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Dialing a radio milestone

After the CBS radio network celebrates the 50th anniversary of its first broadcast Sept. 18, the transistor generation might observe a moment of silence for what radio used to be and for what it has become. It was once an event, the way television too seldom is now, for the family to cluster around the cathedral-shaped radio set to catch a favorite show. The coverage of the 1932 election of Franklin Roosevelt, one of CBS's first big news ventures, was perhaps more incredible to those early audiences of the electronic age than was the first televised presidential election to their blasé sons and daughters.

CBS's three-hour anniversary broadcast will offer a sampling of the bygone news, music, sports, comedy, and drama. Jack Benny, Burns and Allen, Charlie McCarthy and Edgar Bergen — they probably seemed funnier at the time than they will in 1977. Even in the golden days of radio, when its best programs formed a creative partnership with the listener's imagination, there was plenty of junk food for the ear. But it was fun, tuning through static, to hear the familiar voices from afar. And there was a kind of innocence about it all, refreshing in retrospect. This is dramatized by the reminder in a new biography of writer Ring Lardner that even the mild lapses from innocence in some broadcast songs of the '30s caused him to campaign against such "pornography" when he was radio critic for the sophisticated New Yorker magazine.

Now there seems to be practically no static on the radio. And precious little innocence in the current popular songs, at least in those that black leader Jesse Jackson and others have been trying to cleanse from the air.

But radio is by no means down and out in its second half century. It is just different. It is not the family entertainer but the individual, often pocket-sized conduit of music and information. Some stations have become specialized — all words or all music. Some invite listeners to call in and talk things over. With the addition of FM the spectrum of programming has become widened, even including recordings of those adventure, mystery, and comedy shows that helped make good old-fashioned radio what it was. Here and there comes an effort to revive radio drama with new plays for today. National Public Radio provides a magazine approach to news and features of a sort that bygone listeners didn't realize they were missing.

CBS itself is hanging in there, though "network programming" adds up to comparatively little on the dial these days. And we wish it well for the next 50 years.

—Christian Science Monitor

Nature: detente's silent partner

Mankind has yet to beat swords into plowshares despite the ample and sad lessons of history. But the need to survive could ultimately convince the world to beat missiles into power plants.

U.S. scientists have just sent a 40-ton super-magnet, made in Chicago, to their counter-parts in Moscow for use in advanced research. When the sophisticated gear is set up, an American-Soviet team will spend two years working out new techniques for generating electricity with less waste of fuel.

Meanwhile, back in Princeton, N.J., another team of scientists is trying to score a breakthrough in atomic fusion that would allow the use of cheap, plentiful hydrogen to generate power. This project is using a tokamak — an advanced piece of equipment invented by researchers in the Soviet Union.

Other research partnerships have ranged from studies of heart transplant methods to earthquake forecasting and protection of the environment. Scientists say the cooperation works to the partners' equal benefit and goes forward regardless of the current shape of the political picture. If the swords-into-plowshares dream is ever realized, the push will probably come from a Nature that is increasingly strained to provide for her human offspring. Energy is getting costly to produce; mineral resources are over-taxed; good land for growing crops continues to grow scarcer compared with the population it must feed.

Human beings tend to forget their differences in the face of shared danger. Perhaps there is hope of peace, now that the world at least sees itself as threatened by want. It's a tough way to come to terms with each other, but better than not coming to terms at all.

—The Miami Herald

Oil embargo insurance

Almost four years after the start of the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo, the Federal Government finally has begun to fill its strategic oil reserve, designed to insure the nation against any future embargo.

While the move should have been made long ago, it is still good news. Every barrel of oil that this country places in its storage program makes it that much better prepared to resist economic or political blackmail by the oil exporters.

The program got underway when a shipment of 412,000 barrels of crude began to be pumped into a salt mine near Lake Charles, La More salt domes, which do not allow oil to seep out, will be filled along the Gulf Coast and elsewhere in the country.

Current plans call for 250 million barrels in storage by the end of 1978, 500 million in 1980 and one billion by 1985. The latter figure equals about one-half a year's supply of oil imports and would permit the U.S. economy to withstand a quite lengthy embargo.

—The Cleveland Press

'Stop being so polite ... thump him one'



The Christian Science Monitor

by Marty Vega

Got A Problem? Call The Right Man

County commissioner Danny DeVane is very sympathetic to citizen's problems, at least if the problems have to do with garbage collection.

A very nice lady who lives in Hillcrest contacted DeVane when she became angry because she couldn't get pickup service.

A citizen with a problem. What was needed was a solution.

The solution? DeVane told her that if he couldn't get the company to come get her garbage, then he would personally pick up her garbage.

The offer was refused, with thanks, but DeVane told her that if she changed her mind the offer still stands.

For anybody who thinks that this is going a bit far, stop and consider for a moment.

The way the five commissioners are scattered out in the county, it seems we might have the basis for a plan here.

And we love plans. Since DeVane lives northeast of town, he can pick up all the trash for McLauchlin township. John Balfour lives in Stonewall township, so that will be his territory. James Hunt will be in charge of Antioch township and half of Allendale. Neil McPhatter will take care of all of Blue Springs and half of Allendale.

(They can decide among themselves how they will split that territory. It doesn't matter how

they divide it. As long as the work gets done.)

Ralph Barnhart will do most of Raeford township. But he will have to come to a commissioners' meeting to get his route, so this might stall the whole plan indefinitely.

The only thing left is Quewhiffle township. But there is no county commissioner living there.

So what can be done there?

The only workable solution is to enlarge the board of commissioners to a six-member body with the stipulation that the sixth representative be from Quewhiffle.

Since the need is immediate, somebody can be appointed for the time being. The next general election is in November and then somebody can go into the job by vote of the people.

(That's better, anyway. The man will have more than a month to prove himself and the people can decide if he is doing the job satisfactorily.)

Since DeVane started this whole business he might make a good team leader. Of course, Balfour is chairman, so it might be unconstitutional to put somebody else in charge.

The county attorney can look into that.

With a little cooperation from all sides, the plan should work nicely.

In the meantime, if you have any complaints about garbage, call DeVane.

Puppy Creek Philosopher

Dear editor:

There are three things I have no intention of learning: Russian, Chinese, and the metric system.

It's not that they're too hard. Chinese kids for example learn to speak Chinese. Russian kids learn to speak Russian. But you've got to remember they learned it before they knew any better. I could read and speak the metric system now if somebody had gotten to me early enough.

That's the problem Congress is faced with. Over a year ago Congress decreed that the metric system should be adopted and used in this country. It's like Congress' passing an ethics bill. Members are just too set in their ways to master it. I'll bet there aren't five per cent of the members who can tell you off-hand without looking it up how many kilometers there are between Washington and their home town.

They couldn't come within a country mile of doing it.

Somebody has estimated it'll cost millions and millions of dollars just to change all the highway signs in this country over to metric measure, and that doesn't take into account the ones teenagers tear down when they run out of rural mail boxes.

It's a problem however I'm not going to worry about. When a farmer or rancher isn't getting enough to cover the cost of production, what difference does it make which system he's paid under? Regardless of how many miles or kilometers a car gets on a gallon of gas, you almost have to moonlight these days to own one.

I guess I'm like the woman who said if she saw a centimeter she'd step on it.

Yours faithfully,
 J.A.

Browsing in the files

of The News-Journal

25 years ago

Thursday, September 11, 1952
 Thomas Alexander Gray, Jr., native of Bacie, Virginia is superintendent of the Robbins Mills (N.C.) Inc. plant in Raeford succeeding J.B. Bell.

Commissioner of Insurance Waldo C. Cheek this week announced the resignation of Richard S. Brantly as Chief Deputy Commissioner of Insurance and the appointment of Charles A. Hostetter as his successor effective October 1, 1952.

From Poole's Medley:
 You have heard it said that lightning never strikes twice in the same place, but this is not always true.

Citizen Finance Company opened their doors for business today for the first time in Raeford.

The Hoke High Bucks begin their 1952 season tomorrow night at 8:00 at Armory Park when they tackle the strong Chadbourn eleven.



Report To The People

by Senator Robert Morgan

The Congress went back into session Tuesday after taking a week's vacation over the Labor Day period, and the Senate was faced with the Energy Bill which was passed last month by the House.

President Carter has given this Energy Bill his highest priority and some weeks ago warned the American people that unless we act now to conserve our dwindling oil resources that in a few years we will be in real trouble.

Most provisions in the bill which was approved by the House will get through the Senate, but there are some others that will meet stiff opposition. The section which would allow the President to impose higher taxes on petroleum on the theory that if gasoline gets more expensive people will use less, is in serious trouble in the Senate. It is the way the tax money will be distributed that will divide the Senate, it appears.

Under the House bill, money collected from the higher taxes would be returned to the public. The first year the tax is imposed, people would get this in the form of a tax credit, which would mean that everybody could subtract something from the bottom line on the tax return. After the first year, it would be given by lower withholding of taxes on a person's pay check.

Several members of the Senate have already stated their opposition to this, saying that they would rather return some of the tax to the oil companies for exploration purposes.

It is estimated that this tax, which would be placed on crude oil produced in this country, would add about eight cents to the price of a gallon of gasoline by 1981. This is a substantial increase but it certainly hasn't been proved that it would make people buy less

gasoline, although it would obviously hurt poor people more than it would the more affluent.

I have not made any final judgment on this provision of the Energy Bill, but there are a couple of things I would like to point out. One is that if we start things such as tax credits and rebates and other new programs, then we are going to have to add a lot of people to the Federal bureaucracy and we are going to spend a lot on administering what may turn out to be a very big, complicated mess.

Another is that if the tax on wellhead oil is retained in the bill, that a large part of it should go, not to the big oil companies, but to develop new sources of energy that can be used to take the place of oil when the latter runs out. They tell us that we have more oil contained in shale in our country than there is in the Middle East, so why shouldn't we be in a crash program to get it out? We also need to be finding a way to gasify coal, of which we have more than anybody — enough to last hundreds of years.

Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger has called the crude oil tax the main thrust of the bill, as far as the Carter Administration is concerned, so there will be major pressure to keep it in the bill as it was passed in the House. The oil industry, on the other hand, wants some of that tax money, which will be paid not by the oil companies, but by the consumer, and they will lobby very strongly. They have support in the Senate, especially from oil producing states.

I want to hear the debate, but right now my feeling is that if the tax is retained, then it should be used to help our future energy needs by finding new sources. After all, isn't making sure that we have energy now and in the future what this is all about?

CLIFF BLUE ...

People & Issues



SECOND PRIMARIES -- In New York City a primary was held Thursday, Sept. 8 by both the Democrats and Republicans. The second primary will be held on Monday, September 19 within just 10 days of the first primary.

In North Carolina, to the amazement of many the second primary is held in not ten days or two weeks, but four weeks after the first primary. In South Carolina, if we remember correctly, the second primary is two weeks after the first primary.

The month's time between the first and second primaries in North Carolina is a relic of the by-gone days when transportation was by horse and buggy, or possibly a Model - T when communication was slow and more time was necessary. Now the horse and buggy, a relic of the past, and with the primary results known within a few hours after the polls close, many feel that four weeks is two weeks too long for the second primary.

A second primary four weeks from the first is much more costly than a primary two weeks from the first. After weeks and months of politics before the first primary the people are ready to get it over with and turn their thoughts to something else for a few weeks before the fall campaign gets underway. Maybe some forward thinking legislator will give thought to the idea come General Assembly time 1969.

HODGES -- Luther Hodges, Jr. announced his candidacy for the

Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate last week in which the winner will be pitted against U.S. Senator Jesse Helms in November 1978. The tides in politics can change, and sometimes pretty fast, but as of Sept. 1977 it appears that the 1978 Democratic nominee will have his hands quite full in tackling Jesse a year hence!

MILLS OF JUSTICE -- It has been said that "the mills of justice grind slowly, but they sometimes grind exceedingly fine."

Recently the Franklin Times in Louisburg reported that after "more than two years of litigation, finalized before the U.S. District Court Judge Robert W. Hemphill, the Franklin County Board of Education has been upheld in its decision to demote a teacher for reading an obscene note to her fifth grade students on May 25, 1975."

Well, it's encouraging to note that we have a federal judge who is willing and able to stand up against obscene language in our public schools, particularly so since the person using the obscene language was a fifth grade teacher.

RED SPRINGS -- Red Springs in Robeson County appears to be going all-out in making preparations for the Flora Macdonald Highland Games and Gathering of the Clans for October 1-2. One unique aspect of the fun-filled weekend will be the Revolutionary War Battle reenactment on Saturday and Sunday afternoons with approximately 300 members of various recreated military units participating in demonstrations of 18th century military maneuvers. G.T. Andrews is chairman of the event which will feature a Tartan Ball on Saturday evening.

LANCE INVESTIGATION -- Day by day the net seems to be closing in on Director of the Budget Bert Lance with his resignation becoming more of a probability than a possibility.

It is "an ill wind that blows no good" and in the Lance case it points up a lack of strict banking laws or lack of enforcement. Indications are that Federal examiners have begun a nation-wide survey concerning the ethics of bank officers to ascertain how many other bankers may have been practicing the same ethics as Lance practiced in his two Georgia banks.

Here in North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt says: "I'm not sure what steps North Carolina should take to make the Banking Commission a better regulatory body, but some of them will require legislation."