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The Ninth Plenary Assembly of the CCIR at Los Angeles

The Ninth Plenary Assembly of the International Radio Consultative Committee (CCIR) opened in Los Angeles, California, on Thursday, 2 April, 1959. Dr. Arthur Lebel, Chairman of the Delegation of the United States of America, was elected Chairman of the Conference.

Extensive arrangements for the Conference had been previously made by the Host Government with the collaboration of the Director and Vice-Director of the CCIR, Dr. E. Metzler and Mr. L. W. Hayes, and Mr. R. Lindsey, who was elected Secretary of the Conference.

A full report on the proceedings of the Conference will be given in a subsequent issue of the *Journal*, but in the meantime the texts of the two addresses given on the opening day of the Conference are given below :

*Official Speech of Welcome
on behalf of the United States Government to
the CCIR Ninth Plenary Assembly*

*by
the Honorable W. T. M. Beale,
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Economic
Affairs*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :

"It is an honour and a pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the Government of the United States.

"This country has been greatly privileged ; for it was at Washington that the International Radio Consultative Committee was created in 1927, and it was at Atlantic City in 1947 that the Radio Conference adopted the principle of the engineered allocation of frequencies to communications services. Now the City of Los Angeles takes its place in a roster which contains many famous names. For we should not forget that this Committee traces its origin back to the founding in Paris, ninety-four years ago, of the International Telegraph Union. When the first International Telegraph Convention was signed on 17 May, 1865, our Civil War had only just drawn to a close and our country had suffered the loss of the Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln. At that time, this great State of California had belonged to the Union only fifteen years.

"Let me recall for a minute some of the highlights in the historical background against which we are meeting today. When the Paris Convention was revised in 1868 in Vienna, Franz Josef the First was Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary. When it was again revised in Rome in 1872, Italy had been unified for only a year. And by 1875, when the Union met in St. Petersburg, the Czar Alexander the Second had emancipated the serfs.

"A listing of these events serves to point out how relatively young the CCIR is, and at the same time emphasizes the rapidity of developments during the lifetime of your organization. To any of us, for whom the memory of Lindbergh's historic flight is still vivid, the year 1927 is not ancient history. But I feel quite certain that, had the Conference been held in Los Angeles in that year, I would not then have flown from

Washington solely to welcome you, as I have done on this occasion.

"It is not my purpose, however, to dwell on past history and the progress already made by your organization, especially since the end of World War II. You can take pride indeed in your past accomplishments. And I am certain that you welcome the challenging tasks you will undertake in the years immediately ahead. Today you are studying the requirements for communication service with outer space on an urgent basis. Only a few years ago the need for such studies seemed indefinitely far in the future. But as you have recognized, the requirements for this new service are a very real, practical, current problem for which the Radio Administrative Conference at Geneva will have to consider frequency allocation needs. I am confident that this Committee will make a solid contribution to the understanding and resolution of these problems. It is also important for the future that you have under active consideration the problems of still another new service—stereophonic broadcasting—through which new dimensions and depth will be given to the transmission of sound.

"It is a tribute to the farsightedness of the originators of the CCIR and must be a source of gratification to all of you, that the many technical problems brought about by the expansion of the art of radio into the broad technical field of electronics development could be met and solved through the years on an international basis with such success.

"If questions concerning newly developing services and techniques have not become major international telecommunication problems, it is because the CCIR has anticipated them and recommended procedures for their resolution at an early stage.

"The attributes of the CCIR have been many. It has anticipated future communication requirements and recognized the importance of flexibility for research and development in new areas of communication. It has never waited for problems to become acute. Particularly in the period since 1947 when, as I have remarked, the change in approach to the allocation of frequencies for radio communication service was made, the CCIR has put into early study a great many technical problems.

"You are all familiar with most of these problems, but I would still like to recall some of them, such as those of the propagation characteristics of various frequencies, the operational characteristics and techniques for particular services to provide for maximum efficiency and capacity for each service. This had the long-range view not only of providing for future expansion of communication service, but also of providing for conservation of the frequency spectrum.

"The CCIR has emphasized the need for future standardization for international communication service to the widest extent possible. It has also called for the development of more efficient transmitters, receivers and complete communication systems, and for accuracy in monitoring and in standardizing frequency signals.

"It is important to remember, however, that the results of which you are proud could only have been achieved by adherence to the main objectives of the International Telecommunication Union. Let me recall to your minds that these objectives are, first, to maintain and extend international co-operation for the improvement and rational use of telecommunications ; second, to promote the development of technical

facilities and their most efficient operations; and lastly, to harmonize the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends. I would emphasize the words *international co-operation, development of technical facilities, and harmonize the actions of nations.*

"To me they are worth emphasizing, first, because my Government recognizes the vital international importance of the work which is the particular responsibility of this Committee, and second, because these are the objectives which my Government seeks to achieve through its foreign economic policy.

"We believe that these principles of international co-operation, technical assistance and mutual aid should be applied not only in dealing with the problems of telecommunication, but in carrying out the numerous other activities pursued under the aegis of the United Nations. That is why my Government attaches such great importance to other specialized agencies of the UN, several of which work closely with the ITU such as ICAO, UNESCO and WMO.

"Today we live in an era of interdependence. An event in one part of the world has repercussions in other parts, adverse or favourable. If you will forgive me for borrowing from your phraseology, there are times when the political and economic frequency bands seem over-crowded and one could wish that in those fields we might duplicate your success in agreeing on allocations.

"As communicators you have solved many technical problems. I doubt not that you will resolve many more. But you are also citizens in an inter-dependent world and as such, you bear additional responsibilities. In your expert capacity you have contributed to the tremendous advance that has been made in our ability to communicate with each other. In your other capacity you must share the deep concern of all men of good will that the ideas we communicate should promote the peace and well-being of all nations.

"In this audience today are representatives of 54 countries. I do not know how many of you are visiting this country for the first time. Many, I hope, we can count as old friends. During the weeks you will spend in this delightful city and State, I hope you will come to know and understand us, or learn to know us better as the case may be. I recognize that, to you who communicate so freely, no parts of the world, and no peoples, are wholly unfamiliar. But I would hope that this Conference would not only advance the art of communication but assist the communication of ideas.

"Let me remind you that it is not only in the field of communications that the world has changed, and this country with it. Few of those who attended the Conference in Washington in 1927 could have imagined that the Marshall Plan would already be in operation when they met again in 1947. And today this country can point to many developments in the field of foreign economic policy which you will want to take into account in arriving at your understanding of our country. For, as I have suggested, we have sought to apply in this broad field the principles you have found so effective in your own special field of interest.

"In doing so, my Government has associated itself with others in multilateral organizations for the expansion of international trade and the promotion of economic development. We take some considerable pride that our country, in co-operation with many others, has brought about substantial reductions in the trade barriers which stifle the exchange of goods and services throughout the world. Through the International Monetary Fund we have helped to promote exchange stability and to alleviate balance-of-payments difficulties. With other Members of the World Bank we have been able to render development assistance

through loans. We have collaborated with other international organizations, including many agencies of the UN in their efforts to improve economic conditions and raise living standards throughout the world. Moreover, when needs have arisen which could not be met by other means, we have sought to supplement these international efforts from our own resources through institutions established for that purpose.

"In mentioning what we have done in recent years, I do so not to solicit your praise. My sole purpose is that you may have a better understanding of the development of our national thinking. We would have you see behind the form to the substance, so that we may encourage that communication of ideas which your achievements facilitate.

I repeat, we are happy to welcome you to this country. May your work prove useful as in the past, may you enjoy yourselves and make many friends, and may you return to these shores many times to forward the vitally important work of this Committee!"

*Speech of response on behalf of the
International Telecommunication Union at the
opening banquet — CCIR IXth Plenary Assembly*

*by
Mr. Gerald C. Gross
Acting Secretary-General, International Telecommuni-
cation Union*

Mr. Assistant Secretary, Mr. President, Mr. Mayor,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

"It is always good to be back among friends, and it is always good to be home, so if, during my response on behalf of the International Telecommunication Union to the warm speech of welcome delivered by Mayor Poulson, I occasionally strike a somewhat personal note, please ascribe it to my enthusiasm at my happy fortune in combining these two circumstances. I am visiting my home country once again and I am indeed among very old friends!

"It is particularly appropriate that the CCIR should meet again in the United States, because it was at the Washington Conference in 1927 that the CCIR first came into being. This conference was presided over by the then Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, later President Hoover, and it was at this conference that, as a rather junior assistant to one of our most eminent scientists, Dr. J. H. Dellinger, I had my first contact with international conferences. Indeed, Mr. Clarkson of New Zealand recalled to me the other day that it was through the strong and progressive support of such countries as New Zealand at that conference and others that the CCIR first came into being.

"The International Telecommunication Union itself has the unique distinction in the family of United Nations agencies of being the oldest and the most venerable member of that family. As you all know, it was founded in 1865 as the ITU, but at that time, before the days of radio inventions, including those of Edison, Marconi and Popoff (to mention just a few), it was called the International Telegraph Union. It is hardly necessary to say to a group of radio people that this situation needed correcting, and after radio came of age internationally at the Berlin Conferences of 1903 and 1906, the designation of the Union was finally changed at the Madrid Conference in 1932, to its present and more comprehensive name of International Telecommunication Union.

"I have personally had the pleasure of participating in each one of the nine Plenary Assemblies of the CCIR except the one held in Warsaw in 1956, when an appointment for a surgical operation at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston (at which my presence was indispensable) unavoidably kept me away. However, I feel it was worthwhile because, since that somewhat consequential overhaul, I have been feeling very fit indeed.

"During 1947, the ITU itself underwent a major overhaul of its own: the staff of the CCIR was put on a permanent rather than on an interim basis, the CCI Telephone was absorbed from Paris (along with its founder, Mr. Georges Valensi) and the CCI Telegraph was also made permanent. The International Frequency Registration Board was created: for those of you who are not too familiar with its functions, it might be described as an international FCC with certain attributes of the International Court of Justice at the Hague.

"These changes in the structure of the Union brought about at the Atlantic City Conference, and still going on, were made necessary to keep abreast of the steadily increasing demands for international coordination in telecommunications. We are moving steadily forward not only in time but in the other three dimensions. On Monday of this week I crossed the American continent by jet airplane in a little more than five hours. Very soon it will be standard procedure to leave Geneva at 0800 local time, have breakfast on board, and arrive in New York at 0800, have another breakfast, continue on to Chicago, Los Angeles, Honolulu, Manila, Karachi, Cairo and back to Geneva, so that you have gone round the world and had more breakfasts than you can hold, simply because you are keeping pace with the sun.

"All of this, of course, is around our own limited sphere we call 'the Earth'. If we talk to our outer-space friends, however, our horizons become less finite. I have particular reference to two meetings of the International Astronautical Federation which I attended with our good friend and associate, Andrew Gallagher Haley, President of the International Astronautical Federation and General Counsel of the American Rocket Society. At the last meeting held in Amsterdam last fall, I had the pleasure of talking with such eminent scientists as Professor Sedov, father of the Sputnik, Professor von Braun, the designer of the Vanguard, and Professor Theodor von Karman, one of the world's greatest aerodynamicists, and I was tremendously impressed with the plans they have made for interplanetary travel. In fact, I got so enthusiastic that I almost bought a ticket for the first trip to the moon and only restrained myself when I decided that it would be more prudent to buy a round trip ticket, or as the French say a 'billet aller et retour'.

"In spite of my natural diffidence, I finally mustered enough brashness to ask what appeared to me to be a practical question:

"What happens to a space satellite travelling at 18 000 miles an hour which unfortunately runs into technical trouble and starts heading for your house or my house?

"The answer was swift and intended to be reassuring:

"We will blow it up of course, before it does any damage."

"How?" I asked.

"By radio" was the reply. I then said:

"Where do you get the frequencies?"

"Oh, we have them — they are in the experimental band."

"What happens," I asked, "if the broadcasters are using television on them or the airlines are practising navigation aids?"

"Frankly, they had not considered this point! I understand now that the CCIR has made a special study question of this problem, thanks to the enterprise of our good friend, Andy Haley, and the Director and Vice-Director of the CCIR, Messrs. Metzler and Hayes, and the Chairmen of Study Groups 5 and 6 which developed these important questions to be studied.

"In this connection, may I address a special word to His Honour the Mayor and to our hosts in Los Angeles. It appears that for geographical reasons connected with the launching sites, Los Angeles is and will be a key control point for communications with the space satellites. This information has been published, so I am not violating any security when I refer to the fact that the Air Force launching base at Vandenberg Air Base and the Navy satellite launching base at Point Mugu offer unparalleled facilities for launching over an initial all-water path. This combined with the fantastic electronic growth throughout your magnificent State, Mr. Mayor, will probably result in an expansion during the next quarter century which will put the fabulous California gold rush of the last century in the shade.

"Just a final note of caution concerning two aspects of the same problem, one technical and the other political. With the unparalleled development in the entire field of electronics, and particularly in the complexity of the equipment, we must be careful not to relax our vigilance in such fundamental matters as the protection of life and property. There have been far too many serious accidents in recent months both at sea and in the air partly as a result of the failure of the people for whom these electronics components are developed, to use them properly. I think it is a job to which we as engineers should dedicate ourselves to make sure that the ultimate user, whether he be a deck officer on a ship or the pilot or navigator in an airplane, is given the necessary technical education and background to be fully aware of the scope and limitations of the technical tools placed at his disposal.

"Similarly in the political field, we who pride ourselves on bringing order out of chaos and reaching international agreement in our own field — for telecommunication knows no borders — may feel that in the higher echelons of world politics, the technical achievements made possible in our telecommunications field may serve as an example of useful international cooperation which might well be emulated in other fields."



Banquet in honour of the opening of the IXth Plenary Assembly, CCIR
Banquet d'ouverture de la IX^e Assemblée plénière du CCIR
Banquete celebrado con motivo de la apertura de la IX Asamblea plenaria del CCIR