

Jan. 1939. M.E.K.
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R A D I O R E P O R T

Before entering into a detailed review of the activities connected with our radio work, I should like to call attention to a number of points which are necessary preliminary to the report itself. The report is divided into three separate sections, the first concentrating upon an analysis of our past broadcast endeavors; the second concerned with a study of our present and forthcoming plans; and the final chapter listing our radio station contacts in the local and network fields.

The ultimate goal to which a large portion of the Committee's material is aimed is the ever-present "man in the street," who plays such an important part in the formation of popular public opinion. Radio, with its 764 stations, and the thirty-seven million receiving sets located in the homes throughout the land, offers itself as one of the most potent mediums for reaching the masses. Radio offers an unusual opportunity since it finds the listener in a relaxed state which makes for an ideal time at which to impress him with material suited to our purpose. A recent Gallup Survey revealed the fact that a high percentage of the American public relies exclusively upon the radio for news reports.

Lately, we have begun to scrutinize the popular commercial programs on the air. For herein lies the opportunity to place material with radio stars who command huge following. Our experience in the past with radio celebrities has been small because we have not engaged in a concentrated drive to reach them. However, we are endeavoring to make this work one of our main jobs at the present time.

Our radio project was inaugurated as a separate unit exactly two years ago. It has developed to such proportions that it was responsible in 1938, directly and indirectly, for approximately two thousand broadcasts over local

and network stations. All of these programs were evolved at a minimum of expense. Naturally, a special technique was developed in our approach to the stations. The Committee was not endeavoring to secure publicity for itself but rather was interested in the dissemination of a worthwhile message. We also stressed the service angle, and a number of stations developed confidence in us since they could always be assured of a complete package job whenever we were in charge of a broadcast. Scripts, music clearance, production details, and newspaper publicity were all handled by us. Many stations are continually deluged with time requests from educational and religious groups. Stations W O R, W A B C, F H N, and W M C A use us on many occasions as a clearing house.

Our experiments with the foreign language field, recordings, educational script service, and children's programs have been rather scant and are worthy of further study and increased effort.

This report on the radio activities of the Committee has been written primarily to afford us an opportunity for surveying in retrospect the various phases of our work. We are interested in determining whether we are on the right track to achieve our objectives. Possibly, certain parts of our program have received too much emphasis to the detriment of other parts. We feel there is room for development and improvement in our efforts.

Before launching into the analysis of our activities, it would be well to bear in mind the vital objectives of the Committee's radio project. We are interested in stimulating as many local and network programs as is possible which embody the following objectives:

- (1) To present a knowledge of and appreciation for Democracy as against all totalitarianisms to radio listeners by stressing

the Americanism theme;

(2) To impress listeners with the fact that America is a land of many peoples, and to combat pernicious race superiority theories. In short, "Immigrants All - Americans All."

(3) To educate Americans to the threat of Nazism.

(4) To present the Jew in a dignified light and in his place as an integral part of American life and history.

ANALYSIS OF PAST RADIO ACTIVITIES

I. Outside Organizations

An important phase of our radio activity has been expended in behalf of outside organizations which are either associated with us indirectly or have been referred to us by other sources. In the past we have encouraged these organizations to come to us with their radio problems, since it gives us an opportunity to guide their programs. This work resolves itself into two separate divisions.

One group of organizations takes the initiative in calling upon us to secure radio time for them. Provided that the program idea is feasible, requests are made to radio stations for time allotments, either for a one time program or frequently for a series of broadcasts, and other assistance is given toward the best possible program.

The second group of organizations maintains their own station contacts but rely upon us for ideas to develop into possible broadcast series. Program material is often supplied to these affiliates for a special program or a series of broadcasts already existing.

It should be noted that in some cases we act in the dual capacity of a liaison with radio stations as well as the origination point for program ideas and material to be used by one organization.

The following information is a detailed breakdown of the numerous radio projects undertaken for other organizations.

A. Liaison with Radio Stations

1. American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

For the past two years we have handled exclusively all of the radio activity of the above Committee. To date, their broadcasts have centered around programs which commemorated various important religious holidays. Consequently, these radio programs are of a seasonal nature, culminating with the High Holy Days in the fall of the year.

All of the Joint Distribution Committee's broadcasts have been presented over national networks and because of their excellent program content have been placed on reference recordings for our files. The Joint Distribution Committee has used these network programs primarily as a prestige builder rather than as a fund raising means. For this reason, these programs have been admirable in their concentration on a goodwill theme rather than on a fund appeal. All expenses for choral music, scripts and incidentals have been borne by the Joint Distribution Committee.

The activities of the radio department of the American Jewish Committee are of the following four categories:

1. A systematic check on the material that is broadcast. This includes:
 - a) The assembling of information on existing and planned programs having some relation to the Committee's aims;
 - b) A check up on Jewish radio programs;
 - c) A similar check up on the foreign-language broadcasts;
 - d) A periodic review of the short wave broadcasting from European countries.

2. Corrective action of the kind indicated by an objectionable program as, for example, bringing to the attention of the station owner and of the federal authorities programs inconsistent with sound radio policies and the public interest.

3. Positive educational activity as in:

A. The preparation of talks over the radio. (Examples: Father Kernan, Kingdon, Religion in the News, etc.)

B. The preparation of programs on special occasions. (Examples: ^{Our People} The Newport Synagogue Celebration, Brotherhood week radio programs, Voices of America)

C. The initiation of, or active participation in, original radio programs. (Examples: Americans All, Immigrants All; Echoes of History; Quilting Bee; the book program of the National Council of Women, etc.)

D. The furnishing of ideas and material for existing programs or one-time broadcasts both of a sustaining and commercial type. (Examples: Uncle Don's All-American program, University of

Chicago Round Table, Town Hall Meetings of the Air, Kate Smith's broadcasts, etc.)

This part of the work of the American Jewish Committee includes where need be every aspect of radio presentation: the securing of time and participants, the preparation of scripts, publicizing, audience build-up, etc.

4. Information to the Jewish communities:

A. Guidance as to local use of the radio and as to the programs suitable for local purposes or requiring corrective action.

B. The development locally of audiences for the Committee's national programs and others useful for the objective of the committee.

C. Direct expansion of national programs either by local demand for hooking into a broadcast or by a recording service.

Any proposal to coordinate the radio activities of the four organizations will have to take into account the development of existing machinery, the few areas in which there appears to be duplication, and the fact that beyond the general educational programs intended to reach the general audience of listening Americans, there are specific programs designed for specific constituents, which may have to be carried on independently as before, but in which the technical problems involved can conceivably be routed through one or another of the agencies selected for the purpose.

S. W.

December 26, 1939