

involving the public interest which arise in the communications industry. Instead of carrying out this mandate of Congress, the Commission apparently has decided to devote its energies and resources to an unwarranted expansion of its jurisdiction. Unless the Commission reverses its course and gives prompt and careful consideration to the essential and assigned tasks now pending before it, the communications field will soon become a hopeless morass in which the public interest will disappear from view.

The great and pressing problems to which the Commission should be addressing itself are numerous indeed. For the record, I believe it is important to review a few of them.

THE SPECTRUM

What has the Commission done to solve the problem of allocating the radio spectrum? At the insistence and direction of an exasperated Congress, the Commission has failed to follow through. Since that time and with increasing frequency, each day's mail to the Congress brings more complaints and pleas from taxpayers and from police departments throughout the nation who urgently need and require space on the radio spectrum. For years the Commission has had "under consideration" a study and analysis of a proper allocation of radio frequencies to commercial public safety users of land-mobile facilities. But instead of once and for all establishing a workable, usable system, the Commission has stumbled on in patchwork fashion without usefully and equitably allocating the spectrum.

In addition to the 7,000 commercial and educational radio and television transmitters in the United States, there are five million transmitters that are not used for such broadcasting. Not only police and fire departments, but the space program, aviation, and business firms require additional space on the spectrum.

I have found shocking the many comments I have received from the Chiefs of Police throughout the country describing impossible circumstances under which their departments labor because adequate frequency space has not been allocated to them.

According to the Commissioner of Public Safety for Mt. Vernon, New York: "During our recent disturbances during July our one frequency was a specific example of various instances where a shortage of radio space hampered our men in the efficient performance of their duty and delayed or prevented prompt and effective response to emergency . . ."

The Chief of Police of Cleveland, Ohio, has written that: "This department . . . desperately needs more frequencies . . . because Texas police departments are on the same band as the Cleveland Police Department, this creates obvious confusion in our broadcasts. . . . During riots or national catastrophies the police and Ohio National Guard have no mutual radio frequency."

As recently as August 23, the Los Angeles Police Department stated: "The Los Angeles Police Department still has not been able to activate its planned city-wide emergency frequency because of a lack of a frequency which can be assigned to that use. . . . The lack of radio frequencies for critical public safety service has become acute."

The Chief of Police of Newark, New Jersey, has said: "Even during normal operations, we are seriously handicapped because of a lack of available frequencies. It was a serious problem during the recent disturbance in our city and the solution to this problem is a reallocation of the frequencies, particularly to those larger cities who have considerable mobile equipment in the field."

On September 26 of this year, the Chief of Police of Sioux City, Iowa, wrote of his growing concern about the channel crowding of the public safety radio frequencies:

"We share our frequency with the cities of Pipestone, Minnesota; Laverne, Minnesota; New Ulm, Minnesota; and Davenport, Iowa, and should a mass civil disturbance occur in Sioux City, this outside traffic could easily disrupt our communications network here and render it ineffective. This has occurred during routine daily work, but I can foresee serious problems if we urgently needed to utilize our radio and were unable to do so because of foreign interference. My department relies on the radio system and without it, I feel that law enforcement deteriorates badly."

Instead of devoting its energy to solving this important problem, the Commission has ignored the seriousness of the situation. It proposes to allocate precious spectrum space for yet another form of commercial entertainment, completely ignoring the present pressing necessity to study and reallocate the spectrum for public safety and other purposes.