

Use of the Air Waves—A Victory for Education

LAST SPRING the Federal Communications Commission lifted the ban on construction of new television stations. Of the total 2053 new stations, 242 are to be reserved for non-commercial educational programs. This decision was reached as a result of the vigorous testimony of educators in behalf of allocation of channels for educational use.

During the period when the Federal Communications Commission was considering plans for the establishment of new channels, seven organizations established the Joint Committee on Educational Television. These were:

- The American Council on Education
- The Association for Education by Radio-Television
- The Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities
- The National Association of Educational Broadcasters
- The National Association of State Universities
- The National Council of Chief State School Officers
- The National Education Association of the United States.

The chief work of the committee from March 1951 to April 1952 consisted of collecting data and marshaling organizational support to convince the Federal Communications Commission that education should be given a fair share of the nation's air waves. With the untiring cooperation of Commissioner Frieda B. Hennock, the Joint Committee on Educational Television was successful in achieving its objective.

The job of implementation must now proceed at a rapid pace if channels are to be secured, and stations built and utilized to best advantage. Applications for construction of stations must be made before next April or the reserved channels will revert to commercial use. As of September 22, construction permits have been granted to nine educational groups, and action is pending on many other applications. Since the cost of a complete station is estimated to be about \$250,000, major support has to come from state and city government or from private educational institutions and foundations. Consequently, it is imperative that public educational groups act at once to press for the necessary state legislation. State appropriations have been made in a few states and legislation is being prepared in several states.

Because of the high cost of building and operating a station, it is recommended that various educational agencies in a state or area join forces in developing and using the stations. The Chicago plan calls for a cooperative arrangement for operating stations of the public schools, universities and museums. In New York the Regents plan sets up a state-wide network of ten stations, and the Governor has appointed a Committee to study the use of TV for educational purposes. State and regional ASCD groups in areas where construction plans have not yet been made should join with other groups to see to it that their localities do not lose this great opportunity.

Opportunities for Curriculum Leaders

As curriculum workers, our major challenge comes after the channels are secured and the stations built. The best talent in education and related fields should be enlisted if we are to develop programs which will compete with commercial broadcasts. In addition to daytime programs for use in the classroom, educational stations could provide for children and youth late afternoon and evening programs which will enrich and deepen their school experiences.

In a recent survey by the Welfare Council of New Jersey it was found that the high school student spends eleven hours a week watching television. (Ninth graders in one city watched TV 18 hours each week). Parents and teachers know that many of the programs now on the air are of dubious value and that some are considered harmful. Since the habit of "watching" is already acquired, it should not be too difficult to plan programs with both "youth appeal" and educational value. The possibilities in the area of social studies and science are limitless. Many such programs would be of interest to adults as well as children. "Problem type" programs concerned with parent-youth relationships would serve to stimulate family discussions. Music and art programs can supplement the school curriculum and develop new home interests.

Members of ASCD should also be interested in exploring opportunities for "in-service" teacher education and parent education. Lectures, forums, dramatizations and demonstrations of classroom teaching might be presented. Although "looking and listening" can never be an adequate substitute for live classes and group participation,

video can stimulate new ideas, increase knowledge and challenge thinking. Appropriate programs might well be viewed by groups and used as a basis for discussion. Teachers might also watch programs at home and bring their individual reactions to faculty meetings or classes.

Sources of Information and Assistance

The Joint Committee on Educational Television, with additional funds from the Ford Foundation, has expanded its service and will provide written information and field consultants relative to: (a) organizational patterns appropriate for varied educational interests; (b) legal procedures for applications and construction permits; (c) program exchange arrangements on regional or national basis. The address of the Joint Committee on Educational Television is 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

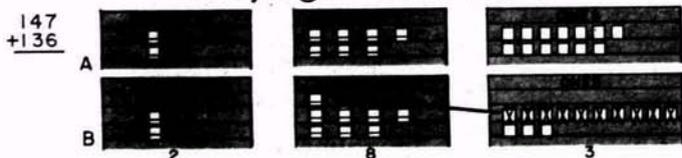
The National Association of Educational Broadcasters received grants in 1951 to study the pattern of existing television programming. Information concerning those studies can be obtained from James Miles, executive director, The National Association of Educational Broadcasters, Gregory Hall, Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

"A Study of Television as a Teaching Tool" by Russell Helmick was conducted under a grant from the Crosley Broadcasting Corporation and released on April 23, 1951 by the University of Cincinnati. For copies of the study write Katherine Fox, director, Special Broadcast Services, WLW, Crosley Square, 140 West Ninth Street, Cincinnati 2, Ohio.

Opinion polls regarding television are conducted by the Wisconsin Association for Better Radio and Television. Students of high schools throughout

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Step 1: Begin with the ones.

$$\begin{array}{r} 147 \\ +136 \\ \hline 3 \end{array}$$
 Think: $7 + 6 = 13$. Change 13 ones to 1 ten and 3 ones. Why? Write 3 in ones' place. Carry the 1 ten to tens' place.

Step 2: Next, add the tens.

$$\begin{array}{r} 147 \\ +136 \\ \hline 147 \end{array}$$

From DISCOVERING NUMBERS, Grade 3, Page 195.

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the country in which radio-television discrimination is taught are invited to participate. The Association, a joint undertaking of civic and educational groups, sends summaries of the polls to those groups and organizations who may be able to improve programs—broadcasters, sponsors, and the Federal Communications Commission. Further information about the project may be obtained from Mrs. C. E. Curran, 402 Grand Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin.

The National Association for Better Radio and Television is a national movement designed to raise the standards of radio and television programs in the United States. Its activities include the following: guidance and information on organization of community listener groups; program evaluation; listening and viewing guides; reprints of speeches and magazine articles; surveys and studies. For further

information write the Association at 882 Victoria Avenue, Los Angeles 5, California.

In Tele-Census, Survey No. 7, June 1952, respondents to the nation's largest television poll voice opinions on questions pertinent to family television. For additional information, write to: Professor Hal Evry, Tele-Census, Woodbury College, 1027 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California.

The Joint Committee on Educational Television has convinced the Federal Communications Commission that education should have a fair share of the nation's air waves. Curriculum leaders must play their part in efforts to see that stations are built and utilized to the best advantage. If this is to be done, action is imperative during the next few months.—*Helen F. Storen*, professor of education, Queens College, Flushing, New York.

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