

Washington Report

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters

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THE WASHINGTON OFFICE

The dream of a Washington office for NAEB has finally been realized. Situated 11 floors up in the Dupont Circle Bldg., it consists of a three-room suite -- and this word is used advisedly. The building was formerly an apartment hotel; hence, our offices consist of a reception room (formerly a living room complete with fireplace) and two offices on either side (formerly bedrooms complete with baths).

The Dupont Circle Bldg. is conveniently located with respect to the headquarters of many of the educational groups located in Washington: ACE, Land Grant College Association, NEA, JCET, Chief State School Officers, etc.

By now the orange crates and paper cups have been replaced with furniture and ash trays and we are ready to invite one and all (and so do) to "come up and see us some time." We would be pleased to welcome you.

JCET STATUS REPORT

At a meeting of the Executive Committee Sept. 27, final approval was given to a prospectus to be brought to the attention of various foundations as a means of securing long-range financing for the Council.

JCET, supported for 9 years principally by Ford funds, had a terminal grant which expired June 30. At that time Ralph Steetle resigned as Executive Director and was replaced by David Stewart, who had been his assistant. Emergency funds, contributed mainly by constituent members of JCET, will enable the staff to continue on a modest interim basis through October. Meanwhile efforts are underway to secure additional interim financing so staff may be kept on the job while a drive is made to secure funds sufficient to insure a three-year continuance of JCET.

FCC MATTERS

NAEB, through its counsel, Cohn and Marks, has filed responses to two recent notices of proposed rule making affecting educational broadcasters. One would revise rules to permit noncommercial educational FM stations to engage in nonbroadcast activities on a multiplex basis. NAEB petition strongly supported the proposal, which would provide opportunity for as many as 3 signals to be transmitted over same facilities. NAEB and WGBH-FM petitioned FCC in June for such revision, pointing out that 162 educational FM stations would be handicapped in networking development, specialized program services, expansion of school broadcasts, etc. if authorization denied. Additional petition was filed by AMA urging multiplexing by EFM stations to afford "semi-private" facilities for discussion of medical subjects not suitable for airing to general public, citing success of postgraduate instruction over Albany Medical College FM station, WAMC.

NAEB also filed Sept. 30 comments on a proposal for reduction of mileage separation on VHF channels. The proposal, strongly backed by ABC, would attempt to shoe-horn in a few more V's by reducing coverage of existing VHF stations, thus enabling net to achieve better competitive position vis a vis other networks via gaining outlets in most major markets.

NAEB filing urged preserving integrity of existing VHF service, indicating education has insufficient VHF outlets now without encroaching on areas currently obtaining educational service over ETV-VHF stations and that drop-in proposal failed to solve the problem of UHF, in which education has nearly 2/3 of its assignments. In fact, utilization of deteriorated VHF service will lessen effort to

develop UHF broadcasting, jeopardize full development of ETV service. However, if reduction of mileage separation does occur, education's interests must be observed in assignment of any drop-in's that might result.

FCC has revised March 16 interpretation of sponsor identification rules which indicated the use of free records without identification on the air of the donors was in violation of Communications Act. FCC will review whole question of sponsor identification; meanwhile, stations need not announce source of free records on the air unless they are received in payment for plugs.

Chairman Ford, recently informed in person of NAEB's progress in making good its promise to provide the Commission with a documented statement on the needs of education for spectrum space, expressed his gratification at our undertaking the task and reemphasized importance of such a document, a view he first enunciated at NAEB luncheon, Columbus. Earlier, Commissioner Robert Lee, who will spend 4 days with us at San Francisco, wrote to commend NAEB for retaining Jansky & Bailey as our engineering firm to survey education's needs for spectrum space. "I wish to congratulate you for the forward step and the able assistance you have enlisted." NAEB has agreed to provide FCC with a preliminary allocations plan for education in January, a complete plan by June.

Significantly the lead of Chairman Ford's speech before Radio-TV Executives Society, New York, Sept. 21 asserted: "The Commission's primary duty in the broadcast field is to make available to all parts of the country a broadcasting system which can be utilized by private enterprise and educational interests to serve the tastes, needs, and desires of the public."

FLASH

On Sept. 29 the FCC, in an important decision, responded to NAEB's petition to grant an exception in behalf of educational broadcasters regarding the use of microwave facilities for inter-city TV relays. Significance of this decision is that now education can establish its own microwave facilities to link educational TV systems in widely separated communities, rather than resorting to common carriers. Ruling, which excepted noncommercial educational users only, should have profound influence in development of state and regional ETV networks and closed circuit systems. Previously the use of microwave facilities was limited to connecting broadcasting stations only. Commission stipulated inter-city facilities were to operate in 6575-6875 mc. band; within a city or for other short hauls, frequencies about 10,000 mc. are to be used. Move was initiated by U. of Texas, which is planning an inter-city micro-relay system connecting Austin to San Antonio and other points.

Also on Sept. 29, FCC awarded second ETV allocation to Milwaukee, Channel 36. Grant was to the Milwaukee Vocational and Adult School, which also operates Channel 10. Additional facility provides for growing services to schools. Milwaukee is second city to have two ETV stations; Pittsburgh was first.

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION NEWS

The Advisory Committee on New Educational Media will meet in Washington Oct. 25-26. New members expected to attend for the first time: Wm. E. Spaulding, Pres., Houghton Mifflin Co.; Margaret Divizia, Dir., Audio-Visual Ed., L. A. Public Schools; Frederick Hovde, Pres., Purdue University; Armand Hunter, Dir., Radio-TV, Michigan State University.

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