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PRELIMINARY INVENTORY OF THE RECORDS OF THE  
SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO INVESTIGATE  
THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

1948

(Record Group 233)

Compiled by Ralph E. Huss

The National Archives  
National Archives and Records Service  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Select Committee to Investigate the Federal Communications Commission was created by House Resolution 691, 80th Congress, agreed to by the House of Representatives on June 19, 1948. The resolution, which was submitted on June 18, 1948 by Representative Forest A. Harness of Indiana, provided in part as follows:

Resolved, That there is hereby created a select committee to be composed of five Members of the House to be appointed by the Speaker, one of whom he shall designate as chairman. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the committee shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

The committee is authorized, empowered, and directed to conduct a study and investigation of the organization, personnel, and activities of the Federal Communications Commission with a view to determining whether or not such Commission in its organization, in the selection and appointment of personnel, and in the conduct of its functions and activities, has been, and is, acting in accordance with law and the public interest; including (but not limiting the foregoing authority) a study and investigation of the Commission's licensing and license renewal activities; the Commission's power and authority, if any, to promulgate and issue its so-called "Blue-Book" and the extent to which, if any, the same has been, or is being used as the basis or excuse for regulation by the Commission, directly or indirectly, of radio-program content at licensed radio stations; whether the Commission has licensed, or proposes to license, any radio station or stations owned or controlled by persons who are members of, or affiliated with, subversive or Communist front organizations or who might permit the facilities of such radio stations to be used contrary to the public interest; and whether there has been, or is, any concerted movement or effort to procure the concentration of radio station licenses, including frequency modulation, amplitude modulation, and television, in the hands of a limited class of persons or concerns rather than a distribution of such licenses on a geographical and equitable basis as provided by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

The committee shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) at the earliest practicable date, but during the first session of the Eighty-first Congress, the results of its investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems desirable ....

The Speaker of the House appointed Representative Forest A. Harness of Indiana (Chairman), Leonard W. Hall of New York, Charles H. Elston of Ohio, J. Percy Priest of Tennessee, and Oren Harris of Arkansas as members of the committee. On July 1, 1948 the select committee appointed Frank T. Bow to serve as its General Counsel.

The first general legislation for the purpose of regulation of radio communications was Public Law 632, 69th Congress, approved by the President on February 23, 1927. This Act established a Federal Radio Commission composed of five commissioners, <sup>to be</sup> appointed by the President, ~~by and~~ with the <sub>and consent</sub> advice of the Senate. The Federal Radio Commission continued its operations until Public Law 416, 73d Congress, approved by the President on June 19, 1934, repealed the Act of 1927 and transferred the functions of the Federal Radio Commission to the newly created Federal Communications Commission.

There had been a growing realization that the intervening years since the passage of the Communications Act of 1934 had produced great economic, engineering, political, and ideological changes in America and in the world that made necessary a reorganization of the Federal Communications Commission and a new definition of its duties, responsibilities, and powers.

The committee focused its attention on the quasi-judicial nature of the Federal Communications Commission's functions. The investigation was in large part concerned with whether the Federal Communications Commission was properly exercising its licensing function as a means of regulating and controlling broadcasters and whether the Commission was issuing licenses to stations operated by members or affiliates of subversive or Communist front organizations.

The committee studied several cases involving conflict between the ideals of free speech and the public interest. Among matters considered were the right of the Commission to censor radio program content, its exercise of licensing power in regard to subversive influences in the broadcasting field, the power of the Commission to promulgate regulations that would tend to limit free speech, and other matter.

The committee, in its final report, made general recommendations for certain personnel changes, the enactment of broader and more precise laws to cope with new problems arising from complex developments in the communications field, and further study of the problem by a future Congressional Committee. With the submission of its report to the House of Representatives on December 31, 1948, the committee completed its activities.

The records described in this inventory, amounting to approximately seven cubic feet, are part of Record Group 233, Records of the United States House of Representatives. Neither the records of the committee nor information contained in them may be made available to any person except upon the express authorization of the House of Representatives.

RECORDS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TO INVESTIGATE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. July 1, 1948 - December 31, 1948 1ft. 1

Among the administrative records are applications for employment with the committee; committee minutes; correspondence relating to administrative matters or requests for publications of the committee; correspondence with the committee chairman; Federal Communications Commission payroll and list of employees; first interim and final reports; investigators reports and memoranda; ledger book or committee expenses; memoranda from the

General Counsel; miscellaneous publications (hearings before the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce, 78th Congress, concerning amendment of the Communications Act of 1934; hearings before the Select Committee to Investigate the Federal Communications Commission, 80th Congress; Radio Laws of the United States, 1944; Forty-Seventh Annual Report of the Governor of Puerto Rico, for the Fiscal year 1946-1947; Official Reports of the Supreme Court, opinions of March 8, 1948, Volume 333 U. S. - number 2); notices of meetings; press releases; reading file; vouchers for salaries, stationary and various other expenses. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

PERSONNEL FILES. Aug. 19, 1948 - Dec. 8, 1948 4 ft.

2

Photostatic copies of personnel records of employees of the Legal Division of the Federal Communications Commission, submitted by the Commission in response to a written request from the committee. Arranged alphabetically by name of person; for list of folder headings, see appendix A.

RECORDS OF INVESTIGATIONS AND HEARINGS. June 19, 1948 - Dec. 30, 1948

2 ft.

3

Records of investigations including correspondence with the Federal Communications Commission concerning requests from the Committee for information and records needed in the investigation; letters from private citizens suggesting areas of investigations; correspondence with radio stations and networks; abstracts from Federal Communications Commission employees' personnel files; transcripts of hearings; reports from the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities concerning backgrounds of Federal Communications Commission employees; for list of folder headings, see appendix B.

APPENDIX A

Headings for Folders in the Personnel File (Entry 2)

Albien, Grace L.	Dobin, Paul
Alford, Robert H.	Donahue, Thomas H.
Anello, Douglas A.	Donnelly, Anne G.
Aronson, Max H.	Doty, Dwight D.
Bauer, William H.	Emery, Walter B.
Becker, Al Harry	Ende, Asher H.
Berkemeyer, Donald	Fenton, Robert M.
Berry, Tyler	Fonger, Adelle V.
Blume, Jack P.	Ford, Frederick W.
Bond, Jay D.	Freret, Julian P.
Brenner, Joseph	Gaguine, Benito
Brownstein, Irving	Gladstone, Arthur A.
Burke, Emma C.	Goldman, Max
Clift, Charles E.	Griffith, C. Lamont
Cohen, Harold J.	Haley, Violet L.
Connolly, Margaret H.	Hall, Wanda L.
Connors, Ann L.	Hancock, Parker D.
Cook, Dorothy S.	Hanson, Mable E.
Cooper, Basil P.	Hartman, Ruth M.
Cottone, Benedict P.	Hase, Bernice E.
Cunningham, James D.	Hubert, Charles
Cureton, Margaret L.	Hudson, Robert W.
Cutler, Evelyn	Hunting, Annie N.
Deibler, David H.	Hutchison, Hugh B.
Dickson, Rosemarie A.	Irion, H. Gifford

Jackson, Mary E.  
Johnson, J. Fred, Jr.  
Johnson, Mahala B.  
Kaplan, Elizabeth  
Kenehan, Edward F.  
Kessler, Sylvia D.  
Kittner, Joseph M.  
Koteen, Robert M.  
Laferney, Anna R.  
Landis, David S.  
Lewis, Raymond  
Litvin, Fanney  
McAllister, John H.  
McBee, Mary K.  
McClenning, Forest L.  
McCoy, John E.  
McDonald, Hazel V.  
MacClein, George  
Mallyck, E. Theodore  
Martin, Marguerite M.  
Nelson, Joseph N.  
Nesterak, Mildred B.  
Newcomb, Lamar  
Orr, Marshall S.  
Paglin, Max D.  
Pincock, Dee W.  
Plaughter, Norma M.

Plotkin, Harry M.  
Powell, Walter R., Jr.  
Puffenberger, Fausta M.  
Rawson, Robert J.  
Resnick, Leo  
Saxl, Erick  
Scheiner, Arthur  
Schildhause, Sol  
Sharfman, Herbert  
Shea, Hilda D.  
Siepman, Charles A.  
Smith, Edwin S., Jr.  
Smith, Elizabeth C.  
Smith, J. Russell  
Soloman, Richard A.  
Spillane, Lester W.  
Stevens, David S.  
Strassberg, Bernard  
Stretch, Florence I.  
Templeman, Melba Z.  
Valicente, Pasquale  
Vetterman, Helen E.  
Wallick, Dorothy  
Waple, Ben F.  
Werner, Jack  
Wicker, John E.  
Wihton, Maurice W.

APPENDIX B

Headings for the Investigations and Hearings File (Entry 3)

Abstracts from FCC employees' personnel folders

Advertising Council, Inc.

American Broadcasting Co.

Blue Book.

Canadian Television Allocation Plans

Clear channel hearing

Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.

Correspondence concerning the committee's requests for FCC material

FCC organization chart and personnel regulations

FCC reports

Goldin, Hyman Howard (information from personnel file)

Houston Post Company

Lamb, Edward (letters, reports, newspaper clippings)

Lotteries, gift enterprises or similar schemes

Mayflower case

National Association of Broadcasters

Port Huron case

Proposed investigations

Puerto Rico

Reports from the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American  
Activities on FCC employees

Scott decision

Senate Bill 1333 and report

Smythe, Dallas W. (copy of personnel folder)

Stations (pending FCC cases involving radio stations)

Western Union Telegraph Co.  
WGOV -Valdosta, Georgia