and intelligent account of the day's events in a background which gives them meaning.

2. Providing a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism, with regular opportunity for a hearing of significant ideas contrary to those held by the radio owners and managers.

3. Providing a means of projecting opinion and attitudes of the various separate, competing groups in our society—not only through news and discussion but through drama, music and other entertainment programs.

4. Stating and restating the general values of society, clarifying the ideas toward which the community has agreed to strive. (No better illustration of programs serving this end can be given than such CBS documentary series as "Operation Crossroads" and "The Eagle's Brood.")

The Commission doesn't suppose that these four ideal demands can ever be completely met. It doesn't assume that they can be met by one radio station, network, or communications medium alone. The approach to their achievement is not easy, quick or spectacular. We found no magic formula. As the report says, "the most surprising thing is that nothing more surprising could be proposed."

We have already heard the criticism of our recommendations that, if the press is to continue as a private business, it can succeed only as retailers succeed, that is, by giving the customers what they want. The Commission did not accept that theory: that the primary test of public service is financial success. They found many examples of good radio practice in the interest of public enlightenment which are good business as well. You know that the radio and the press are not serving stationary wants. Year by year, they are building and transforming the interests of the public. As a *profession,* it is their obligation to elevate, never to degrade those interests.

Mr. Bryson.—I think we believe that, Dr. Leigh. I have said so in this series.

Dr. Leigh.—Yes, I know you have. All our recommendations really aim at improvement of the professional character of the press and the radio.

We looked long and hard at the possibility of written codes, to be enforced by an industry-wide punitive or censoring organization—the kind of machinery represented by the Hays-Johnston self-regulatory body in the movies. But we rejected such a technique as not promising much for positive improvement, and as especially inapplicable in radio.

The Commission recognized that the radio audience exercises an influence through pressure groups. They provide the constant temptation to offer only what will please and never offend, rather than to furnish a picture of events and people as they really are. As a counterinfluence, the Commission recommended building groups of active listeners in each community, independent of the government and of the radio industry, to support the best professional service. With the same purpose, the Commission urged the press and radio industries and outside university and citizen agencies to encourage honest, expert criticism of bad performance, and to pool and to publicize accounts of good performance in the public interest.

Mr. Bryson.—And what, finally, about advertising?

Dr. Leigh.—The Commission was clear in its stand that the peculiar position of advertising in making programs, and often influencing the place of those programs on the air, is a harmful emphasis. It stresses the short-time business incentives as opposed to long-time professional standards and incentives. We liked better the situation prevailing in newspapers and magazines, where advertising is sold for a certain space and the newspaper editor plans, writes and controls all the other space. Applied to radio, this system would not prevent selling unrelated advertising preceding or following news, discussion, drama, comedy and musical programs. It would merely guarantee that the professional radio manager would be in complete charge of his programming service—licensed as he is to operate

it in the public interest—and that he could allot to advertising its proper space and emphasis.

As for the government, the Commission felt that the present policy and plans for licensing so as to extend service to cover the country completely, and to provide generous opportunity for noncommercial radio to meet the needs of special audiences, are essentially sound. As a means of encouraging radio as a professional servant of the public interest, our Commission felt that, in choosing among applicants for license, the FCC was justified in considering whether the applicant was prepared to serve the public interest, and, when renewing the license, to consider whether he had kept the promises he had made and had actually served the public interest.

As the Commission concluded, the air belongs to the public, not to the radio industry.

Mr. Bryson.—We might differ on some of those recommendations, Dr. Leigh, but only to question whether or not they are the best way to get the results you want. What we all are after is the best possible radio and press, working in freedom for the public good.

Advertising on the Air

With ATHERTON W. HOBLER, Chairman of the Board of Benton & Bowles, Inc.

Mr. Bryson.—A very large number of the letters that people have written me since this series of talks about broadcasting began have complained about commercials. Now you have seen a lot of these letters.

Mr. Hobler.—Yes. In the main, they were intelligent and interesting. I have your analysis of them. Twelve per cent of the letters you received criticized radio commercials in some way; of this 12 per cent, about one-third objected to too much advertising, one-quarter to singing commercials, one-sixth to repetitious and aggressive commercials, a like amount to what I might term condescension or

underestimation of the listener's intelligence, and the rest —a very small percentage—to what are believed to be dishonest claims. I think, if you were asking me, as a listener, I would rank my pet peeves against radio commercials about in the same order.

Mr. Bryson.—But you are not just a listener, Mr. Hobler. You speak for the great advertising agencies. What do they do in radio?

Mr. Hobler.—Most national advertisers select an advertising agency to help them plan, create and place their advertising, whether it be radio, magazine, newspaper, or outdoor advertising. My company, Benton & Bowles, has the responsibility for the advertising of several of our country's largest advertisers, and we have used radio advertising very extensively and quite successfully for our plans since the early days of radio. It is our job not only to recommend to our clients whether or not they use radio, but also, if we do, to advise them what network to use and then select or develop a program for the advertiser to sponsor and, of course, write and produce the radio commercials for the programs. As you can see, it must therefore be our business to keep in intimate touch with consumers—to know their likes and dislikes. We are very serious about doing it.

I believe many radio programs and radio commercials have room for improvement, from the standpoint not only of good taste but also of effectiveness. We, in advertising, have a twofold responsibility: one is to the sponsor, to insure effectiveness for his advertising; the other is to the listening public, to keep programs and commercials entertaining, yet wholesome and in good taste. The letters of criticism that you sent me show that our listeners are aware of this twofold responsibility—that of service both to the sponsor and to the public.

Almost all of the listeners expressed the feeling that under our American system of radiobroadcasting they expect commercials, and that because of commercials they receive more and better radio; that sponsored radio is in

keeping with our free enterprise system. It is because the public feels this way about radio that I believe every advertiser and every network should remain conscious of his responsibility to the listener.

With respect to any one given type of commercial, I cannot expect everyone to agree with me any more than do the various people who criticized in these letters agree with one another. In reading the various criticisms, I note that often the very specific commercial to which one listener objected was the very commercial that another party held up as an example of what more commercials should be like. It looks as if I were going to be "in bad" with a part of our audience, no matter what I say, but I'll tell you just what I think.

Mr. Bryson.—The first letter I will read is from a woman in New York. This one is typical of that small proportion of people who question extravagant or unprovable statements. Here is a quotation from the letter:

> Of course, there must be commercials, but can't they be controlled? . . . The claims made for the sponsor's products are incredible . . . The public might reasonably be expected to listen to the sponsor's name and a brief report of his product when he presents a show, out of mere courtesy alone. However, the extravagant and unprovable statements made antagonize the audience and detract from the listening pleasure.

Mr. Hobler.—Part of the answer to that can be postponed, but I will take up the main point, the question of extravagant and unprovable statements, because I cannot agree with our critic. The writer asks whether commercials can be controlled. You know, and I know, that commercials are carefully checked and censored, and that standards for editing are progressively being raised.

My comments, following, refer primarily to national network advertising. There are specific forces, as well as common sense, that operate to prevent misleading or untrue statements. However, a certain amount of trade puffing, or gilding the lily, does occur not only in commercials,

but in all forms of selling and advertising, whether it be in personal salesmanship, in newspapers, magazines or radio advertising. It is generally conceded that this—if not misleading—is not against the public interest, and is justifiable. In my many years in advertising, I have never been able, no matter how enthusiastic the advertising, to promote successfully a product that did not give the consumer good value. Unless consumers like products and repeat their purchases, no amount of advertising will keep them alive.

At times we even have to tone down the truth. Sometimes, on new products that perform new or unusual services, we tone down claims that are true and provable, because our research people tell us that these claims are difficult for the consumers to believe—until after they have tried the product.

Next, as you know, Mr. Bryson, your network and the other networks and stations all have continuity-acceptance editors. We call them censors. Their job is to question any statement that they think false or misleading, and to eliminate them if they cannot be proved. Also, the Federal Trade Commission is so organized that it questions advertising claims and issues orders to advertisers who make false and misleading statements to cease and desist.

I think that truly dishonest claims are as rare as they are inexcusable. For the good of the public, the sponsors, and ourselves, we must have basically truthful commercials. On the other hand, I think that, with our American enthusiasm for doing any job we tackle, there will always be, in advertising and selling, a reasonable and justifiable amount of that trade puffing, or gilding of the lily, already mentioned.

Mr. Bryson.—The next letter I have concerns what seems to be a more controversial subject—the singing commercials. From San Francisco, a man writes this:

The singing commercials and the "irritation" method of constantly reiterated slogans take all the joy out of listening. Instead of making me desire the sponsored product, I find

that I avoid buying same whenever possible. I realize that sponsors are paying thousands of dollars to advertise their products, but someone should make them dignify and revise their commercials so that the listening public will feel grateful for the entertainment brought to them gratis . . .

Mr. Hobler.—Making people grateful to a product for the entertainment that is brought them is just what sponsors and advertisers like to think they are accomplishing. Apparently not all of our advertising always does this. That's not good. Let me say that there is just as much difference in singing commercials in their ingenuity, in their taste, and in their production as there is in the various types of radio shows we hear. When they are ingenious, and the sales response by the consumer to the products being advertised is good, there is reasonable evidence that they are being accepted.

Let's look at it this way: When singing commercials first came on the air, there was a tremendous favorable response. Now, because these earlier singing commercials were so effective, it was but natural that many advertisers adopted them. I agree that today we have too many of them, and some on products on which I, personally, would not want to use them. For those of you who object, there's hope. The tide may be turning, for in this country of ours when a thing is overdone, a free people, by their action, have a way of making it known that it is not acceptable and we voluntarily change.

Mr. Bryson.—All right, here is another letter, this one from a man living in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. He writes:

Perhaps one of the basic faults of radio advertising is that many of the products have little or no merit over their competitors. Therefore, the form of advertisement is that of dinning into the public ear the name and brand of the ware.

Mr. Hobler.—The writer makes quite an assumption, I think, when he says that many of the products advertised on the air have little or no merit over their competitors. Now I am not going to be as enthusiastic about the prod-

ucts for which my company creates the advertising as to say there are no other products that can equal them, or that even come close to them. That couldn't be possible under this free competitive system of ours, because any product, and especially an advertised product, to be successful, must give real value to the consumer. Bring out a superior product, and your competition will match it. It's then up to you to increase still further its service and value. It's largely because of advertising and our American competitive system of free enterprise that the quality, value and performance of products are constantly being improved.

Mr. Bryson.—Here is another letter, from Charleston, South Carolina. A man writes:

I am 100 per cent for our American system of radio broadcasting, in which radio entertainment is paid for directly through sponsoring, or indirectly, as in the case of sustaining programs, by advertisers of merchandise and services. Not only does this system provide a wide variety of entertainment at all times, but the keen competition of sponsors and of competing networks and stations for audiences assures me of the best programs available, of every type. For confirmation of this last, one need only tune in a foreign station on the short-wave band, and compare its programs with those of CBS. Of course, I have my preference in advertising. I usually enjoy singing ads, but never fail to tune out noisy, irrelevant and repetitious ads. I turn a willing ear to ads which tell the truth about a product's useful or enjoyable characteristics, but turn a deaf ear to half-truths. . . .

Mr. Hobler.—I suspect, when the writer mentions half-truths, he means that sometimes our enthusiasm, or trade puffing, is a little too strong. I do think we must watch this. However, he seems to have written a pretty concise summary of the case for advertising in the American scheme of radio.

It seems to me indeed, that he is expressing what I said in the beginning. I found in the majority of the letters a belief in our system of radio and commercials, and he is

interested in seeing that it is kept that way. It seems to me he is saying that, whatever its faults, American radio is infinitely more vital, more intimately a part of our daily life, than radio under BBC in Great Britain or under the government's thumb in Russia; that the American listener will tell you he thinks radio can be a lot better, and that generally he knows somebody is trying to make it so. He knows that four great networks, and all the local stations he can get with his radio set, are competing every minute of the day to bring him something that he will approve and enjoy; and he knows somebody has to pay for all the news, the music, the comedy, the suspense, and the education he gets in his own home without moving out of his chair.

In closing, let me say to you, Mr. Bryson, keep up the good work that you are doing. We like to have the public enlightened, and we like to have them express themselves.

Mr. Bryson.—And we believe in doing what we can to cure what they complain about. Is that right?

Mr. Hobler.—We will try to do our part to give them effective radio commercials which by far the majority of the people can consider are in good taste.

Public Service Advertising by Radio

With PAUL WEST, Vice-Chairman of The Advertising Council[5] and President of the Association of National Advertisers; and HOWARD CHASE, Chairman of the Joint Committee of the American Association of Advertising Agencies and of the Association of National Advertisers.

Mr. Bryson.—On Monday, listeners heard, on the "Kate Smith Speaks" show, a message that went like this:

Announcer: I have been asked by the Advertising Council to mention today the crisis in our schools. There are overcrowded classrooms, and many emergency teachers, I

[5] An organization of leading advertisers, agencies and media formed in 1942 to coordinate war-information messages, and a continuing operation since the war to facilitate public-information campaigns.

am told, who fail to meet educational standards. There are 26 million children in school in the United States, and another 2 million who should be in school but are not. These 28 million children are the chief victims of the present crisis, because when schools are closed, or when they provide an inferior education, much damage is done to the future of our country. At present, fewer teachers are being trained. Teachers face overcrowded classrooms, inadequate equipment, and lack of public interest in what they're doing.

What can the individual citizen do about this? Every American can help by taking an active interest in educational conditions in his community, by honoring the teaching profession and getting acquainted with the teachers, by joining and working with local Parent-Teacher groups, and by showing friendliness and interest in the teachers themselves. These things are important. Teachers exert a vital influence on the character and future careers of our boys and girls, and money that this nation spends on the education of our youth and the equipment necessary to accomplish that education, is money well spent.

Mr. Bryson.—The important thing about this message was that it was broadcast on a sponsored radio program, a commercial program. You might think that it didn't have much to do with General Foods advertising or Kate Smith, or the network. But it was a voluntary contribution of advertising time and skill. You've heard hundreds like that on sponsored programs for the last five years, and they're one of the most important things that have happened in advertising.

Today I have, as my guests, Mr. West and Mr. Chase, both of them men who have had a good deal to do with this campaign. Mr. West, what do you mean by public-service advertising?

Mr. West.—Before the war, advertising was used mostly to sell products, as you know. During the war, advertising proved itself a real power for molding public opinion and enlisting public action in a voluntary, democratic way.

I can give a quick sum-up of some facts that I think are

impressive. As you know, advertising took on a number of vital projects for the Government during the war, and the results were truly phenomenal. For example, 50 million victory gardens were planted; 4 million workers were recruited to relieve the labor shortage on farms; 85 million Americans bought war bonds; 538 million pounds of waste fats, 800 million pounds of tin, and 23 million tons of paper were salvaged; millions of men and women were recruited as blood donors and nurses aides, and for numerous other fields of civilian service; the WAC recruiting rate increased 400 per cent in one year, and Army and Navy nurse recruitments were met without resorting to a draft.

All in all, American business sponsored more than 100 separate home-front information campaigns. The estimated value of this advertising time and space was more than a billion dollars. All this cost the Government not one cent. It's amazing how the American people, if given the information on a national need in a way in which they can understand it, will respond willingly and effectively to meet the need in their own way.

Mr. Bryson.—Mr. West, I'd like to ask Mr. Chase if he thinks that advertising really was a decisive factor in all these campaigns. These things happened, of course. Did they happen, Mr. Chase, because advertising was in the picture?

Mr. Chase.—I think a great deal of the credit can be laid to advertising. My own approach to this is very simple. A device which can sell a product can also sell an idea. And during the war, there were great, tremendous, ideas to be sold, ideas of loyalty and participation. I think there's no question that advertising did a big job in bringing about this intensified loyalty with the results that Mr. West has mentioned.

It was a tremendous job of organization, because many, many people throughout the country were a part of this voluntary effort. Soon after Pearl Harbor, every segment of the advertising business, the advertisers, the advertising

agencies and the various media groups, including newspapers, magazines, radio networks and stations, car-card advertising and the outdoor advertising industry, voluntarily joined forces to help bring information to the people. Through their national organizations—and that's the point, these organizations were ready at hand—it was possible to marshal these forces and skills almost immediately. In that way was formed, in a matter of a few weeks, perhaps the most powerful instrument of communication ever put at the service of the people of any nation in the history of the world.

Mr. Bryson.—That was under war pressure, Mr. West. How did it happen that the advertising industry continued to use its facilities for public service, once the war had ended?

Mr. West.—Well, Mr. Bryson, I'd like to ask you a question at this point. Do you think that the end of the war lessened the need for keeping people informed on national needs, in order that they might act intelligently in their own interest?

Mr. Bryson.—No, I don't think that, but I'm afraid I've had enough experience, Mr. West, to know that the fact that a thing needs to be done doesn't always insure that it gets done. What I want to know is how it was that the advertisers and business in general realized that they needed to carry over these efforts into a new world, a world of peace where the problems were no doubt even more difficult than they were during the war. Does business have any evidence that the public appreciates what advertisers have done?

Mr. West.—There is a tremendous volume of evidence, very tangible evidence, Mr. Bryson. I wish there were time to give you here, literally, some of the evidence that has come to manufacturers and to the media.

Mr. Bryson.—What sort of public-service campaigns on the air are you now supporting?

Mr. West.—Well, these are some now under active operation, definite programs under way. I think you'd agree,

for example, that atomic energy needs some explaining. There's also a definite need to cut down traffic accidents. There are facts showing definitely that the traffic-accident curve has gone down since information has been brought to the people about the situation. Savings bonds should receive strong advertising support—I'm sure you'll agree with that. Group prejudice should be fought effectively. I should not say The Advertising Council is fighting group prejudice; it's bringing information to the people so they can take intelligent action.

A school campaign is important, as we've seen. We know, too, that people can help prevent forest fires and they are doing it. I should think that advertising would make some effort to get more housing for veterans, and we are on that program. Another case that occurs to me, just to mention one more, is increasing the understanding of the importance of world trade. I think you'll agree it is an important project.

Mr. Bryson.—Mr. Chase, do you have public guidance in this thing? Are you getting any advice from anybody else?

Mr. Chase.—The answer is certainly yes. There is one campaign, for instance, for better understanding of our economic system, a campaign which The Advertising Council has recently accepted as a project. You might say it's presumptuous because, in the past, all campaigns which purport to discuss economic systems, have been defensive in nature, in defense of the status quo. But here is a committee composed of such people as Evans Clark, of the Twentieth Century Fund, and the presidents of Harvard, and Vassar, and Hunter College. Representatives of all three of the great labor groups have unanimously approved this plan. Racial groups are represented, too. Heads of consumer groups, organized women's groups of all kinds—yes, a real cross section of the population has approved this advertising campaign for better understanding of our economic system.

The Responsibilities of Broadcasters, Advertisers and Listeners

With JOHN CROSBY, Radio Critic of the *New York Herald Tribune* and other newspapers.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, Mr. Crosby, you have been devoting all your time to criticising radio, now, for about a year. Have you decided what's chiefly the matter with us?

Mr. Crosby.—I have a few ideas, Mr. Bryson. I should say one of the chief evils of radio is the control by advertisers of the content of radio.

Mr. Bryson.—To the extent that the advertisers do control radio.

Mr. Crosby.—Yes, they control it pretty thoroughly, don't they, Mr. Bryson?

Mr. Bryson.—Well, you tell us why you think they do.

Mr. Crosby.—Of course, it is not an original thought. Everybody has been complaining about it for a long, long time. Radio columnists, newspapers, everybody else. In fact, the advertiser has become a convenient excuse for everything bad in radio. I don't entirely agree with that point of view. The advertiser's money has done a lot of good for radio, it has made possible our most popular programs and, almost in spite of itself, it has created a diversity and opulence of radio programming unmatched anywhere else. We spend a lot more money on radio than anyone else does.

Mr. Bryson.—So the advertisers' intervention is both good and bad, you think?

Mr. Crosby.—Yes, let me see if I can explain that. I think control by advertisers has a serious flaw. The advertiser wants to sell goods—that is his dominant thought. Now, he may want to do a lot of other things, too. He may want to create good programs—I imagine he enjoys having critical approval of his programs. But the real reason for sponsoring radio is sales; sales come first, everything else

comes afterwards, if it comes at all. Now, right there, I think, is a fundamental error in policy.

Mr. Bryson.—You mean policy, so far as the broadcasting system is concerned, or a mistake on the part of the advertiser?

Mr. Crosby.—I mean that the point of view is automatically fixed by sales, whereas it is not in anything else. After all, I work for a newspaper, which is supported by advertising, but it is not controlled by it. I mean, if we put out a good enough newspaper, a lot of people will buy it; and if enough people buy it, the advertisers will come along and support it.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, may I examine that word "control" just a little bit, Mr. Crosby? You aren't meaning to indicate, are you, that you think we take orders on our editorial policies from our big advertising clients?

Mr. Crosby.—No, I do not mean editorial policy. I realize that, so far as your news is concerned, I think that comes straight from CBS. But we, in newspapers, I think, have the more positive control. That is, we put out the newspaper. We sell Walter Lippmann, but he writes his own column. It is not as if J. Walter Thompson came in, let us say, and sponsored Mr. Lippmann and, if they disagreed with him, they dropped him.

Mr. Bryson.—What you are really objecting to, then, is the practice, in the radio business and the broadcasting world, of permitting the advertising agency representing the sponsor actually to create the program.

Mr. Crosby.—That's exactly it. I say that an advertiser, an advertising man, and an editor are entirely different types of people. They may all be splendid people, but their points of view are not all alike. Well, an advertising man does not want to hurt anyone's feelings, for one thing, and we in newspapers think that you have to hurt people's feelings once in a while.

Radio, it seems to me, should be controlled by some analogist, an editor—that is someone whose prime concern is good radio. Radio first, and salesmanship second. Now,

that doesn't mean you can't make concessions to popular taste. We do that, too. But other standards should be consulted. Sheer popularity isn't enough.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, would you say, Mr. Crosby, that the programs which we put on ourselves, the programs which are not sponsored, or which at least in the beginning are not, although sometimes we hope that some advertiser will pick them up—that those are, on the whole, better programs than the commercial programs?

Mr. Crosby.—Frankly I do. I think that you, particularly here at CBS, are producing very splendid programs. Your "My Friend Irma," that's a brand new program. I don't think that an advertiser would have thought up that sort of program.[6] You have another one on here, let's see "CBS Is There"—which I don't think has ever been on the air. I think it is a splendid program, but I believe the advertiser is a little shy of it now, because it is so different. But I think the creative "urge," if you know what I mean (even in Hollywood they have a creative "urge") has produced movies like, let's say, *"The Long Voyage Home," "The Informer"* and *"The Grapes of Wrath."* Now, an advertiser doesn't think in those terms at all. He wants to sell first.

Mr. Bryson.—Of course, there may be some protection, if that's true, Mr. Crosby, in the fact that the advertiser doesn't think in any terms except of selling; that keeps him from using his program for political purposes.

Mr. Crosby.—Yes, there is protection in that attitude, but I think that you broadcasters are a little too timid there. That is, can you conceive an advertiser's using a program for political purposes? I can't.

Mr. Bryson.—Yes, we can conceive of it; as a matter of fact, it is one of the things we are constantly watching to prevent, although one has to say that most advertisers and most advertising agencies play fair. But, if this is wrong, if basically we lose too much by permitting the

[6] Sponsorship by Lever Brothers began in August, 1947; the program began on a sustaining basis the preceding April.

advertising agencies to produce the programs, what's the chief flaw in programming that results, in your opinion, Mr. Crosby?

Mr. Crosby.—Oh, diversity, I should say, experiment, change. After all, radio is now twenty-seven years old and it was almost frozen, it seems to me, about fifteen years ago. Not entirely, but comedy formats, for instance, have become almost frozen by success—you don't dare change them. Too many people imitate Jack Benny, too many people imitate every successful character in radio. There are about a dozen Dennis Days on the air.

If a newspaper were run the same way, every paper would have not only one imitator of "Terry and the Pirates," but about four of them, all on the front page, because it is a popular comic strip, but we can't have a paper that is run entirely on the basis of what is popular and what is unpopular.

Mr. Bryson.—As a matter of fact, you people that run newspapers have a tremendous advantage over us, Mr. Crosby, that you may not realize. If you are listening to the radio, you can practically hear the best of what's being done anywhere in the United States anywhere you happen to be. But in the newspaper you are likely to take the newspaper of your own home town, which has one or two other newspapers to compete with it.

In radio, we compete with everything, all over. We compete with Hollywood, Chicago, Washington—with whatever city has an originating point.

Mr. Crosby.—Oh, yes, and you do a very good job. As a matter of fact, a year of radio listening has made me quite a fan.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, how radical do you want our experiment to be?

Mr. Crosby.—Well, there I don't agree with critics who want to throw out everything in radio and try something brand new. I think there should be a gradual improvement, a fresh approach to the old formula, new personalities, a novel twist here and there. There should be a

constant effort to improve, rather than a constant attempt to conform. That applies to a lot of successful programs, too. I'm a little tired of "Allen's Alley," for instance. Lots of listeners, I know, are tired of that collapsible closet on the "Fibber McGee and Molly" program. To a certain extent, I think we listeners are to blame. I think the advertisers also are to blame, and, to a certain extent, you broadcasters.

Mr. Bryson.—Well, what's the matter with us, in particular? What is our responsibility that we are not really discharging?

Mr. Crosby.—I should say, so far as concerns the broadcasters, it varies a lot. Now, CBS, I am happy to say is a very progressive network. You have tried a great many things. You put on the air a good many experimental programs, some of which could hardly be improved on. An obvious example is the "Columbia Workshop," some of its programs were wonderful, some of them pretty bad. Of course, if you experiment, you have to take that risk, the risk of failure. There are some broadcasters, however, who simply will not. Some networks I know practice a consistent policy of developing nothing, and enticing successful shows away from other networks that originated them.

You know, Mr. Bryson, some day I'd like to draw up a genealogical chart of all the network programs which would show their true parentage. Many, many shows now heard on a certain network, let us say, were developed by other networks. "Duffy's Tavern," I think, used to be one of your shows. The most recent example is "Author Meets the Critic," which was born on a small station up in Schenectady and was weaned by WQXR, New York, and Mutual, and now, after most of the birth pains and hard work are over, it is on NBC. You know, some day you people will have to develop a system to nail down the shows that you originate.

Mr. Bryson.—As a matter of fact, that is not a new idea to us, Mr. Crosby. We've been thinking for a long time

there ought to be some way to tie a good show to the place where it got started. Well, now, what about the listener? Does he have any responsibility?

Mr. Crosby.—I am afraid the listener doesn't go for experiment very much, either. Your own show, "Once Upon a Tune," is a good illustration. It was a good show. I think all the radio critics said so. Still, it had a very hard time attracting listeners, did it not?

Mr. Bryson.—That is right, it did. But, you know, a lot of listeners, at least so far as they give us any indication of what they think, are critical. They don't very often write in and say we are good. They are inclined to write in and say we are pretty bad.

Now, do they really represent the rest of the listeners? Do you have any opinion about that? Can we take the letters as truly representative?

Mr. Crosby.—I think broadcasters pay entirely too much attention to letters. A great mass of listeners don't write letters and, even if they did, their complaints would be so conflicting that I don't see how you could possibly get constructive suggestions out of them. I get letters, too, and one letter will say a particular column I wrote is the worst thing ever written, somebody else will say it is the best. The only conclusion I can draw is that people disagree about everything.

Mr. Bryson.—What about polls?

Mr. Crosby.—Well, I'm not so hot on polls, either. I think radio leans much too heavily on polls. Every five minutes, you people are telephoning or ringing doorbells to ask what people think of "John's Other Wife" or Jerry Colonna's moustache, or something else.

Mr. Bryson.—What about "squawks"?

Mr. Crosby.—Well, squawks about what, particularly?

Mr. Bryson.—Squawks about crime shows, squawks about daytime serials, and so on.

Mr. Crosby.—Oh, I think there are too many crime shows on the air, but I think so just from the standpoint of balanced programming. With the sort of person, however,

who says that crime shows foster crime, I very much disagree. Every so often, you know, there is an article in a newspaper which will say that some criminal got from a radio program an idea for cracking a safe. Well, I think that, even if radio hadn't been invented, he would have gotten the idea somewhere else. As for daytime serials, if a housewife wants to listen to daytime—oh, let's call them "soap operas," shall we?—I think she ought to be allowed to.

Mr. Bryson.—What can you do? You are a critic, you have immense influence, what can you do?

Mr. Crosby.—Well, we have a twin responsibility—I don't want to sound pompous here—to elevate the taste of the broadcasts, and to elevate the tastes of the public. I don't say any of us are doing that as well as it could be done, but that's what we should be doing. One of the most important functions of a radio columnist is to be a reporter, to tell people what's on the air, rather than to criticize it.

A simple description of some radio programs is criticism enough. I like to arouse a listener's curiosity enough so that he tunes in on a program he's never heard of before. I feel there should be more "dial twisting" in this country. A great many listeners are almost anchored to certain programs to which they have listened for years. A good radio column should act as a conscience to the broadcasters and as an ear to the public.

Chapter IV

BROADCASTING AS AN INSTRUMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT

by Mr. Bryson

We have been saying, in this series, that broadcasting is a public problem because it is a public opportunity. We do not, as yet, however, know more than a little about what may be done with broadcasting, some time, on behalf of humanity. But no machine is a moral influence by itself, nor an influence for good by itself. It is only a machine. A machine is neither good nor bad. It is neutral. The broadcasting machine can carry wickedness and hate, if that is the best we can find to broadcast. Or it can carry the noblest and most beautiful of thoughts and sounds. An opportunity is, at the same time, a danger.

Today, I want to talk about broadcasting as an instrument of enlightenment. How can it be used to serve good causes and the general good? First, I have to remind you, once again, of the facts about the organization of our broadcasting system. A national audience exists because there are national networks, four of them, which offer programs to their affiliate stations. More than two-thirds of the regular stations in the country are members of these networks. But the networks cannot do any more than *offer* the programs. The stations decide, on their own responsibility, what they will broadcast to their own local audiences.

This has to be remembered, because a national event can be brought to the radio listeners only when, and only if, the station managers, each in his own town, think the event is really of national importance. Moreover, even when the local station manager believes that a speech may be significant, it still must be possible for him to find a place for it on his schedule, either when it comes to him

as originally broadcast, or in some other spot where he can play it from a recording.

It would be a mistake to jump to the conclusion that when a station manager declines to broadcast a national event, or a speech of national importance, he is refusing because he has a local advertisement in the spot and does not want to lose revenue. That may be the case, of course. When he does have a local commercial program, he has an obligation to his client, as well as to the public, and he has to find a fair balance between them. But he faces a much harder decision when he has to choose between national public service and local public service.

Speeches on national events are important. So are speeches on the events and problems of every home town in the country. Here is where the editorial judgment of the manager of a local station is put to the test, but it is probably impossible for him to please everybody, no matter what he decides to do. A network cannot give a speaker an audience, either, because, even when the speech is broadcast, there is nothing that will make people listen, if they have not already had their interest roused.

It would be reassuring to think that people will pay attention to things because they are important, but it is not true. If importance *were* the chief quality that determines the interest that the public at large will take in any subject, the newspapers would not be made up as they are now. In practically every newspaper in America, the amount of space and time and journalistic skill given to the reporting of sports events is a good deal more than the reportorial attention given to such subjects as international politics.

I am not criticising the public taste in these matters. I am only calling attention to what everybody knows. So this makes the second complication that stands in the way of getting a national event to the people. The first is, getting the stations to carry it, fitting it into local schedules; the second is, getting people to listen when it is on the air.

We have learned other things from experience. For example, we have learned that broadcasting is not a good instrument for launching new ideas, except in rare circumstances. The radio is not a good medium for starting things, it appears, because radio is not likely to get a chance at the attention of the public until after they have already become interested in some question or some cause. When, however, the right time has arrived, radio can do, and does, things that no other medium of communication could possibly do. For example, there were "The Eagle's Brood," a documentary comment on juvenile delinquency, and the "Open Letter" on race riots. There were hour-long dramas of great emotional impact and—we believe—of great effect on people's thinking.

Would broadcasts of this sort do any good if they were devoted to subjects about which the people were not already aroused? I doubt it. It is very doubtful that anybody would listen. Of course, we have ways of greatly increasing the number of listeners. If we set aside periods of evening time and put on a documentary about a great public question once every week, we might get fairly good audiences for them. They would probably be audiences somewhat larger than the number that now listen to our regular discussion periods on such public problems. But they would not be large, as compared with entertainment programs, no matter how well done the documentaries were, no matter how dramatic and searching the presentation was. Most people, on most evenings of their lives, want to be entertained, not instructed.

So what we do is to produce programs of this serious kind as special events and give them all the benefit of special promotion. Then we put the serious show in a spot regularly occupied by entertainment. We cancel a commercial program, something that has a large audience of faithful listeners. For example, instead of getting "Information Please," which they love, for once they got "The Eagle's Brood," which shook them and made them think.

The success of such a way of catching an audience, however, depends on doing it not too often. It is true that such a cancellation costs the network a considerable sum of money, but the money is well spent to serve a good cause. The objection to doing it more frequently is not the cost; it is the fact that frequent cancellations would kill the entertainment program—even a program like "Information Please," which appeals to a well-informed audience—and yet would not build an audience for the programs on public problems.

It was once part of my work to decide, on frequent occasions, whether or not to cancel some program of light music and substitute for it a talk on some important subject. The musical shows were charming and amusing, but inconsequential; they were entertainment. The talks were not always eloquent or exciting, but they were always by persons of distinction on subjects in which everyone ought to be interested. I tried to make a judicious choice in every case. Sometimes we took the speaker; sometimes we kept the music. During this period, I was struck by the fact that I received frequent complaints because the music had been cancelled. I do not remember ever getting a single letter commending us for putting on one of the speakers. Of course, this does not mean that nobody listened to the talks, nor that they should not have been broadcast. It does mean, however, that people do object to having their favorite programs interrupted for serious talks—if the interruptions come too often.

A third way of using broadcasting for the advancement of good causes and for public enlightenment is by means of our discussion programs. We get a good many requests from the officials of committees and organizations of all kinds, suggesting that we might help a cause if we would just have a discussion about it. Sometimes it is necessary to explain to these advocates of good causes that our discussion periods would soon lose their listeners if they were no longer controversial.

If we take the proposals for social betterment of some

committee as the subject of a discussion, then we must set it up as a debate. For example, we may be asked to tell the public about what is called "socialized medicine." It is offered as a remedy for the present state of affairs in which, as is well known, many people do not get decent medical care. Now, on a subject like this, when the public is thoroughly aroused, we can present the current situation as a public problem, in a documentary broadcast. But when it comes to discussing any proposed improvement for this situation, socialized medicine or anything else, we can use a discussion period only if we present the opposition to the proposals, as well as the arguments in their favor, because that is what the audiences built up for those programs have come to expect, and because we believe in balanced opinions.

Broadcast discussions are useful for clarifying issues that have become confused in the public mind. They are good for exposing the arguments on both sides of issues that are at the same time being discussed in homes and meeting places and in the press all over the country. Discussion programs, when they are doing their best work, can help people to think. But they do not often succeed in getting people to think about really new subjects.

If the subject is something in which he is already interested, he will stay tuned in and give the program a chance. If he is bored by the subject, or not curious about it, he will turn the dial to something else. When, however, a problem has become a matter of great public concern, a radio discussion can catch the existing aroused interest, and develop it, and help to bring public opinion to a wise and well-informed decision.

Broadcasting can help good causes, too, when the great figures of radio, the popular entertainers, can bring into their time on the air a word in support of such a cause. A great star with a large and loyal audience can work into the substance of his story his interest in a public problem. One of the most effective and, I believe, influential arguments against the black market—when the black

market was a problem—was a very funny show by a pair of famous comedians. Many an entertainer made an immense contribution, too, by selling war bonds.

Broadcasting has its resources for helping great causes, tremendous resources, but they must be used with an understanding of what the people want from broadcasting, and what they will allow broadcasting to do. They will not always put aside their local affairs for what someone in New York or Washington thinks is more important because it is of national significance. They will often listen to a favorite entertainer talking good sense, when they will not listen to a serious speech. It is the business of the broadcaster to understand these things and put radio to work in the ways in which it will do the most good.