

REMARKS OVER WSPD HOOKUP WHEN WSPD JOINS N.B.C.

May 2, 1937

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Anyone interested in education must be interested in Radio, and on behalf of the University of Toledo, I gladly offer our congratulations to WSPD.

Radio is so new to our civilization, that its possibilities for entertainment have been developed, and to many millions of persons it brings beauty in music and drama, news of current events, and opinions of leaders on the problems of the day.

In the long run this last may be the most important of radio functions, and it is here that we educators are most concerned. For radio can be an instrument for propaganda, the tool of the dictator, just as easily as it can be the agency for free discussion, helping people to appreciate our complicated problems.

The wonderful advances of scientific research have made possible in the world 3 times as many persons as lived here a century ago - some 2000 million in all. But this vast number of people raises problems that have become more serious than ever before, and we are in the midst of wars, strikes, and uncertainties.

In some countries they are trying to solve these problems by dictatorship, and the radio is the slave of the dictator. If I were saying these words in one of those countries, your radio would suddenly become silent, and I would find myself in Siberia or a concentration camp.

Freedom has gone from those countries. Freedom of thought, of speech, of action, are lost. The people have given up the right of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for what they believed would be security and prosperity. They have found neither!

I read in my copy of the American Legion Councillor the official standard of living figures published by the League of Nations. If the United States figure is 100, then Germany is 33, and Italy 25. The figures for Russia are not given in this study, but I have never heard even the most enthusiastic communist claim anything like the same standard of living there that we have here.

No, in giving up their liberty, these people have not found prosperity, but even if they had done so, in the long run, they would regret the bargain. I believe freedom under law as the Constitution of the United States stands for, is the most prized heritage of the human race, and the one which we must fight hardest to maintain.

Radio stands at the front in this battle. Over WSPD we can get instantly not only the news of the whole world, but the interpretation of that news from many different points of view.

Let even the Caughlins, the Longs, the Browders speak over the radio. The best way to puncture these false doctrines is to bring them out where we can hear them.

And let the radio officials make it their duty, as they have done so well in the past, to see that the democratic point of view is also presented. I have no fear whichway the American people will choose.

Have I been too serious for a pleasant party of congratulation and encouragement? I hope not, because after all, the most fun in life will come to radio officials, as it does to everyone else, from the satisfaction of significant contribution to the progress of mankind towards life that is more full and free.

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