

Rewrite Of Communications Act Key Topic At N.Y. Radio Forum

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sales department to increase commercial load. But before radio moves into this brave new world thought will still have to be given to what will attract and hold an audience.

Support for the bill has taken a major leap with the endorsement of it by the national Radio Broadcasters Assn. NRBA president Jim Gabbert, chairman of the Radio Forum advisory committee, says, "We would have to be out of our mind not to fight for this bill."

The NRBA position puts the organization in conflict with the National Assn. of Broadcasters, which has reservations about the bill, wants to retain many provisions of the Communications Act of 1934 if a new bill is to be written, and would be happy to retain the status quo.

While NRBA accepts the proposed bill completely including a fixed spectrum use fee, which Gabbert says is "reasonable," this fee is the bone that will stick in NAB's throat.

This is because NRBA only cares about radio, while NAB represents both radio and television. While it is estimated that no radio station will



Rewrite Conference: NRBA regional director Jim Connor of WWSH Philadelphia and NRBA president Jim Gabbert of KIOI/KIQI San Francisco listen to Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Calif) explain the fine points of the proposed new Communications Act, which was developed by the House Communications Subcommittee. Van Deerlin heads that committee.

pay more than \$50,000 in this fee, VHF tv stations in New York will pay as much as \$7 million annually under the proposed bill.

Gabbert reasons that even \$50,000 would not be so bad because

many stations pay more than this in legal fees to comply with all the regulations of the current Communications Act and its administration by the FCC. The new bill would also abolish the FCC.



SINGING OUT—As Prometheus in Rockefeller Plaza in Manhattan looks on singer Rupert Holmes belts out a song for a noontime crowd gathered for a concert staged by WYNY New York (Y97) and Private Stock Records.

Stations Now Experimenting Via Album-Oriented Country Format

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posedly too "country" to get breaks from most pop radio programmers and too "pop" to be accepted by most country programmers.

There are also artists considered to be mainly pop artists who occasionally record songs that country radio listeners may find they enjoy hearing if they were made aware of their material.

And, there are, of course, many types of country categorized artists who have been, and are, continuing to make quality albums that aren't being significantly revealed to the radio audience.

Artists and listeners alike would benefit from an album oriented country type approach to programming because the artists would be continually exposed to a new record buying audience and the radio audience would be exposed to new music that they possibly would not have known about had it meant switching to an all pop or all country radio station.

Radio stations representing the Denver, New York, San Diego and

Austin, Tex., markets were interviewed to find what levels of success they had reached.

From all indications, the increased usage of album concepts in country music programming can open all kinds of new avenues for many types of music despite some problems still encountered by radio stations in trying to institute these ideas.

KLAK in Denver features a show called "Night Ride" from 7 p.m. until 6 a.m. daily which music director Bill Ashford says is having a "good deal of success" in that market.

The program is structured to the point that the person on the air does basically three and four record sweeps.

"We'll start a sweep say with a top 10 record," Ashford explains, "and then the person on the air has the option of playing anything in the library for the next two or three cuts."

Artists featured during these pro-

gramming hours are as diverse as Jerry Jeff Walker, Rusty Wier, Marcia Ball, David Allan Coe, the Dirt Band, Jimmy Buffett, the Amazing Rhythm Aces, David Bromberg, Townes Van Zandt, Steve Fromholz, Hank Williams Jr., the Ozark Mountain Daredevils, Joe Ely, Billy Joe Shaver, Firefall, the Charlie Daniels Band and the Outlaws.

"We have to use discretion on which cuts we use because we don't want to scare our country folks away by rockin' 'n' rollin' too hard," Ashford says.

"We're playing primarily album cuts on these types of artists and we really try to expose new albums," he adds. "Also, KLAK has been country since about 1955 so there's an amazing library here."

"We try to feature a lot of the traditionalist, too, within this format like Bob Wills, a lot of the early Ray Price things, Tex Ritter, Carl Butler, Gene Autry, Patsy Cline, George Morgan, Jimmie Dickens, Webb Pierce, Hank Snow and all those folks."

"We've found a really growing number of young people who are burnt out on hearing the same Fleetwood Mac cut every other minute," Ashford continues. "They'd rather come over with us and maybe get turned on to someone like Hank Williams Jr."

"By using the crossover artists like Waylon and Willie, Emmylou Harris, and Linda Ronstadt as teasers, we're able to pull people in who normally would say they hate country music. Granted a lot of them won't listen 24 hours a day—they'll sneak back for Eric Clapton in the daytime. But I've had a lot of folk tell me they have just within the last year become steady country music listeners because of this programming."

Although album airplay is more concentrated during the nighttime hours, the station still programs a

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Labor Day Special For 'Countdown'

LOS ANGELES—"Jazz Album Countdown" is spinning off its second weekend program: a retrospective for the Labor Day Weekend.

The program blends music of today with performances by artists from "yesterday and midway," according to Hal Cook, head of the syndicating firm of Orcas Productions.

Paul Tanner, UCLA music professor, is collaborating with the show's regular writer Brent Seltzer on the script. Rod McGrew, "Jazz Album Countdown's" regular host, serves in the same capacity on this special three-hour show.

The program will be made available to the 106 stations presently airing the weekly "Countdown" program and to others in markets where the show is not aired. A nominal charge of \$50 is involved, according to Cook.

There will be 12 minutes of commercials in the three-hour show which goes out to stations the last week of August on three LPs.

Among the musicians spotlighted are Jelly Roll Morton, Fats Waller, Joshua Rifkin, Bessie Smith, Oscar Peterson, Ray Charles, Hank Crawford, Count Basie, Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Band, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Keith Jarrett, Miles Davis, Modern Jazz Quartet, Horace Silver, Jimmy Smith, Grover Washington Jr., Les McCann, Quincy Jones, Eric Gale, Louis Armstrong, Maynard Ferguson, Freddie Hubbard, Johnny Hodges, Cannonball Adderley, Phil Woods, Coleman Hawkins, John Coltrane, Art Tatum, McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Wes Montgomery and George Benson.

Krofts Set Guests

NEW YORK—Sha Na Na and Captain Kool and the Kongs were guests on the "Kroft Comedy Hour" on ABC Saturday (29). Sid and Marty Kroft are producers of the show which also includes Red Foxx, Patty Harrison and Robin Tyler.

KPOL-FM's Call Letters Face Change

LOS ANGELES—Adult contemporary soft rocker KPOL-FM here will change its call letters before year's end to KZLA-FM, according to Jack Popejoy, program director for the Capitol Cities outlet.

"We and the FCC haven't set a mutually agreeable date yet," says Popejoy, who took over as programmer a year ago, "but I'm sure it will be before 1979."

Popejoy insists there will be no format change involved, "primarily because we're hitting our chosen demographics right on the head."

In combination with its MOR sister outlet, KPOL-AM, the two stations ranked fourth in Southern California in the spring Arbitron rating for 18-49 adults—their prime target.

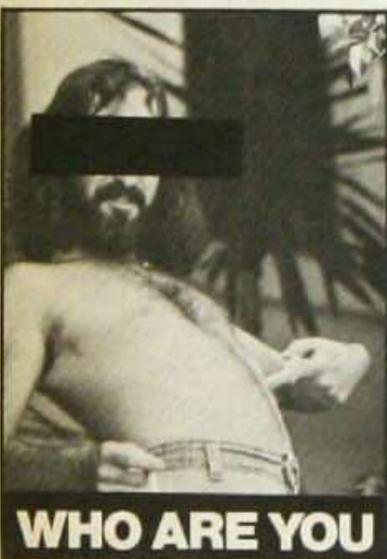
However, Popejoy is still struggling to overcome a beautiful music image at his station, acquired when it used to be simulcast in that format with the AM outlet.

"Additionally, there's been a great deal of confusion we've seen in phone, mail and Arbitron diary response," he explains. "There's a cluster of contemporary stations here around our 94 FM spot. We felt new call letters would contribute to strengthening our identity."

Popejoy says his third reason for the switch is that "KPOL" simply didn't present in itself a good sounding image for a contemporary station... I mean, 20 years ago in radio, 'POL' stood for polka music."

McArdle As Judy

NEW YORK—Production has started on "Rainbow," a two-hour NBC World Premier movie starring Andrea McArdle, the 14-year-old star of the Broadway show "Annie" as a young Judy Garland. McArdle portrays Garland from her early ages of 10 to 17, from her early struggles for recognition to stardom in "The Wizard Of Oz."



WHO ARE YOU

AUGUST 5, 1978, BILLBOARD