

Interpretation

RADIO AS AN AID TO INTERPRETATION

Superintendent James R. McConaghie, Vicksburg NMP, has been using radio for some time to tell the historical story to visitors in caravan tours. "Mac" tells us that for approximately \$30 and a day's labor, anyone can put together the necessary equipment for "broadcasting" to vehicles in the immediate vicinity of a tour leader's car. The parts he uses are a Knight wireless broadcaster and microphone, a converter, and a 96-inch, or extra long, automobile antenna. The transmitter is set at a pre-determined wave length, well removed from any local commercial broadcasting channel. Since the transmitter range of this device is limited to the immediate vicinity, Part 15 of the Federal Communications Commission Rules and Regulations (incidental and restricted radiation devices) should be observed. Copies of Part 15, FCC may be obtained from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. Briefly, these requirements include:

- (a) Power input to the final radio stage (exclusive of filament or heater power) does not exceed 100 milliwatts.
- (b) *(Does not apply to standard automobile radios.)*
- (c) Total length of the transmission line plus the antenna does not exceed 10 feet.

Note: Manufactured transmitters should be certified as meeting these requirements.

When radio is used in this manner for interpretation, those following the tour leader's automobile are requested to tune their car sets to the preselected wave length before setting out on the tour. Busses and other vehicles not equipped with radio receivers are furnished a small battery powered radio which "Mac" obtains from automobile junk yards at bargain prices. These are preset at the appropriate wave length and placed in the front of the bus. A portable antenna is fastened to the outside of the bus by means of suction cups, and connected to the portable set.

Through the use of this device, those following a tour need not leave their vehicles, thus causing undue delay at points enroute. It has been noted that visitors, particularly the school children in busses, give greater attention to the story being told when the narrator is not in the immediate view of his audience. Much time is saved, too, and the tourist has a better chance of getting the full story since the narrator is with them in their vehicle all the time, figuratively speaking.

By the addition of a portable tape recorder in place of, or in conjunction with the microphone, even personnel unfamiliar with the details of the interpretive story can lead a caravan. The tape recorder, operated through a converter of proper capacity, can put the interpretive story, previously recorded in proper sequence, into the transmitter. The tour leader need only flip a switch at each point of interest as the caravan progresses.