

9/13/66

TO: Richard T<sup>H</sup>orne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

COPY

I intend to pursue this matter until the problem is solved or has been pronounced unsolvable.

You might check tomorrow (Wednesday) to see whether I have been sent the PSA copy presumably prepared for recording this Friday. Also whether there is any promo or other PSA copy lying around which I should receive.

9/16/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

COPY

Enclosed are four pieces of Kiwanis copy with one minor correction -- an error in grammar. If all goes true to form I'll hear this uncorrected copy on the air on Monday.

I point out (YAWN) that this copy is undated. I'll be listening for it on September 24, since the copy contains the date of September 23.

Let's discuss the copy situation and the PSA schedule with Ron Ruth on Monday. Last copy I received was on Thursday, September 8. I telephoned you that morning to see whether it was worthwhile to try to get corrected copy back to the station that afternoon, since I naively assumed it was to be recorded the next day. You assured me that it would not be recorded until my corrected copy was received. I sent it back special delivery to arrive early Friday morning. I heard the uncorrected copy on the air Monday.

My corrections were not important by the casual standards of WNUS but the Boys Club copy, particularly, bothered me because it is what I call "nonsense copy" and I see no need of running such stuff when it can so easily be corrected. One announcement, now running, urges WNUS listeners to "walk through the inner city and listen for the silent cry of thousands of children." I don't know the name for that kind of tommyrot but I think it's called an Irish Bull.

Another bit has "31,000 children looking to the BOys Clubs for help." No one in his right mind is going to believe that 31,000 little boys and girls are looking to the Boys Clubs for help. I corrected "children" to "boys" and even wrote a note, explaining that children was a co-educational word while the Boys Clubs were not coeducational institutions. I suppose that since nobody at WNUS cares I shouldn't care either but it makes me uncomfortable knowing that intelligent listeners will be aware of this kind of twaddle and wonder why the station permits it.

I don't know why you didn't run the Hull House anniversary copy unless it was resentment that I rewrite it to make it conform with what I thought were standards of good taste.



9/16/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Asg

IS THE FOOD SHOPPING GUIDE WHERE IT BELONGS?

I politely and respectfully question the placement of this feature.

If this is merely the crass scheduling of a feature calculated to attract chainstore advertising, the placement is appropriate. If, however, there is a genuine intention to be of service to the housewife, consideration should be given to a change in schedule.

Surveys of audience composition generally indicate that the maximum of concentrated housewife listening is between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Women are too busy with children, husbands and other chores in "drive times" to be able to take advantage of specific price items over the air.

Can you imagine a housewife at 7:40 a.m. being able to listen to, remember, and jot down the price of a pound of round steak at the A & P?

9/17/66

TOL Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

I THINK IT'S A SHAME

I think it's a shame to re-run Bart McLendon Viet Nam tapes day after day after day. I heard one recently run four days in a row and I heard one today which has been heard off and on for at least ten days or two weeks.

I think it would be much better to run just some promos through the week on the up-coming documentary, rather than to weary listeners with too frequent repetitions of taped dispatches.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

DON'T STRESS "RACE" UNNECESSARILY

A story heard several times today about an Indiana robbery says, "Police say that the two men, both of them Negroes, entered the terminal . . . ." This is a direct violation of the policy book adjuration to mention race in crime stories only when it is a necessary identification factor. Race should be mentioned only when it is a specific factor in the news value of the story.

News copy writers should familiarize themselves with station policy. If you wouldn't say, "both of them white," you shouldn't say, "both of them Negroes."

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

"HEADLINES ARE SACRED." -- RICHARD THORNE

I quote to you this statement which you made the other day in a meeting. I quote it in this instance in support of my previously voiced complaint that the 5-minute religious news on Sunday displaces the regular mid-broadcast headline summary.

I didn't listen enough this Sunday to verify whether or not the religious news completely eliminated the headline summaries but I can state that they threw them off schedule as much as six minutes.

I don't see why, for instance, the headline summary can't be given at 8:44 a.m. and the religious news immediately follow on schedule at 8:45. The announcer needn't mention the time as "8:44" but merely give the headlines. Several of the men are handling it this way already and it seems to work very satisfactorily.

2 Stale Promos

I'm not kicking about Dennis Fraser's voice but the promos do get a bit hackneyed when always heard in his voice and when repeated time and time again with exactly the same wordage.

I think the promotion for the Advertising News series is being overdone. I suggest again that the copy on these be cut down. It's fine to advertise this feature but I think the overpromotion with the same over-written announcements is getting to be boring.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

TOO MANY STALE PROMOS

Listening during hours when commercials are scarce gives one the very definite impression of too many station promos. One also has the painful sensation that many of them are far too familiar to the ear.

Every now and then, for a day or two, we get the two announcements in the voice of Don Keyes which were recorded at the time when United Airlines became a joint sponsor of "Minute Telephone News." There's nothing particularly wrong with these announcements and the promotion is certainly justified if minute news is still functioning, but I should think that regular listeners would be as tired of these announcements as I am. They could be re-done with slightly different language and some different voices.

Another announcement which has had its day is the one in the voice of Dennis Fraser which starts out, "Seven Chicago radio stations program all night." This one has really been scheduled to death in the last few days. In the first place, it's a little too long, belabors the point a little too much and also says, "News 1390 is your reassurance," when it means "assurance." It's not bad, but it's been on the air too long and too frequently. I dislike it particularly because it first went on when we were at the nadir of the Walter Robinson fiasco and when we should have been running announcements urging people not to listen to WNUS at night.

Certainly now our very good nighttime programming should be promoted but we should be proud enough of it to write some new promos. I suggest three new bits of copy, a little shorter and not so repetitive and in the voices of three different newscasters.

I suggest that you might consider as a matter of policy an effort to get a little more variety in station promos, merely by having three different wordings for each particular announcement and having them done by three different voices.



9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

SAME OLD STORY

The "Friendly Visitor" PSAs are running with a grammatical error which I corrected in the copy submitted to me. These announcements were recorded before I received the copy.

A hell of a waste of my time and of a 30-cent special delivery stamp and just one more cheerful message to listeners that WNUS does not care whether it uses good English on the air.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

SO NOW WE HAVE "SHOWS" ON THE ALL-NEWS STATION!

I have several times heard a promo which states (approximately) that WNUS "has a fall schedule of shows calculated to give you an ear to the world."

Maybe this is an in-joke which I don't get. My own reaction is that the Founding Father would not appreciate hearing an announcement saying that WNUS had a fall line-up of "shows."

I should receive promo copy for proofreading in accordance with management's orders to studio staff as of last May.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

NEW "CLOSE-OUT" FORMULA NOT DOING TOO WELL

The men are not doing at all well in carrying out the specific instructions on the close-out formula set forth in your memo of 9/22/66. I have a feeling that possibly you did not stress sufficiently that the order of items was being shifted. Several of them still give the pollen count last and Mike Turner has developed the habit of weaving it into the middle of the weather conditions -- which I find confusing.

I have heard the five-day forecast read now and then but there doesn't seem to be much consistency about it, even within the limitations which you set forth.

I think the mandatory close-out of the official weather report immediately followed by announcer signature should be re-stressed and, incidentally, never again varied.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

DANGEROUS EDITORIALIZING!

I mention names because I think this is a bad situation.

Mike Turner and Bill Drisky have a tendency to ad lib. I find their remarks bright and amusing. But it's strictly against policy. And it can lead to dangerous situations, to wit:

Mike Turner read a story the other day about a Negro Professor from the University of Chicago who spoke in St. Louis and said that black power could be divided into four categories, the last of which was "physical power." Mike ended the story with an ad lib to the effect that, "Yes. And we just had a fine example of that last kind of power here today."

To me this could mean nothing but a reference to two stories currently running in which Negro youths threw a fire bomb into a bus and another group beat up some innocent citizens.

With Mike, I abhor these conditions, but I think it is dangerous for him to editorialize thus on air.

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

IMMEDIACY OF NEWS? HAW. HAW. HAW.

At 8:20 p.m. Sunday WNUS was still using as an example of its "immediacy" in reporting news a story which was then about 36 hours old. The promo, which gives a simulated report from the teletype room to show how the station interrupts news schedules to report stories of great "immediacy," gives the beginning of a story about the throwing of a fire bomb into a CTA bus "early today."

The incident in question happened early yesterday, Saturday, 6/24/66.

This dated promo, which specifically states that "today" the news was interrupted with etc., should have been killed at midnight Saturday. It ran at around 2 a.m. Sunday morning, which made it sound even sillier when described as a re-run of a cut-in earlier in the day of a story which happened earlier in the day.

This same failure to kill this dated promo happened also on Saturday. The Friday promo with the Friday story was run early Saturday morning, an event not calculated to increase listener confidence in WNUS' claims of "immediacy."

I think it's odd that the newscasters don't notice things like this and call them to the attention of the engineer. Or, as I used to say before I found out that it hurt the engineers' feelings, why don't the engineers hear it and yank it?

9/26/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

DRISKY GIVES A GOOD, LISTENABLE BROADCAST  
BUT HE NEEDS A SPANKING

Things he still does in direct violation of policy book:

Gives Chicago teams' baseball scores wherever they appear in wire copy -- not first on list as instructed.

Instead of giving baseball scores, he reads all that guck from the wire about teams being "upended, edged, slaughtered, etc." Gives specific street addresses of unimportant people in routine stories.

Announces own name four times during each broadcast -- beginning, end of first headlines, at midcast headlines, and at end.

Mannerisms and eccentricities which should be corrected:

"Our temperature, our official weather report, our humidity, our pollen count."

Our planes bomb "the commies." (Vietcong.)

Bad editing of date lines in wire stories with ludicrous results. "In Pasadena, California, Surveyor II is whirling around helplessly in space."

Time checks should be checked.

I know it's a difficult situation, but something should be done about inconsistency of time checks. Sometimes a whole hour will go by with no time given -- either at beginning or end of broadcast -- then for a half hour the time will be given every five minutes.

Other items which probably can't be corrected:

Too frequently repeats identical stories in same broadcast. Fails to update stories.



9/26/66

TO: Dennis Fraser

CC: Ron Ruth, Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

NEW PSA SCHEDULE

Referring to your memo of September 20 on the schedule for the PSA recordings, I suggest that it is unnecessary for me to telephone with corrections.

1. It wastes time.
2. It leaves all kinds of room for additional errors.
3. I think you have allowed slack in the wrong place. As Ron Ruth points out, copy for most PSA campaigns has been prepared well in advance by the organizations. There should be no reason for us to meet a frantic deadline. Furthermore, why go through the comic opera stuff of telephoning corrections as if we had a hot news story and then let the finished recordings sit around for seven days before going on the air.

Let's try having me mail the corrected copy back so that you get it Thursday morning.

9/28/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

"HE WAS JUST A BUM."

When I was a young rewrite man a skid row derelict tried to end his life by jumping off the Madison Street bridge. Unsympathetic police pulled him out of the water to begin life anew and I wrote a touching front page feature story which brought tears to the eyes of the city editor and a pat on the back for me.

The lead paragraph was: "He was just a bum."

Shortly thereafter the tears were in the eyes of the managing editor. A slick lawyer had clipped the story, located the bum, and sued The Evening American for \$100,000.00 damages for defamation of character. The moral of this story is, "Never call a bum a bum."

I cite it merely to support a suggestion that it's about time to remind newscasters and news writers again about the libel laws.

All day yesterday we carried a story about a woman who allegedly murdered her son, wounded her daughter and shot herself in a suicide attempt.

Some of the stories said, "A mother reportedly ...." Some said, "Police report that a mother ...."

BUT some said, "A mother today murdered her son, etc." When and if this mother goes to trial she will already have been tried and convicted on WNUS 1390. There seems little doubt that the woman performed as reported but the Supreme Court continues to assert that it isn't nice for WNUS to convict people of crimes before a judge and jury have had a chance.

The direct-statement form of reporting is of course more listenable but it's a much safer policy to stick to the conventional newspaper form of avoiding libel by use of such hackneyed phrases as "is alleged to have - reportedly - police charge - police report that -- etc."

9/27/66

TO: Ron Ruth and Richard Thorne

CC: Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

PROMO COPY?

I continue to hear new promos on the air for which I have not seen copy.

9/27/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

NOW THAT THE HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE,

LET'S ALL GET TOGETHER ON THE LEEWARD ISLANDS

I always thought they were pronounced "LOO' URD ISLANDS." That's the way Phil Bowman and I pronounce them. But Joe Edwards and Noah Webster say "LEEWARD ISLANDS." just as spelled.

I presume it's just a question of "Yo Ho. Let's heave to the loourd until we hit the Leeward Islands." It's not good to have two different pronunciations on the air, so I suggest that you issue a fiat supporting Noah and Joe.

10/2/66

TO: Richard T<sup>H</sup>orne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LET'S ALL GET ON THE BALL, MEN!

At 1:28 p.m. yesterday Bowman broke in on Rogers with bulletin that death toll estimate from INEZ had reached 600. Two minutes later King began headlines with one about Secretary of Treasury. His sixth headline was, "Hurricane Inez is losing some of its punch."

He could have ad libbed an opening headline on the new estimate and have made us sound as alert as we say we are.

Maybe you should memo the men that all bulletins should appear in opening headlines of following broadcast. I don't think this can be a mandatory but it certainly could be an "urgent please try."

Incidentally, Bowman said, "now back to Paul Rogers at W-NEWS Central. Instead, we heard the transcribed voice of Henry Williams of the Crusade of Mercy. It occurs to me that this could just as well have been a transcribed commercial. Maybe the cue line should be changed to, "Now back to W-NEWS Central."

P.S. I've heard it pronounced EYE' NEZ, EYE NEZ' and EE' NEZ.

10/10/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

I'M BORED WITH THE W-NEWSNAME OF THE DAY --

AND I'LL BET ALL THE OTHER LISTENERS ARE TOO

I know this is a sacred cow. I know from my very first conversation with Gordon McLendon just why it's on the schedule. I know it will be hard to change.

Even the best gimmicks have their day. Let's maintain the feature but give it a switch. Get people talking anew. And let's continue to cater to the vanity of people in the advertising business with another feature. Certainly the people who are being mentioned today on the age-old "newsname of the day" can no longer be the cream of the crop and we can always find a way to butter up a really important guy if the sales department wishes.

I suggest that the feature be changed to THE W-NEWSNAME OF THE DAY IS YOUR NAME. IF YOUR NAME IS DELILAH IT'S FROM THE HEBREW AND MEANS LANGUISHING OR GENTLE. ARE YOU?

THE W-NEWSNAME OF THE DAY IS YOUR NAME. IF YOUR NAME IS RONALD IT'S FROM THE OLD NORSE AND MEANS "MIGHTY POWER." THE ENGLISH NICKNAME IS "RON."

This would be an interesting feature and would make listeners identify with the station. It could also call for talk about the station.

It could even be used as the present feature is used -- give the name and its meaning and then say, "AS IN ED WEISS."

The present mention of advertising people could be taken over by a daily birthday feature. It would probably be little trouble for salesmen to secure from secretaries the birthdate of advertising bigwigs they wished mentioned on the air. I think a birthday feature -- merely mention of the fact as in the case of Dick Thorne the other day -- would be sufficient. More than one person could be mentioned each day if advisable.



2 W-NEWSNAME of the Day

This could be made a very interesting and talked about feature with very little research work necessary. For instance, birthday greetings to the head waiter at The Kontiki, the gorilla at the Lincoln Park Zoo, a boy who shines shoes in the I. C. station, public officials, educators, advertising people, business executives, visiting artists, actors, etc. Also, birthdays of institutions -- the Chicago Public Library, the Michigan Avenue bridge, etc. And now and then, for kicks, the birthday of somebody who's been dead a few thousand years, or somebody who shouldn't be wished a happy birthday, like Bluebeard, the Marquis de Sade, Nero, etc.

If a little imagination were used in preparation this birthday feature could become quite an attraction -- I think.

10/10/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

A SALES POSSIBILITY LURKING BEHIND A PROMO SCHEDULE ?

The recent surge of welcomes to the convention visitors to Chicago and the PSAs about Chicago's pre-eminence as a convention city suggest a possible sales approach to Carson Pirie Scott & Co.

The basic premise of the sales pitch. Marshall Field & Co. gets the bulk of the money spent in department stores by out-of-town visitors. This is due chiefly to a nation-wide acceptance of the prestige of this store, built up ever since its pioneering years. Many a convention visitor will sneak out on the last day of the session, and, if he knows you well enough, will tell you that he "has to buy something for the wife at Marshall Field. It has to be from that store."

This is a bad situation for competitors but it could be partially overcome by the proper advertising campaign.

Carson Pirie could join with WNUS in such an effort. Carsons could set up a real or imagined sales bureau specifically to assist visitors -- male and female. They could either have a special phone number to a special shopper trained to advise over the telephone about specific items so that the visitor would lose the least possible time when making a hurry-up trip to the store before leaving for his home town.

Maybe there could even be a delivery service whereby the store would deliver items direct to hotels.

At any rate, the pitch would be that Carsons was "the visitors' store," or "convention shopping headquarters." Listeners would be urged to telephone the store for preliminary information about items before they came to shop. Wives of conventioners or women convention delegates, could be offered the special services of a "conventioner shopper" if they visited the store.

Whatever the set-up, it would be backed and promoted by an advertising campaign on WNUS. It would be a logical arrangement to have

## 2 Sales Possibility

WNUS and CARSONS join in welcoming convention visitors as WNUS now does alone. (Or Carsons could take over the job of welcoming them -- at the price of a paid schedule of commercial announcements.)

We could maintain that Carsons would make a very advantageous hook-up by joining WNUS in catering to convention visitors. They could be told that WNUS was the most logical station to use because it is the station most likely to be listened to by conventioners who are always on the run and have to pick up news in their hotel rooms when they can and not "on the hour."

Possibly we might be able to work out some promotion campaign at not too great expense, either with or without the aid of the convention bureau, through which the round-the-clock of news availability on WNUS could be brought directly to the attention of the convention visitors. I have a faint memory that the president of Carsons is a very public spirited man who might like to be associated with a program like this which would aid his store and help promote the city as a convention center.

Carsons is the ideal store for this approach. They have become really "high class" in recent years, have concentrated on import goods and could readily put out a creditable story which in time could give them "prestige" with out-of-towners.

This could be worth a try by your sales department.

10/10/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

DON'T BE MISLEADING, PARTIAL, OR CHINTZY

Dennis asked for comments on his "Chicago Blue Chip Stock Report."

I am not competent to judge the merits of this as a feature. It sounds like a good idea for a one-a-day shot.

I have three suggestions:

1. I think it should not be called "Blue Chip" stock report. Financial people, and even the smallest investor, automatically connect Blue Chips with A.T. & T., I.B.M., etc. If a listener hears a promo about this feature and tunes in to hear a report of the "Greater Chicago Pickle Wart Remover Company," he will feel that he has been misled.
2. Be sure to rotate all the stock issues. If we report on only the five or six big shots each day in order to impress executives of Montgomery Ward, Sears Roebuck, etc., we may be making enemies in the executive staffs of smaller corporations which may be good potential advertisers.
3. Don't be chintzy. Don't stoop to giving \$8.00 radios to chairmen of the board of big corporations. If we can't spend twenty dollars or so to get a really presentable radio which the guy wouldn't mind having sit on his desk, let's give him nothing.

Better think of some gimmick like an announcement telegram written on ticker tape, rather than give him a cheezy daily reminder of WNUS economy.

P.S. If these were premiums for "ordinary" listeners I'd have no objection to getting them as cheaply as possible. But V.I.P.s ... JAMAIS!

10/10/66

TO: Ron Ruth  
CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

WNUS "OFFICIAL MAIL ADDRESS" SHOULD GO FOR COMMERCIALS TOO

Although the current policy book doesn't specifically say so, the "official mail" address should be given uniformly in all commercial announcements.

A current commercial for the book which tells you how to make a million dollars in real estate asks listeners to send mail orders to "WNUS, Chicago, Illinois."

Beside the obvious advantage of having WNUS sound consistent about what it thinks its mail address is, there is also the item of the zipcode. An organization, operating for profit in the public interest through use of a radio frequency donated by the taxpayers, should set a good example to the public by heeding the urgent pleas of the post office department regarding the importance of using the zipcode.

10/10/66

To: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

OFFICIAL ADDRESS FOR CLIFF JOHNSON TOO

Maybe if someone took Cliff aside and explained gently that the POLICY BOOK was for the business staff as well as for the studio ....

Cliff is using "WNUS, Wrigley Building, Chicago, 60611" as the address in both his Orient Tour and Christmas Carol announcements.

Unimportant, of course. But why not try to achieve conformity just for the sound of the thing?



8/4/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

DATES HELP PREVENT ERRORS

Dennis kindly sent me a sheet of copy for DROPINS for the Bart McLendon documentary repeat broadcast.

I hope you won't be offended if I make a couple of suggestions about office procedure.

There is no date anywhere on this sheet. Instructions are "Kill 7 p.m. Sunday." Since there is no issuing date, if this copy is left lying around and someone picks it up next week it could easily be re-broadcast and there would be another of the too-many off-scheduling errors.

I think all copy should have an issuing date, and for safety's sake the "kill" date should bear the day of the month as well as the day of the week.

Also, this copy speaks of "This Sunday Night." According to the instructions the announcers could be reading this up to 6:44 p.m., which, as I have said before, doesn't sound nearly as well as if Sunday's announcement said "Tonight."

Looking at this copy indicates that just a few seconds of pencil editing would provide special copy for Sunday. I should think this could be done, and it would certainly make the station sound much more alert and up-to-date.

8/9/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

WON'T SOMEBODY PLEASE SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER

There's a very commendable bit of production in a PSA -- up to a point.

This announcement starts out with a very good sound dramatization of "the ole swimming hold". The background noises are excellent and Dick Thorne's voice is very effective as he announces that the simming hole isn't what it used to be (to the accompaniment of the sound of a speeding motor boat.) This is all good and very professional.

Then what happens?

Some bloke starts playing the bloody piano to distract listeners from hearing the Red Cross safety tips about water sports given by some girl. The message is fine and appropriate but the piano playing in the background. Oh well.

It all ends up with a great nose-thumbing glissando flourish which seems to say, "The boss says we're interested in all news and nothing but the news but we like to show off our musical prowess when we get the chance."

P.S. This announcement now off the air but the criticism is still valid.

8/9/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

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P.S. This announcement now off the air but the criticism is still valid.

8/9/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Richard Thorne, managing editor of WNUS, said, on July 8, 1966: "We are not in the music playing business -- we are in the news dissemination business."

8/8/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

BILL GRISKEY

Will be OK on night show but should learn importance of format soonest.

Casual observations on first performance:

Spent more than two minutes on story about kid who swallowed aspirin. In his over-dramatic style told of frantic search for vacationing family. Gave partial license plate numbers, etc. Five hours earlier newscasters were giving smiling reports that family had been found and boy was all right. Don't know how you solve this failure to up-date, but there it is.

Weather report at 11:56 p.m., then news stories directly into almanac; no sign-off. From almanac directly into recital of headlines with no intro. Didn't announce his name. Gave time without chime.

Announced his name just before mid-broadcast headlines.

Failed to up-date stories after midnight. (I know this is a tough one to handle.) At 11 minutes after midnight had a story of something which happened "this afternoon."

Should listen to carts before airing. He introduced cart about HE ROW' SHE MA and then announcer from Japan said HEE' ROW SHEE' MA.

Came out of news with "This is Bill Griskey reporting for WNUS," instead of "For WNUS, this is Bill Griskey."

8/9/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

MISCELLANY

If you're scared to say it, don't say it at all.

One newscaster, in describing the riots, said that some spectators shouted "Nigger lovers." The next newscaster timorously reported that they shouted "Negro Lovers." Silly, of course. I cite this merely to show the danger of attempting euphemisms.

Some of the men are a bit careless about geographical locations in city stories. The other day a shooting incident was described as on "the southwest side" whereas it was at Division and California. This mistake was in copy at 8 a.m. and was still being repeated at 8 p.m., suggesting that Chicago-born newscasters might possibly be able to make a general correction available to all. (I don't know whether this is possible but it would be desirable.)

I've recently heard time checks that were as much as two or three hours off. Could this be the wheel?

An amusing story about a rainmaker named Hatfield said that the city refused to pay him the \$10,000.00 promised because he flooded the city with too much rain. This same story the next day said that Hatfield left town with \$10,000.00 given him for his successful rain making.



8/9/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

LET'S GIVE PUBLIC SERVICE "CUSTOMERS" A BREAK

WNUS should make the same effort to impress telephone numbers on the listener, as is done in all commercials.

Telephone numbers are treated with the greatest of unconcern and apathy in most SPAs. They're usually stuck in the middle and delivered with no change in voice pace or tone -- no emphasis. And they're not repeated as they should be.

Offhand I think of the announcement urging employers to advise of job openings for young people. The telephone number comes along in the middle of the announcement with no warning. It is not repeated at the end.

WHY NOT?

Well, because we have to have that great musical flourish on the end of the announcement. I don't know what the music has to do with getting jobs for young people, but there it is -- taking up just the number of seconds which would be needed for a repetition of the telephone number.

An announcement about "project 100,000 dollars" has the same defect, in addition to being so vaguely worded that one doesn't know whether the announcement is seeking tutors for kids or kids for tutors.

Music doesn't soothe this savage breast.

mm 8/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

TAG LINES

I heard several announcements about Bart McLendon's ambush documentary, last night and today, from which the tag lines giving time of broadcast were obviously omitted. I know they were supposed to have tag lines because some of them did.

8/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

WE'RE MISSING THE BOATS

In view of all of the hullabaloo we make about Harbor Weather Forecasts and the insufferable repetition of the announcements about free boating lessons, I'm surprised that we make no mention of "Lakefront Festival Week," formally proclaimed as such by Mayor Daley -- August 15-20.

This is the kind of civic project we should be plugging. There should be room on the schedule. The Lambs spots are getting to be a bit overdone. THOUSANDS of listeners are interested in boats and boat watching.

If you make some spots why not try skipping the music and just trying to get in the pertinent information?

8/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

GORDON McLENDON, JR.

I guess I was wrong about what he is to be called on the air. At least I've heard some spots done in a voice which seemed to have a great deal of authority in which he was called Gordon McLendon, Jr.

Well, at least it's been consistent all day. I haven't heard him called Bart at all.

8/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

GRISKEY

This night programming isn't improving as fast as I had hoped it would, in view of Griskey's long experience on the air, the existence of the policy book, and our sad experience with Robinson.

Griskey should read the style desired by management as set forth in the policy book. He still gives scores with all the UPI "drubbed," "overwhelmed," etc. He ~~manthm~~ still gives Cubs and Sox scores wherever they appear in the wire dispatch instead of at the head of the line.

Many times one has to wait more than thirty minutes to hear the time. I thought your suggestion to Robinson was a good one, i.e. -- tape some intros saying, "Here are the headlines on the three o'clock (4 o'clock, etc.) In this way the listener without watch would at least get some idea of what time of night it was.

He's still spotty in that one broadcast will be loaded with time checks and others completely without them.

He doesn't give the temperature often enough. He could at least do that when he comes in with time checks.

He isn't specific enough in weather reports. At 4:30 in the morning, "Today" and "tomorrow" become dangerous words.

Engineer is still too slow coming in with carts after 5-minutes cues.

Possibly due to unfamiliarity with wheel Griskey repeats BIG stories in same broadcast. This sounds very bad. Also gives headlines of stories which are never heard. I listened for an hour and a half the other night to find out why some damned girl was allowed to keep her damned duck.

HE'S BEEN ON THE AIR LONG ENOUGH TO SIGN OFF WITH "FOR WNYS, ETC."  
He's still "reporting" for WNUS/

8/16/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

THE WNUS OFFICIAL ADDRESS IS ALWAYS IN THE POLICY BOOK, BUT ---  
NEVER ON THE AIR

Listeners wanting a copy of the Tench obituary are asked to write to "WNUS, Wrigley Building, Chicago."

Please understand that I don't give a hoot what the official address is. I just think there should be one and it should be used consistently. The one in the book, "WNUs, Chicago 60611," is there because Art Holt told me to put it there. I think "illinois" should be added to it, but that's neither here nor there.

Not using a consistent official address makes the station sound small-townish, un-organizaed, inaccurate, sloppy. Furthermore, a facility which is using a radio frequency belonging to the taxpayers for the purpose of making money for its stockholders should at least have the grace and decency to set a good example and use the zip code, as so ugently requested by the government.

If you fellows don't like the present address, why don't you agree on one you are willing to use consistently and ask Ron Ruth to tell me to change the policy book?

NOTE. If the men see this "edict" in the policy book consistently violated, as it is, they will consistnly violate other edicts, as they do.



8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

AS MARK TWAIN SAID . . . .

I seem always to be complaining about the weather and nobody seems to be doing anything about it.

Actually the weather service of WNUS is quite good. It sounds better than it is. It could be better, and it should be. WNUS should be the best weather station in Chicago, despite WBBM's nine highly paid professional weather prognosticators.

My complaints. (Same old ones.)

1. Temperature (just the temperatures, not in connection with weather forecasts) is not given often enough especially in drive times. See policy book.
2. Five-day weather forecasts almost completely neglected. I have heard only three in the past two weeks. I hear more announcements saying "harbor forecasts and five-day weather forecasts are an integral part of WNUS . . . ", than I do five-day forecasts. The announcements should be killed or the forecasts increased.
3. There are almost too many harbor forecasts.
4. There should be a couple of aviation forecasts, around 7 and 8 in the morning.
5. The boys should give a complete and official forecast at the end of each newscast.
6. That horrible North America Savings sponsored weather report should be scheduled anywhere but at the end of the 7:30 a.m. news. (Preferably at 3:27 a.m.)

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

HOORAY!

Again I was pleased at receiving your memos of August 16, indicating, by your specific instructions, that we are making real progress toward a better sound for WNUS.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

CONGRATULATIONS TO WNUS ---  
AND TO PHIL BOWMAN

If I am no longer "anonymous", as you indicate, will you please express my pleasure to Phil Bowman at hearing that he has become a regular member of the staff.

You may remember that I expressed my regret several weeks ago on learning that he was on a temporary basis. I'm glad he's going to stay. He is a real asset to the station.

I can't explain what is so satisfying about his broadcasts, but they have a quality of "uniqueness" without being too far off the beam to be at all disturbing. He's a good newsman, like the rest of them, and with a distinct personality like the rest of them.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

PSAs

I was delighted to see your memo with instructions about the new procedure for announcements sans music and on a two-week rotating basis. The announcements for the last two months have been better than the preceding ones but I haven't bothered to say so because there were so many things wrong with even the improved ones.

My suggestions for helping the new schedule along:

1. Telephone numbers should be given twice, as in commercials.
2. Addresses should be complete and specific and should have zipcode.
3. Information should be specific. Listeners should not be asked to contact agency simply if they "want to help." They should be told whether they are needed as tutors or are to enroll their children, whether it's money that's wanted, or service, etc. This can be done, even in the sharp confines of the limited word-age.
4. If the voice of the man or woman at the agency is bad, why not use just a sentence or two and have the rest of the announcement done by a WNUS staffman. We have some good persuasive voices and I'd like to hear some SPAs done by various of the men.
5. Remember to get the WNUS call letters in each announcement. But once is enough in each 30-second announcement. More will sound silly.
6. Try to get a schedule running so that listeners won't be saturated for days on end with an overload of the same announcements.
7. Try to see that the schedule at any one time contains a representative spread of the city's public service activities.

Let's make WNUS public service announcements "TALKED ABOUT"  
among listeners and agencies as well.



8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LABOR DAY WEEK-END

Re your memo to Dennis -- I think care should be taken to see that statistics on traffic fatalities are given straight and not as dire and foreboding implications of disaster. I agree with you that fatality statistics do make "hard news" and I suppose they have to run but I also think that announcers and newsmen should not scare tired drivers to death by shouting about how an all-time record is about to be broken, with the implication that the driver-listener may be the one to break it.

Also, in the past, we have called our driving tips "traffic conditions" and I think that this is unpleasantly misleading for the listeners. I think our driving precaution announcements are good, but listeners shouldn't be left to believe that we are going to try to compete with helicopter stations and give "traffic conditions."



8/18/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

TO SAVE YOU TIME

Thank you for the bunch of memos, addressed to me, which I received today. I appreciate the spirit of this procedure but I point out that I already had most of this information. The copies of your memos directing the staff to do this or that or informing Ron that you had done this and that are sufficient confirmation to me.

Please understand that this is not a criticism but a suggestion to save you valuable time. You are a very busy man and have enough to do without writing duplicate memos for my benefit. I don't want to be any more of an annoyance to you than I already am, so -- when you have sent me a copy of a memo directing that a certain thing be done, you don't need to send me an original memo confirming it.

That's the beauty of this memo system, with all the copies, which does seem onerous at times. It does let everybody know what's going on. Your copies of your memos to the staff will serve you in good stead if anyone denies receiving instructions and if I ever question about something you have done, ymm your copies to me will show I was wrong.

Here's to lots of memos but no unnecessary ones.  
Thanks again.

8/18/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LET'S KEEP AFTER GRISKY (if that's the spelling)

We seem to agree about this man. A tape of one of his night broadcasts will sound like any presentable daytime broadcast -- except for the telltale 5-min. break-in cues. Unless you think it will break his morale I think you should stay on him until he's reasonably following format.

He must have a stubborn streak, or something. Last night, after he had presumably received your instructions about the closeout six-word formula, he was saying, "This is Bill Grisky for WNUS." Maybe you should explain further to him that he is working for a very peculiar station and that in certain instances newsmen have no leeway whatever. The policy book means what it says. You mean what you say. And Gordon McLendon can't stand precipitation. He likes rain and rain it must be.

And something must be done about the time. One can listen through the end of one broadcast, all the way through another, and through the beginning of the next and still not know what time it is. There must be some sort of a compromise which can be worked out which would give the listener an approximation of the time now and then.

If you can get this fellow in the groove right now I think you can soon turn your mind to other things.

Joe Edwards sounds good, whoever he is.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re your memo -- I am aware of the problems involved but I think it's worth taking another stab at it. I'm hoping that if we write the proper kind of letters in the beginning and then send in the right kind of controversial answers we might get the listeners to join in a free-for-all. I wouldn't like to see us get involved in the civil rights question too deeply but there are a lot of other controversial matters which might start some legitimate and interesting letters if we got things off to the right start.

I'm ready to try it any time you feel ready to make a sustained effort of a couple of weeks or so to see if we could get something going. I think the station badly needs some features which involve some listener participation.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

WEEK-END "INSPIRATIONAL" FEATURE

My contact at the Great Books Foundation is out of town. I'll let you know when I find out whether they would be willing and able to supply proper material.

I disagree with you when you say that it doesn't matter whose voice is used. I'm not in favor of using the feature if just any old voice is used. Your voice has a very impressive timbre which makes the reading of such material an out-of-the-ordinary offering. There are only two other voices I'd even consider but I think it would be much better for you to do it as managing editor, and as the man who has read previous features.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

SMOOTH PROGRAMMING DEPENDS ON FORETHOUGHT

It's not very important, I suppose, but our programming would have sounded a little "slicker" Sunday night if, before going into the Bart McLendon documentary, we had announced that the Drew Pearson show, ordinarily aired at 6:45, would be broadcast at 7 p.m. Then, at the end of the McLendon show, we should have told listeners that we realized we had been forced to delay the Pearson show, and here it is.

This is routine practice on major stations and I think it is a justifiable practice. It is only fair to the Drew Pearson sponsor and to the listeners. A little forethought could have taken care of this.

Instead, we went into the McLendon show cold and followed it with the delayed Pearson show with no explanation.

Maybe next time.

8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

BACK TIMING

It looks as if all your good work in getting newscasts off the air on schedule will go aglimmering if you don't remind the boys again about the importance of getting out of the way for the next guy. I have been noticing a gradual deterioration in the situation which you had so well in hand but I didn't say anything in the hope that it would get better.

Recently, however, I have heard the time announced as three minutes after the hour or half-hour. I don't mean just once or twice, but far too many times. This is too late to be getting under way with a new broadcast, when other competing stations will have already been on the air with news items for a couple of minutes.

The men are still tempted to cut the final weather report in order to get off the air, despite your instructions to "back time." Bill Abbott frequently leaves out all temperatures and Jim West has a tendency to cut the final weather into too sparse a report.

The other day I heard Jim announce the time as "twenty-nine minutes past the hour." He still had an SPA, the obligatory stock market report and the weather to give in this final minute. Obviously he did not get them all in and he cut the weather badly to get off when he did.

Can't some way be found to get the boys to ease out of their newscasts with a nice big full and complete weather report? They seem to be overcome with a desire to "tell all" in the last five minutes. I don't know how to solve the problem but there might be some way of formating the last five minutes so as to give the men more room for the mandatory closing features.



8/17/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

SHSHSHSHSHSH.

Perhaps you should warn the newsmen that their remarks and guffaws, off-stage when they are off the air can be plainly heard by listeners. I don't know where they are sitting when they are on the bench but their comments are distinctly audible.

I've heard some very funny remarks and no doubt the listeners enjoy these "asides" but I'm afraid that someday one of the comments may be a bit on the blue side and the station will have trouble with some of its Godfearing listeners.

8/23/66

TO: Jack Danahy, Migrant Worker

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon, Richard Thorne

FROM: Ash

DRISKY SHOULD BE TOLD

"OFF" THAT IS

If you want to exercise some of your migrant authority you might write a little note to Drisky and tell him to sign off his newscasts with, "For W-NEWS this is Bill Drisky," or else.

I am now tired of being nice to this fellow. He's been complimented all over the place for his newscasts -- and they are good.

Two weeks ago, after I had complained about the matter three or four times, Dick Thorne wrote him a brief memo specifically instructing him to end his broadcasts with the above-quoted six words and in no other way.

He is still ending his programs with "This is Bill Drisky for W-NEWS." I find this kind of childish insubordination disgusting.

8/23/66

TO: Jack Danahy, Migrant Worker

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon, Richard Thorne

FROM: Ash

TAGLINES

The promos on Gordon McLendon, Jr. in the voice of Gordon McLendon containing excerpts from Viet Nam tapes which have already been heard on the station, sound very much as if they should have a tagline attached. I think these announcements may puzzle some listeners and would sound much better if they ended with something like, "Be sure to listen for etc."

There's a cancer PSA running which ends up with a suggestion that WNUS listeners contact their local Cancer Society units. I don't know where or how this announcement was produced but it sounds very much like a "canned" announcement made in Dallas for use by all stations with a local tagline attached. Why, otherwise, this vague statement about your "local" Cancer Society? Doesn't WNUS know where it is?

Certainly it would be a better service to the listener to give specific information. Let the station exert this little effort, rather than indicating that the listener should go to the telephone directory.

P.S. This memo was written before I received the new batch of cancer announcements. I checked with local office of Cancer and they definitely would prefer to have their specific address given, with mention of "local units" for benefit of those who live outside Chicago.

8/24/66

TO: Jack Danahy, Migrant Worker  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon, Richard Thorne  
FROM: Ash

#### CHALLENGE

I detect a note of challenge in the memo from Dick Thorne to me announcing that music will be eliminated from SPAs for the time being in a "test". I feel that I am on the spot.

He indicates that music was a "support" for some of the weak lay voices used in announcements. I feel that the contrary is true. The amateurish ineptitude of the music merely emphasized the unprofessional quality of the voices. Many times the music interfered, rising to a crescendo when the amateur announcer was lapsing into a diminuendo. So much for that.

I have previously stated my solution for the problem of the bad voices. Repeating. Use a WNUS announcer for the bulk of the copy and introduce the outsider for only a sentence or two to give the announcement legitimacy and "convincingness."

There are other forms of support besides music. I see no objection to sound effects in these short announcements, if properly introduced. Such effects should not be used abruptly at the beginning of announcements.

Some off-the-cuff examples:

ATTENTION MOTORISTS. (SOUND OF SCREECHING BRAKES) THIS COULD HAPPEN TO YOU. ANY DAY. A LITTLE CHILD RUNS OUT...

TRAGEDY. (SOUND OF AMBULANCE SIREN) ANOTHER VICTIM OF CHICAGO'S TRAFFIC....

IS YOUR CHILD MUSICALLY INCLINED? (FEW BARS OF CHILDISH VIOLIN MUSIC) FREE MUSIC LESSONS FOR CHILDREN ARE AVAILABLE AT....

WHY ARE THEY SO HAPPY? (SOUND OF CHILDREN LAUGHING) THEY'RE PART OF A PROGRAM WHICH....

Also, even though these announcements are short, some of them can be dramatized. A two-sentence interchange between a remedial

reading teacher and her young pupil. A playground instructor's admonition to a too-eager boy and the boy's response. The spoken request of a hypothetical applicant for help at a social center and the social worker's reply.

This can be done without too much trouble. I'm sure that such little "dramas" could be pre-arranged by telephone for later recording on the spot as easily, or more easily than arranging for appointments with executives. How about brief interviews with recipients of welfare and civic agencies with the voice of a WNUS staffer and some actual recipient?

There are many, many ways in which these announcements can be made interesting to listen to without the aid of music.

The only instructions I can remember from Gordon McLendon on the subject of SPAs was in a memo of his written last January. As I remember it, it did not say that all public service announcements had to be in the voice of someone from a public service agency. He also suggested that some be in the voices of WNUS staff members who should identify themselves and express their interest in the cause being plugged.

I think that more attention should be paid to getting a truly representative spread as far as the subject of these announcements is concerned. I think we have been woefully weak in promoting the cultural aspects of Chicago. I see nothing wrong in plugging dramatic performances of Social Centers, amateur groups, the Goodman Theater, etc., even if they do charge cash admission. I don't mean to include the professional "off-Broadway" theaters in this free publicity but certainly the amateur groups should get a break.

Also, later in the year, why not plug intellectual activities at the various universities etc. Public lectures, etc.

The Public Library has various activities which should be mentioned. Also the YMCA and YWCA. There are a lot of aspects of adult education which need promotion.

I think that some of the public service activities which are interesting enough in themselves should be given some 60-second announcements. They should also have 30-second announcements for use in crowded air-time but during those lonely nighttime hours when Drisky says "I'll be back with more news in just a minute," and then we hear a brief 30-second PSA repeated for the umpteenth time -- why not a nice, cleverly dramatized one-minute announcement about some worthy and interesting activity? It would liven up the newscast and give listeners a more comprehensive idea of what the agency was doing than can be done in a 30-second announcement.

A CHALLENGE? Yes.



May 28, 1966

Dear Gordon,

RE: A WNUS "IMAGE"

I have an idea for WNUS promotion which I think may possibly be good enough to merit your consideration. I am transmitting this by letter, rather than by memo, because I am never quite sure whether you are taking a vacation from reading my memos.

I have been haunted by a constant feeling that WNUS has lost "personality" since the end of the frantic reconstruction period of January-February, and that nothing seems to be developing which would tend to produce an "image" of vigor, direction and consequence. Under Art's persistent prodding and Dick's continuing supervision, the station has developed a very smooth sound. To the casual listener it must sound very good, although there is still room for much improvement.

The Eliza Doolittle promotion was very good. Staff, newscaster, and audience reaction was so good that it inspired my "idea", which is:

A 12-MONTH PROMOTION CAMPAIGN BASED ON "LISTENER PARTNERSHIP."

Please don't be dismayed or misled if much of what I say from now on sounds "corny." This is because I have not taken time to work out details, slogans, etc., and shall not take time unless you think this idea worthwhile. If you do, I'll be curious to see what specific plans arise from the combined thinking of you, Art, Don Keyes, Thorne, Fraser and any others on your staff who are "promotion-minded."

Here are the basic details of my suggested plan:

1. In a completely pre-planned 12-month promotion campaign, WNUS will seek to build an image of a news station built strictly on the specifications of listeners -- not on (now widely discredited) surveys, but on what actual listeners actually tell WNUS day by day.



May 28, 1966

2. Listeners' reaction to the Doolittle Day indicated their shock and pleasant surprise that, despite its low-keyed boasting about how good its broadcasters were, it was willing to subject itself to correction from listeners. I have an impression that this made listeners "feel good" toward the station in that it gave them an outlet for that feeling of, "If I were running that damned station I'd ... etc." I'm sure that this goodwill feeling was enhanced by the memory of the days of blatant bragging and over-promotion when the station was boasting unmercifully about how good it was in the midst of such bungling broadcasts as have rarely been heard before or since. WNUS is growing up! Everyone of us, deep down within, appreciates having his opinions respected and listened to. For listeners to be heeded in terms of individual response rather than as digits in a pulse survey, would be a novel thing indeed, a novel station operation.

3. The promotion should be long-range and consistent. The "listener partnership" idea should not be exclusive in the overall promotion picture, but it should be dominant. Just when the listener thinks the idea has been dropped and forgotten, like all others in the past (except "nothing but the news"), another "listener partnership" promotion pops up. As far as the station's internal promotion structure is concerned, management should know in July what will be on the air in November. And in November, what will be on the air in the following May. (Another Eliza Day, of course.)

In between the dominant main promotion campaigns, any promotion idea can be put on the air, preferably on the zany side, but with some effort at restraint and horse sense (and supervised production).

4. Some painfully awkward, but hopefully suggestive, slogans:

You listen to WNUS because WNUS listens to you.

WNUS. The station that listeners built.

You're telling us? Sure you are. And we like it!

Our motto. "The listener knows best what the listener wants most."

(Suggested slogans, continued):

Sure we broadcast "managed news." We manage to broadcast what our listeners want.

If we make a mistake today, it's because you neglected to correct us yesterday.

5. Here are some admittedly hastily conceived promotion ideas:

Obviously, the next one, about a month from now, should be "Henry 'iggins Day." Husbands, male friends, and male relatives of women listeners have complained so much that they didn't get a chance to show off their prowess in the use of Good English that WNUS will oblige. It will have a listener vs newscaster contest in the hours between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. Women won most of the prizes on Eliza Doolittle Day, but men say that's because they didn't get a chance to listen during contest hours. WNUS gives them a chance. Same prizes -- same conditions.

Pronunciation contest. This would be very tough to handle, but could be done. No proper nouns, place names, etc. Certain standard reference works as final authority, etc.

Pronunciation of Chicago street names and proper appellation as "street" or "boulevard." This needn't be a one-day deal, but could run quietly for a month with a \$5 or \$2 prize to listeners, with a gong announcement any time of day or night that listeners caught a mispronunciation. Commissioner of streets and alleys or Chicago Historical Society, or some outside outfit as final authority.

Listeners write the commercials for one day. DON'T LAUGH. Properly handled, with a two-month preparation period, the proper administration of martinis to account executives and time buyers, this could be a tremendous promotion which could arouse a great buzz-buzz in local advertising circles. Think of it! A station willing to spend the time to give listeners a chance to write the kind of commercials they want to hear and to give agencies and advertisers a chance to get listener reaction to their commercials without the expense of hiring one of those top-notch subliminal, psycho-motivation guys, at a sackful of dollars per minute.

May 28, 1966

Amateur night for newscasters. Candidates studying to be radio announcers or newscasters in local schools (I assume there are such institutions) selected in competitive contests, and allowed to broadcast actual ten minutes of news on the air over WNUS. Properly prepared, this would not chase listeners, and would interest friends, relatives, faculty, fellow students of contestants, etc. WNUS would be doing a constructive good deed to improve the quality of radio broadcasting in general, etc. Again, listeners would be partners in station's efforts toward better radio. Listeners would provide contestants and added listening to well-advertised contests.

Listener-produced editorials. Not the ordinary, painful-to-listen-to kind. Well-prepared, well-sifted, well-rewarded, and well-produced. You'll be surprised as to what this could bring out in listener response and increased prestige -- if properly done, as it would be in the long-range plan I suggest.

Note that none of the above suggestions would interfere with the present broadcast time format. They do not run contrary to the "all news, nothing but news" policy any more than do any other of your promotions, because they can be run in your promotion-allotted time spots. Actual promotions should not eat up any more time than did the Eliza Doolittle venture.

The reason I have written at such length is that I truly believe this idea would enable you to build an image of WNUS as a new and exciting radio operation -- on top of the novel "all news" idea, the "listener partnership" idea that will make WNUS a reflection of the community's wishes and provider of its desires in news broadcasting and community cooperation.

Well, that's about the size of it. I do not mean to indicate, of course, that WNUS will necessarily change its policy or operation because of listener attitudes. I mean that, outwardly, every promotion will be not merely a gimmick to attract listeners by giving them prize money, but will purport to be improving the station for the benefit of the community -- which might actually happen. If you like the idea, why not toss it to the boys and see if they can come up with enough real solid ideas to justify

Gordon McLendon

-5-

May 28, 1966

building a 12-month campaign as I have suggested -- or an improvement of the idea resulting from the combined thinking and judgment of all concerned?

Best regards, and

Sincerely,

Mr. Gordon McLendon  
The McLendon Stations  
2008 Jackson Street  
Dallas, Texas

pcw

CC - Art Holt

# John Ashenhurst

August 17, 1966

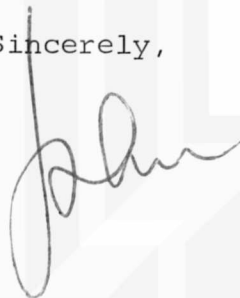
Dear Gordon,

The last time we talked you were considerably concerned about your son's ability to make good as a correspondent.

I trust that you have now stopped worrying. I think he's doing exceptionally well. He will improve with experience, of course, but I am amazed at the way he has taken hold of things from the very outset. I have heard no indications of uncertainty or self-consciousness. He got a good play in the SUN-TIMES today. You seem to be doing a fine job of managing him on this side.

I hope that you are in good health and that things are going well for you. Your station, WNUS, is sounding better every day. I'm still being an annoying nuisance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John", is written over a large, faint, stylized watermark of the letters "JAN" in the background.



John Ashenhurst

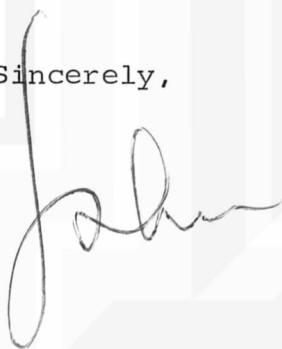
7/8/66

Dear Gordon,

I hope it doesn't annoy you that I pursue you with a letter I sent you some weeks ago. I'm trying to catch you at some time when you have ten minutes to spare.

If you have time to read the letter but no time to do anything about it (which I can well imagine) why not assign Don Keyes to the job of building some kind of a long-range promotion structure for WNUS? I think you'd find this commercially advantageous.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", written in dark ink.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611



**PUBLIC RELATIONS GENERAL**

**OUTSTANDING ADVERTISEMENT ...  
A SPLENDID PUBLIC  
RELATIONS GESTURE**

Edward Petry and Company, Inc., radio and television station representatives, decided to answer the anti-television article then appearing in Fortune magazine, with a counter article.

The magazine article, "The Light That Failed," strongly indicated that the publishing industry was making an all-out attack on the television industry.

Following the appearance of the magazine article, Mr. Petry decided his company should run an article of its own, not only in trade papers, but in the press at large.

To this end, company employees were asked to submit a public relations advertisement. The one chosen was called "Shrimps to Telepathy," and was written by John Ashenhurst. This ad, ridiculing the anti-television campaign, had a two-fold purpose ... to discourage the campaign, and to let the stations and the public know that Mr. Petry was giving battle in behalf of the industry.

Since the appearance of "Shrimps to Telepathy," the Petry company has received more than 300 letters from operators of stations, including many they do not represent. They have also received many letters and commendations from ad agencies, newspaper publishers, and the public at large... evidence of the far-reaching effects of this outstanding article.

According to a company spokesman, the article forcefully brings home the fact that every medium of communications is effective -- if it is geared to catch the eyes and ears of the present-day Americans, and to represent their wants and needs.

# *Shrimps to Telepathy*



BILLION-ODD YEARS AGO, on the floor of the ocean, the art of advertising was born when some forward-looking shrimps learned to crack their knuckles and some females (God bless 'em—still most sought after by most advertisers) responded. But don't think there wasn't hell to pay.

The sea anemones, and in-fact all the frond-waving crowd, said that this new form of advertising was vulgar, disgusting, and a very low form of attention getting. The sea slugs, en masse, decried it as a really dreadful thing to bring noise into a world where there had been no noise before and where practically nobody had ears. You would have thought the world was coming to an end, rather than a beginning.

After a couple of million years all the shrimps were cracking their knuckles all the time, but everybody had got used to it and things were quite happy and normal until—well, until some "gifted" crustaceans thought up the idea of long antennae as a means of communication.

A terrific row was raised by everybody else—and the shrimps squawked the loudest. They said that this innovation would make their own advertising system outmoded, and unfairly so. Since it was unfair to them, it was degrading to the entire world. This row quickly settled down in an aeon or two and in the meantime things were beginning to happen up on earth—on dry land.

Here the competition in the advertising field was so bitter and so bloody and so useless that we'll skip the saurian details and come down to the last split-second of history, to Modern Man—to the last micro-second of history, to Modern Western Man.

Still confining our attention to the advertising field, we might first mention the prodigious ruckus raised by the Fraternal and Peregrinating Order of Town Criers when the job printers first started turning out handbills. You should have heard what the bell ringing news crooners had to say about the bill posters—or perhaps you shouldn't have. These latter didn't have long to enjoy the invective being heaped upon them because soon the bill posters had to turn their attention to a horrible conspiracy to wipe them out of existence—namely the introduction of the newspapers.

You've probably caught on by now and realize that newspapers were an invention of the devil. The newspapers lived a mighty rosy life for years and years. They managed to get along with their sister medium, the magazines, because the rhythm of publication was so different.

Then in the early 20's—Oh Brother! Some fiend incarnate taught wireless telegraphy how to talk. Here, indeed, was a frightening challenge to the newspaper industry. Here was a novel means of communication, and a great disseminator of news, entertainment—and advertising!

The familiar useless battle ensued. Newspapers tried in every way to prevent the public acceptance which was bound to come for this new medium. They pretended it wasn't there and closed their columns to news of radio.

They vilified it. They ridiculed it.

Later, equilibrium was established once again in the advertising industry. Newspapers even used radio as an advertising medium to get circulation for their own publications, and radio used newspapers to get listeners. It seemed as if peace might reign forever in the advertising world. Then a few witches and men of magic got together in dark caves and planned to ruin all advertising media by persuading somebody to invent a thing called "the picture tube." When this new invention finally arrived—television—it proved to be such an amazing phenomenon that it stunned the entire industry.

Radio, still in its comparative youth, made a few feeble efforts at ridicule, calling the television men "the magic lantern boys," and then sat around stunned at its loss of listeners until finally, with good sense, it started to rebuild its medium to fit the needs of the public, and today is once more flourishing and a fine competitor to other advertising media. Newspapers and magazines remained appalled—but they remained in business.

Within the last few months the hue and cry against television has become louder. Some publications are seeking to fight this demon who is taking away their advertising dollars. The sad thing about it is that they are fighting in the same million-year-old way. They are attempting to deprecate television as an advertising medium.

We like all advertising. We like newspapers, radio, television, magazines, and all the others. They are all effective. If a newspaper or magazine didn't print what the public wants (be it entertainment or news), it would not be read. If a radio or television station failed to broadcast good programs, it would not be watched or heard. The fact is that successful newspapers and magazines are read—and people *do* watch television and *do* listen to radio. Without listeners and viewers and readers, they would be without advertisers, without whom they could not exist.

All advertising media might well follow the proven path of "peaceful co-existence," and make sure that they are geared to the wants and needs of present-day America to the nth degree. Along this path alone lie prosperity and success for all.

Anyway, we have to spend a lot of time thinking up all the things we're going to say about the next advertising competitor—telepathy. That's going to be a pretty cheap medium for the advertiser, because anybody (with brains, that is) will be able to get the message.

*do you agree?*

## Edward Petry & Co., Inc.

*Radio and Television Station Representatives*

NEW YORK • CHICAGO • ATLANTA • BOSTON • DALLAS • DETROIT • LOS ANGELES • SAN FRANCISCO • ST. LOUIS

Preprint of advertisement appearing in New York Times, Chicago Tribune, New York Herald Tribune and Wall Street Journal.

RESEARCH BUREAU, INC., CHICAGO, ILL.

During recent months the rivalry between certain advertising media has become so vitriolic that it has endangered the health of all Advertising.

This name-calling in public only serves to tear down the whole Industry.

It has reached such a point that it is time for someone to speak out.

Which is why the Petry Company has voiced its views in this New York Times advertisement.

It is also appearing in the following publications:

New York Herald Tribune  
Chicago Tribune  
The Wall Street Journal  
Advertising Age  
Broadcasting Magazine  
Sponsor Magazine  
Television Age  
Television Magazine

We hope that you will find it interesting and that you agree.

John Ashenhurst

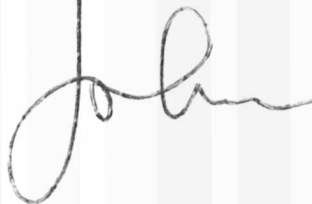
7/8/66

Dear Gordon,

I forgot to tell you that I write copy too.

If you ever feel in need of a nice Offbeat ad for one of your ventures, why not check with me?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", written over a large, faint, stylized letter "J" watermark.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

THE *McLendon* STATIONS//MEMORANDUM

To JOHN ASHENHURST  
CC: RON RUTH  
GORDON MC LENDON  
From DON KEYES  
RICHARD THORNS

Date 9-6-66

Subject

RE: "WHERE'S THE COPY"

QUESTION: Are you getting your copy now? Please let me know



THE *McLendon* STATIONS MEMORANDUM

To **WUSHEN**

Date **9-6-66**

From **RICHARD THORNE**

Subject

Remember to pencil edit your copy so that the following takes place:

- A. The elimination of all addresses that are not important
- B. Round off numbers to the nearest hundred, thousand or million wherever possible.
- C; Change the word "here" which frequently appears in copy to the City of story origination.

Another point I would like to reiterate, please prepare a new set of Headlines for every newscast you do. The Headlines must reflect news content.



THE *McLendon* STATIONS ~~MEMORANDUM~~

To JOHN ASHENHURST

Date 9-6-66

CC: RON RUTH

GORDON MC LENDON

From RICHARD THORNE

Subject

I have returned to WNUS from a most pleasant two week vacation and am now working on a new schedule I have arranged. We should make some rapid advancements.

Glad to see your still in fine form.

THE *McLendon* STATIONS ~~MEMORANDUM~~

To  
WNUSMEN

Date  
9-8-66

From  
RICHARD THORNE

Subject  
NEWSCASTS

1. Each newscast is to be updated as much as is humanly possible.
2. Each story in that newscast is to be updated as much as is humanly possible.
3. It is mandatory to have a new set of heads for each newscast relating directly to the story content that will be utilized during your newscast.

I reiterate a previous memo: These heads must refer to the first section of your newscast and the stories contained therein.

4. I should like to meet with each of the newscaster the week of September 12, to discuss program content and presentation thereof.

I'll be available between 11:00 and 2:00 for the morning shift and anytime later for the afternoon - evening shift.

THE *McLendon* STATIONS ~~MEMORANDUM~~

To JOHN ASHENHURST

Date 9-14-66

From RICHARD THORNE

Subject "DISCUSTING"

The corrected copy information was received here to late.

The process of preparing the copy for the clipboard took some time so that when copy was received it was to late to be updated.

I agree with you, this should never have happened. We must have a more satisfactory system for having P.S.A.'s okayed and channeled, so that this dreadful delay is eliminated.

I shall bring this up at the meeting on Monday.

GENERAL CORRESP.



7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, DOn Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

EMPLOYEES SHOULD CATCH ERRORS

Two tapes of a very good PSA about Palatine band concerts are currently being broadcast. The tapes are identical except that one is electronically O.K. while the other contains an awkward hiatus, which cuts in silence for several seconds, right in the middle of a word. This defective tape has been broadcast frequently for the past three days.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTION. The engineer on duty should hear this defective tape, yank it and demagnetize it -- or whatever is routine under such circumstances. He should then play only the good tape.

Or am I too naive? Do union regulations prohibit such procedure?



7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

BART McLENDON

Don't ruin this boy by over-scheduling!

WNUS is being unfair to Bart by running repeats of his tapes day after day. Listeners are tired of hearing from that G.I who doesn't get enough fresh vegetables and Grade A milk. Bart is sending in good tapes but just because he is Gordon McLendon's son and the world's first teenage war correspondent is not a valid reason for giving listeners a distaste for his tapes by useless repetition.

If you aren't getting new tapes, get off the air and wait for new material.



7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

"TIME" IS OF THE ESSENCE ON WNUS

At this risk of boring everybody, including myself, I point out that a number of the men are getting very careless about delivering time announcements properly. The policy book is crystal-clear on the subject. I see no reason for citing specific instances at this time. There should be no reason for writing this memo.

7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

ANNOUNCERS SHOULD STOP CALLING POLICEMEN "COPS "

Revival of the announcement series urging citizens to respect the police is very fitting at this time. WNUS should extend its own courtesy to the department by eliminating the word "cop."

One piece of copy says: "The cop on the corner may be the best friend you have. Why not treat him like a friend?" O.K. Why not? Why not stop calling him a "cop"?

Status nomenclature is highly important to those involved. Newscasters don't like to be called "announcers." Policemen don't like to be called "cops." Can't WNUS extend to the police this much courtesy while mealy-mouthing the public on what it should do?

P.S. All of my previous memos on this subject have been ignored. How about extending me a little courtesy?

7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

BART MCLENDON INTROS

The new intros without music are an improvement. They are more appropriate and a more effective introduction to this type of material.

Many other station-produced announcements would be improved by the elimination of inept and inappropriate background music. The time and energy thus saved could be devoted to improving the content of the announcements, to the benefit of the station and to the pleasure of the listener.

7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

NOW, LET'S GIVE FM A BIG SPLASH

Some time ago I wrote a memo pointing out that WNUS-FM was being badly neglected in promotion and suggesting that it be honored with a short saturation campaign in view of the fact that nobody knows how big the audience is or how important it may become someday from a commercial or promotion point of view. Dennis explained that we were waiting until the FM signal went on at full strength.

Last night, in the wee small hours, I heard a very good promotion announcement for WNUS-FM. It was well-written, well-delivered, hard-selling, and (thank Heaven) had no music to ruin its effectiveness.

I suggest a 48-hour saturation promotion consisting of this and similar purely vocal announcements about FM and its merits. I suggest that these announcements be substituted for the usual PSA's routinely scheduled toward the end of the newscasts. The FM promos would be scheduled every half hour for 48 hours -- and then the entire schedule yanked completely. The carts should be saved but kept out of the mischievous hands of the compulsive miss-schedulers at the station. At some later time, another such FM promotion campaign should be scheduled. Perhaps shorter and thinner.

Present scheduling of PSA and SPA spots is so haphazard and so lackadaisical that to me it seems rather ineffective. I think the above-suggested scheduling might prove quite effective in impressing listeners with the fact that WNUS has a good FM operation.

7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

MISCELLANY

The staff on duty did an excellent job in coverage of the student nurse mass murder. I felt that the story was handled with a very proper balance between restraint and diligence. The telephoned interviews were excellent, the "teletype room" bulletins at satisfying frequency and continuously well updated. Around 10:00 a.m., we were doing much better than other Chicago stations.

A minor item. At around 9:45 a bulletin from the teletype room told of two suspects being arrested "just across the Illinois border." Boundaries of states are referred to as "lines," not borders." We realize that this statement was made under tension and offer this comment for general future reference purposes only.

I thought the Bardot marriage story was underplayed this morning. I may misjudge the public interest in Bardot at the moment, but I feel that this story could have been better headlined and more imaginatively reported. I can guarantee you that if Gordon McLendon were still reporting on the air, this story would have received much more exciting treatment.

Phil Bowman's advent was like a great gust of invigorating fresh air. The fact that he immediately worked in so well with the overall broadcast picture on WNUS shows that it can be done with a real pro and a policy book and well-stipulated format. I was sorry to learn that he is a temporary vacation replacement. Let's hope that the lovely weather will lure him into staying on in Chicago.

If you want to bother with briefing him on minor deviations from expected practice, the only things I have noticed which are worth criticizing are these. He sometimes fails to "get out" of midbroadcast headline summary and goes directly into news story. He doesn't "get out" of UPI carts but goes direct into story or announcement. He should read the policy book on how management wants baseball scores handled. He reads the wire service wording of "edged, blanked, swamped, smothered," etc.

## Miscellany 2

Incidentally, while the policy book doesn't mention this specifically, newscasters should avoid these same cliches in reporting baseball schedules. If they insist on reading non-Chicago games, they should merely give locations and avoid saying, "will host the, greet the, entertain the," etc.

Paul Rogers has recently begun giving the time in half-minutes. He does this quite regularly. This is not just a casual slip-up. Management is violently opposed to the giving of time in fractions of minutes -- as the policy book clearly points out.

The North American Savings-sponsored weather report with the vintage French fire engine in the background is getting worse instead of better. This announcement would sound appropriate on a 100-watt station broadcasting on a frequency of 1599 KC. in the piney woods section of rural Arkansas, but it doesn't belong on "the mighty thirteen ninety."



7/14/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

#### THE WEATHER

The boys are still not always giving the full official weather forecast at the end of each broadcast. We have discussed this and I realize that there is a problem of timing.

You have done a fine job, Dick, in seeing to it that the newscasts end on time so that each new broadcast can start on time as it should and as the listeners reasonably expect that it should. BUT, can't you now carry your reforms a step further and somehow "formatize" the closing seconds of the broadcasts so that the men will have time to give a full weather forecast? I don't know enough about the technique to suggest the formula, but couldn't the men become habituated to thinking of the broadcast ending at 00:00:29, instead of 30 -- or at 29½ or whatever?

Psychologically, they could get everything out of the way but the weather. They could say, "All I have to get in is the weather report and a station plug and then sign off. And I don't even need to give the station plug if the weather is too long." This, instead of, "Well, all I have to get in is the final commercial, a short news story and then the weather."

I'm explaining this badly and I don't know what part the "log" plays in all this, but it does seem to me important that some system be set up so that we close out each broadcast with a good, honest, full weather report which will become a "trade-mark" of WNUS excellence instead of the present unpredictable weather report which varies, depending on the amount of time the newscaster has left.

There's no reason why WNUS cannot have the finest weather service in the city.

I have a feeling that we're stressing harbor reports just a wee bit too much. It sounds to me as if several of the newscasters owned boats. What's all the folderol lately about the constant

Weather 2

explaining about what the blue and red flags mean? If we're going to be such specialists, what about an aviation report now and then for the newscasters who own private planes?

And where in hell are the extended forecasts? In weather like this there should be a 5-day forecast now and then at least.

7/14/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

RUBBISH BETWEEN NEWSCASTS

Some weeks ago, at a meeting which included Holt, Keyes, Thorne, Fraser, and myself, a great forward step was taken in improving the listenability of WNUS between programs. In one fell swoop all the litter and rubbish which had been cluttering up the transition period between programs was swept away and a simple transition format evolved which provided the listener with absolute minimal motivation to tune out the station.

It was decided that there would be a simple signature sign-off, a station i.d., and an immediate live intro by the next newscaster. Dick made the brilliant suggestion that the half hour break be merely a "pause for station identification." This got warm concurrence from Holt and Keyes. This was agreed on all around and there was a further consensus that this format was to be left undisturbed and was not to be changed without approval of management.

It was lovely. I was very happy. So were all the other listeners.

On July 2, the studio staff, without consulting management, inserted some station promo copy in the half-hour break. I don't particularly object to the copy, although one piece goes out of its way to insult WNUS listeners and other radio stations. I do object to the principle involved.

I spoke to Thorne about this on the telephone on July 2 and he agreed to get the extraneous copy out of there pronto.

It's still on the air. Perhaps again it's "the system" and Thorne is unable to get it off the air. My point is that if the studio is allowed to violate orders which top management has

Rubbish 2

declared as firm and not subject to change without approval, then format means nothing, policy books mean nothing, and management will not have the control over WNUS sound which is vital to continued commercial success.

I'd not have brought this matter to your attention if Thorne had been able to repair the damage. I know this memo is going to make Dick and Dennis sore at me but I think part of my job is to do my best to protect the WNUS format and so here it is.

I think you should ask Thorne to keep the program transitions in the simple form established at the meeting.

7/16/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, DOn Keyes, Gordon McLendon

WHITHER MY MEMOS?

Under instruction I send most of my memos to Dick Thorne. I don't know whether you have been reading memos prior to Art Holt's departure and are used to them, but on re-reading a handful of them today I realized that you might easily get the impression that anything that goes wrong anywhere, day or night, is Dick's fault. This, of course, is absurd.

After more than six months of listening and criticizing, I am still puzzled as to why obvious errors can't be corrected or take months to correct. I continue to think that there is "something wrong with the system." I tried in vain to have Art Holt allow a friend, who is a co-ordinator of office procedures, check into the system in use and offer possible suggestions for improvement. I was told that "the system is perfect" and that all uncorrected errors were due entirely to "human error." ~~On the other hand~~ I tried in vain to get flow charts and diagrams of organization.

I think many of my memos are ignored because they are misdirected. Obviously I don't expect my suggestions to be carried out when the management level involved doesn't find them valid or important, but I have been told many times that "we couldn't agree with you more." -- and still nothing happens. Furthermore I am never told when my suggestions are rejected and I therefore waste my time, for which I am being paid, in repeating the same corrections time and time again.

The whole procedure seems damned inefficient to me and I feel that a lot of wasted effort and sloppy broadcasting is due to lack of direction and co-ordination.

Many of the things I seek to correct seem to be the responsibility of "engineering," ~~the~~ "traffic," or "continuity." I learned ~~from~~ just the other day that these latter two departments are downtown, and yet I am supposed to write to Dick Thorne about them.

I tried for three months to get two public service announcements off the schedule which had been on the air two months before I began to try to pry them off. When they did finally disappear I doubt if it was because of any effort of mine. I doubt that "traffic" ever saw one of my memos..

I don't know who is responsible for the laxity of engineers, whether Dennis Fraser gets any sort of supervision whatever in his commendable but often misdirected efforts, to whom traffic is responsible for many stupid errors. Some of the announcements I criticize sound as if they had been produced in Dallas. I don't know where Dick Thorne's responsibility begins and where it ends, and yet I am supposed to send all my memos to him.

Certainly the only department which has shown any exciting signs of improvement is the news department. Dick has done one hell of a swell job. I don't see how he has done it, along with the heavy schedule of newscasting he has. I have said for months and months that the station will not sound "first class all around" until the manager at the studio is given time to manage and isn't expected to do a full broadcasting job and then do an intricate job of management in overtime and between pencil editing.

Meantime, maybe my memos should be being sent to a number of different people, with copies to you. Maybe some should be sent to the person in charge of "traffic," if there be such a person --- which seems doubtful indeed. Maybe some should be going direct to Dallas. Maybe some should be bounced off of asteroids in orbit.

I THINK A STAFF MEETING IS INDICATED, WITH LITTLE OLD ME ALLOWED TO LISTEN IN.



7/18/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

WALTER ROBINSON

I'm afraid he isn't salvable. And he is DANGEROUS. Many people listen to WNUS only at night and he can be losing the station thousands of listeners nightly.

I hope that the downtown office is aware of the revenue danger if loss of listeners becomes tangible and that you get full cooperation in hiring a new man in case you also feel that Robinson must go. And while they're at it they might as well hire two new men so as to be somewhat adequately staffed, as befits a station which claims to be "up there" with the other big boys in the industry.

What about hiring some fellows locally? Aren't there some announcers on FM who read news well and whose salary is such that they could be lured over to WNUS on relatively short notice?

Meanwhile, ~~mmm~~ would this be a temporary solution? Could you, without starting a ship-wide mutiny, persuade one of the day men to take the night shift temporarily? Robinson sounded quite good on a day broadcast the other day and might be passable during the mid-day schedule. A good pro on the night shift might save the day, if you'll pardon the expression.

7/18/66

TOL Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

BART McLENDON PROMO

A current promo gives a rather bad impressiin. It boastfully asserts that WNUS has two exclusive Vietnam correspondents. (This is O?K..) Then it mentions only Bart McLendon. This is like the promo which said: "WNUS has five news services: UPI, AP, and the City News Bureau."

Regular WNUS listeners can draw four conclusions, none of them pleasant.

1. The station is lying. Ward has come home and the station doesn't want to admit it.
2. Lousy copywriting.
3. Station is intentionally not mentioning Ward and is slanting copy to favor McLendon ~~and~~ account of his ~~name~~.
4. Usual WNUS sloppiness.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTION. Re-tape. Either mention Ward or stop saying that WNUS has two exclsuive Vietnam correspondents.

7/25/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

NIX!

I object to the "Lizzie Borden Freeddm Day" promotion suggested for August 4 in Dennis' "weekly report" for the long week of 7/18-8/1.

I realize that this famous case has been the source of much ghoulish humor throughout the years and that, at first glance, this promotion might seem appropriate. I feel, however, that many WNUS listeners will still be strongly aware of the grisly aspects of the student nurse murder and that any light treatment of the subject of murder at this time would be highly inappropriate as well as in very bad taste.

I shall be ashamed of WNUS if this promotion goes on the air.

7/25/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

HOW ABOUT A "NEWSCASTERS' VIGNETTES" PROMOTION?

Suggested promotion for sandwich month and smiles week sounds A-OK.

I add a suggestion to Dennis' all-too-true remark about "to humanize some otherwise straight sounding announcers." The strict program format now being so well observed does give somewhat the impression that we have a bunch of machines grinding out the news. The personalities of the various men ~~do~~ come through but not enough, I think, to produce the proper feeling of friendliness between listener and audience which I have sought in vain to have management cultivate. I would not relax the format one bit because I believe it to be largely responsible for the present smooth-flowing sound of all the daytime newscasts.

I think the newscasters could be "humanized" by a promotion series of vignettes, done by fellow newscasters. These should be like the advertiser vignettes formerly on the air, but more flippant in tone and filled with very good natured kidding about follies (loud shirts and sports jackets, etc.), weaknesses (too much Sicilian Gold and ice cream, over-polishing golf clubs, etc.), cussed streaks (harsh supervision of wife's operation of power mower, chasing dogs out of garden, etc.) They should ~~annually~~ give legitimate factual information also, age, background, schooling, where and how he lives, interest, hobbies, etc. They should leave out nauseating aspects of advertiser vignettes concerned with subject being seen every Sunday morning, standing on the steps of the Lutheran church in Oak Park, with a luminous glow hovering above him and a gorgeous wife and beautiful children standing nearby.

Dennis could write very good copy on this from details supplied by men or the men could write their own descriptions of their team-mates.

I see no policy objection to this. This series might also be handled with short drop-ins. "The voice you will hear on our next newscast will be that of. He's the guy who ..." Such copy should be pre-edited and controlled -- not ad libbed.

7/25/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: RonRuth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

SCOPE OF "STUDIO MANAGEMENT" AUTHORITY.

Re my memo on "Rubbish Between Nesscasts" and your distressed reply.

My conception of the program operation is that "management" (as opposed to "studio management") is attempting to control programming from Dallas by means of a strict format, set forth in the policy book and very precisely defined as "an edict from management," in Art Holt's foreward to the policy book. Beyond these restrictions you are the boss. Changes may be made at your discretion or on orders from management as the result of my memos. I have no authority whatever and know.

I am sure you recognize that there are some things you know you dare not change -- things which Gordon McLendon feels are essential to the sound he wants to hear from WNUS.

My mistake in writing the memo referred to above was in assuming that you and Dennis regarded the present format between programs as sacrosanct as the items in the policy book. This was not included in the policy book because it never occurred to me that any one at the studio level would change it without authority from on high. I was wrong in challenging your authority, although I still challenge your judgment.

What shocks me and worries me, is not the copy, as Dennis mistakenly implies in his memo to me, but in the precedent. If Dennis can put in a 10-second promo he can put in a one minute and pretty soon we'll be back where we were with a clutter of junk in there.

Incidentally (sic), my memory, which is sometimes like that of a tape recorder, says that you said, "I'll check into it and get them off the air tomorrow, unless the original tapes have been destroyed." Does that jog your memory?

studio management 2

I know that you are overworked. I have been advocating a full-time studio manager ever since last February and have written Gordon McLendon some very insulting memos about this. As for your compensation -- I don't understand why you don't get paid for out-of-stretch announcements but unfortunately that entire matter is distinctly out of my realm and I shouldn't even comment on it.

I said in my memo that you and Dennis would get sore at me and you did. If you think it over, however, you'll realize that I have frequently said nice things about you and the news operations in my memos. I find little to criticize in the news department as it stands and I repeat that I think that you have done a wonderful job with the men. One can "feel" the improved morale over the air.

I plan to start criticism of news and headlines as soon as possible but can't do this until I have discussed with Ron Ruth a slight change in my procedure. I want the men to know they are being monitored and I want them to understand that criticism is given in the spirit of a "copy desk" on any newspaper and with full knowledge that they are working under pressure all the time.

I guess Ron Ruth is working under pressure too, because I haven't yet had a meeting with him to discuss this matter.



8/1/66

TO: - Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

BE SPECIFIC IN PROMOS

Maybe we don't have a big enough staff to handle this, but WNUS would sound much more like a great big grown up professional metropolitan station if promos could be pinpointed rather than generalized.

For example. All day Sunday listeners were urged to listen to Bart McLendon's war documentary "this Sunday at 7" and to Senator Edward Kennedy "this Sunday at 11."

The copy would sound so much more alert -- and persuasive -- if it read TONIGHT instead of THIS SUNDAY.

Is it possible for newscasters to ad lib or pencil-edit their copy so as to change "this Sunday" to "tonight"? This would be of some improvement.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

SOMEBODY HAS TO CATCH TECHNICAL ERRORS

Dennis has scolded me for criticising engineers for not catching and correcting technical errors. He says their feelings get hurt.

Regardless of potential hurt feelings I feel it my duty to report a Saturday night flub. Robinson called for a specific cart and got an entirely different one. After the wrong cart had run for several sentences it was yanked with no explanation and after some seconds of silence the correct cart was broadcast. In view of Robinson's imminent departure I am not criticizing him for not giving the genial explanation to the audience which is expected of newscasters under these circumstances. I do think, however, that the engineer should have stayed awake long enough to have kept this identical error from turning up on the wheel half an hour later. I stayed awake to hear it but of course I had the stimulus of knowing it would appear on the tape, on good old reliable WNUS.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

SOME ANNOUNCEMENTS I LIKED

There are two excellent announcements currently running which are fine examples of what I think there should be more of. (Please pardon that atrocious sentence.) One is about FM at its peak and the other about WNUS being the one fulltime station in Chicago which specializes in news. These were written and delivered by Dennis Fraser and are just what I think station promos should be. They are firm, strong and convincing -- with no monkeyshines. Let's have more like them.

The "straight" announcement by Don Keyes giving his personal recommendation that listeners tune in for Bart McLendon's Sunday night show is another example of a fine piece of promotion. I was pleased that it had no musical accompaniment to distract the listener from the very convincing and persuasive message from Don. More of these, please. Let's have more straight, "heart to heart" talk with the listeners, and less "pep pill" music designed to bamboozle the listeners. As a news station we should depend on brisk copy and strong vocal chords. We do that so well.

Dennis' announcement on Smile Week is a real masterpiece. Not only is the copy good but the light-hearted delivery is excellent. This entire promotion is fine. This is the kind of thing we should have more of on WNUS. (There goes my syntax again:)

P.S. You know me. No compliment without the hidden dagger. The Smile Week announcement should have carried the one and only official address of WNUS as set forth in the policy book -- not the Wrigly Building address mentioned twice in the announcement.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

I may be wrong but I feel that the latest Mel Wolfe howling chorus commercial is running a few DBS above the general volume level. This announcement is abominable at best and isn't helped by added volume. Perhaps the engineer might be checked on this -- very politely, of course.

8/1/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

AH CHOO

I learn, through checking, that the pollen count statistics are supplied, not by the health department or weather bureau as I had thought, but by Abbott Laboratories.

Apparently a request has to be made to them in order to receive this information daily. I don't know what their requirements are about mentioning their name or about having reports sponsored. At any rate you may want to check this since the hay fever season starts in about a week.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LET'S STIR THINGS UP A LITTLE

Dennis recently made two suggestions for livening up the WNUS schedule. I approve of both suggestions.

One was that we renew the "Letters to the Editor" series. Dennis seemed to think that this needed official approval from on high. I don't think so. As I remember it this was dropped because you seemed to think it couldn't be sustained, not because of any frowns from above.

Let's see if it can be sustained. I'm ready, for one, to write all kinds of controversial letters signed by all kinds of controversial people. Let's try to get something going.

The second suggestion was relative to your reading of the Fourth of July selection. I was much impressed with this reading. I suggest that every Saturday or Sunday you give a short reading of an inspirational nature -- not necessarily patriotic or literary, or religious or philosophical but a grand mixture of all of them. My thought was that perhaps we could get short selections from the Great Books Foundation -- or the Great Books Publishing company representing the great thoughts of great men through the centuries. Maybe we could even get Mortimer Adler to pick out the selections in return for having his name mentioned.

This might prove to be a surprisingly attractive feature. People generally do not realize what inspiring passages there are in writings which on the surface might seem dull.

You have such a tremendously effective voice for this kind of thing that I think this could prove to be a great asset to WNUS. Of course this might need a policy o.k. from the powers above. I don't see how they could well refuse, however, in view of the many deviations from policy there are on Sunday. This would be a pleasant relief and would bring goodwill to the station.



2.

What do you think of this?

P.S. I know somebody at the Great Books Foundation. I used to work for them.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

ANNOUNCEMENTS SO GOOD THEY SHOULDN'T BE ON THE AIR

In another memo I speak highly of two announcements currently running -- one about FM and one about our specialization in news -- particularly all night news.

I think both of these announcements should be off the air.

I am told that FM has to go off the air again for an indefinite period and that the FM announcement is on the air just as "general station promotion." This announcement is so good and so convincing about how WNUS-FM is now at its "peak" that I think that it's a shame to use it now to lure listeners who will again be disappointed. I think we should lay off FM promotion until we're definitely back on the air for good.

I heard the other announcement first when Robinson was at his very worst at night and when an invitation to tune him in was like committing Hari Kari just for fun. We need promotion for our nighttime newscasts right now "like an ostriche needs a head in a hole!"

These announcements should be saved for a time when we have good solid merchandise to offer.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM Ash

I DON'T GET IT

I could hardly believe my ears -- but WNUS is still running the promo about how we have "two exclusive Viet Nam correspondents -- Bart McLendon."

Apparently there are some things about station operation which I just don't understand and never will. This beats all.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

LET'S STOP USING CHICAGO-ORIGINATION UPI CARTS

I strongly object to the use of Chicago-origination UPI carts.

In the past several days this obnoxious practice has been particularly noticeable in the coverage of the Speck murder case. Newsmen have wouh'd these carts into their newscasts as if they actually contributed something. Actually I feel that this merely emphasizes the fact that WNUS doesn't have a "man on the scene."

These carts are so obviously made for out-of-town consumption and are of such a general nature that I have found no information in any of them which the station did not already have or which the newscaster had not already mentioned before he played the cart. Our listeners are smart enough to recognize these carts as Chicago "feeds" for subscribing stations. The UPI announcer's statement that this is "so and so in Chicago" makes the station look bad, not good. If they ever do turn up any real news, let's give it live and get the credit.

I'd like to eliminate Chicago carts completely -- in the policy book. I'd like to hear what others think about this.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

LET'S JUST STOP TRYING

I recommend that the feature "SPOTLIGHT ON CIVIC AFFAIRS" be dropped completely until we have a staff adequate to the task of presenting these announcements so that they are not a discredit to the station.

Present case in point. Last Saturday night a SPOTLIGHT said that a rummage sale would be held "this Saturday." On Sunday and today (Monday) this announcement continued to announce the rummage sale, "this Saturday." Obviously a "this Saturday" announced on a Saturday isn't the same Saturday that is announced on a Sunday or Monday.

The other two items on this same announcement said, ungrammatically, that a school will hold their meeting.

In order to make everything clear and avoid argument, I submit that there can be no defense of this language. Since "school" is singular, THEIR must be ITS.

Since continuity can't get good English on these announcements, and traffic continues to schedule them badly, and they're so skimpy in copy that they can't do much good anyway, why not quit trying for a while? The station would sound better.

8/1/66

TO: - Richard Thorne

CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

WLS NEWS ADVERTISING IS BACK ON WNUS!

I could hardly believe my ears! WNUS is again advertising the ABC network and WLS news service with the familiar musical trademark at the beginning of the Paul Harvey show. I haven't listened at noon for a long time and therefore don't know how long this has been going on, but it should be stopped forthwith for the same valid reasons which management so violently stated during the previous contretemps over this strange practice. You'd think even an engineer would notice this.



8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

HANDLE CARTS WITH DISCRETION

We had a pretty good understanding with the men some time ago about the handling of UPI carts. This was in accordance with the wishes of McLendon and Holt. I think maybe the men should be reminded again about how management wants these handled.

Recently several of the men have been introducing carts with phrases like, "Senator Mansfield told WNUS." We are not to pretend that WNUS has a man on the floor of the Senate. The listeners are too smart for that.

Also recently several of the men have taken to saying "WNUS spoke to Senator Mansfield. He said." Then the cart. Listeners have heard too many of these carts to be fooled by this device. Carts should be introduced only as reports from the WNUS correspondent, or "So and so said today," etc. Also there is a tendency sometimes to tell too much of what's going to be on the cart. This spoils the value of the news content of the cart, which is all too often too brief to allow of any pre-summary without giving the whole thing away.

Also men should be reminded always to "get out" of carts with some kind of an exit line.

8/1/66

TO: Richard Thorne  
CC: Ron Ruth, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

MAKE THAT FIRE ENGINE BACK UP

That horrible North American commercial with the French fire engine behind the weather report was much too close to the final weather report today. The newscaster announced that it was three minutes before the hour. Then came the horrible commercial with quite a full weather report. This must have taken a good forty five seconds. There was the proper full weather report at the end of the show which must have filled another thirty seconds. This would leave only a maximum of 1' 45" between two full weather reports and I think that's too small a gap.

8/9/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

IT CAN'T BE DONE

In the thirty seconds which WNUS allots to worthy public enterprises -- just to prove that WNUS IS CHICAGO -- it's impossible to give a good musical production AND give adequate representation to the cause being promoted.

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Richard Thorne said: "We are not in the music playing business -- we are in the news dissemination business."

8/9/66

TO: Ron Ruth  
CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

IT ISN'T FAIR

It isn't fair to give public service organizations only 30 seconds of time and THEN take away from time with musical introductions and end flourishes AND obfuscate the meaning of the message with inept musical accompaniment throughout.

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Richard Thorne said: "We are not in the music playing business -- we are in the news dissemination business."

8/9/66

TO: Ron Ruth  
CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

AND I THOUGHT IT WAS SUCH A GOOD IDEA!

I see that my "A CHOO" idea for giving a novel twist to the hay fever pollen reports is being ignored in favor of the purely conventional conforming procedure. In other words, WNUS is giving the pollen reports in the good old fashioned way, just as all other Chicago stations do.

I grant you that my judgment is not necessarily good on programming ideas and I make no pretense of being an expert in that department -- BUT, WNUS should make an effort to be DIFFERENT now and then. Things are getting a bit dull on the station.

WNUS should make an effort to be talked about. Now that mistakes are fewer there is less for people to talk about and there should be some constructive effort to give them things to talk about.

There should be more editorials, more station promotion, more "features" which do not violate Gordon McLendon's format.

Let's get a little crazy now and then. HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR TO YOU. A CHOO!

8/9/66

TO: Ron Ruth  
CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon  
FROM: Ash

STOP THE MUSIC!

It would be a great service to public service organizations and to listeners if you would eliminate the use of music before, behind and under public service announcements.

Announcements as presently produced make the station sound amateurish, small-townish and ridiculous.

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Richard Thorne said: "We are not in the music playing business -- we are in the news dissemination business."



8/9/66

TO: Ron Ruth

CC: Richard Thorne, Don Keyes, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

HOW SILLY CAN WE GET?

A PSA for the Lambs Pet Shop opens up with some very lovely music. It's really pretty music. It sounds nice.

Then the copy begins: "When you're riding around listening to WNUS...."

How silly can we get?

A THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Richard Thorne said: "We are not in the music playing business -- we are in the news dissemination business."

# John Ashenhurst

DECEMBER 29, 1965

DEAR MR. McLENDON:

I HAVE A SOLUTION FOR YOUR BIGGEST PROBLEM ON WNUS — HOW TO GET HIGHER RATINGS AND ADD LISTENERS TO NON-DRIVING HOURS WITHOUT HARMFULLY UPSETTING YOUR VERY SUCCESSFUL "ALL NEWS" FORMULA.

AFTER MONTHS OF PAINFUL LISTENING TO BAD NEWSCASTING, STUDY OF PULSE RATINGS AND THE REALIZATION THAT YOU WERE GOING TO "MAKE THE GRADE", I DECIDED THAT WHAT YOU NEEDED AT THIS JUNCTURE WAS A SHOT IN THE ARM FOR WNUS — ANOTHER GREAT FIRST FOR THE McLENDON OPERATION.

(I'M A RETIRED OLD FUDDY-DUDDY, BUT ONE WITH A LOT OF EXPERIENCE IN THE NEWS AND RADIO FIELD. I WROTE THE RUNNING STORY OF THE LOEB-LEOPOLD TRIAL FROM THE COURTROOM FOR THE CHICAGO AMERICAN AND WAS CITY EDITOR IN THE OLD CAPONE DAYS. I HAVE HAD TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN SELLING MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF NATIONAL SPOT RADIO AND HAVE NURSED MANY A RADIO STATION BACK TO HEALTH THROUGH A NEAR-FATAL ATTACK OF TOXIC TELEVISIONITIS.)

AFTER DEVELOPING AN OBSESSION ABOUT LISTENING TO WNUS (THE IDEA WAS SO GOOD AND THE PERFORMANCE SO BAD) I FINALLY DEVELOPED A FORMULA WHICH I FELT WOULD LET YOU GO TO AD BUYERS AND LISTENERS ALIKE WITH AN EXCITING NEW IDEA — WITHOUT ADVERSELY AFFECTING THE DRAWING POWER OF YOUR OBVIOUSLY SUCCESSFUL "ALL NEWS" FORMAT. I SET THIS UP IN SALES PRESENTATION FORM, HOPING TO BE ABLE TO PRESENT IT IN PERSON TO YOU AND TO MR. KEYES, BUT I WAS UNSUCCESSFUL IN GETTING AN INTRODUCTION TO YOU. I DECIDED TO GAMBLE ON PRESENTING IT TO JACK BURKE AND, AFTER AGREEING ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIM TO PURCHASE IT IF HE FOUND IT FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE, I PRESENTED IT TO HIM FORMALLY ON DECEMBER 2.

THE IDEA WAS SIMPLE ENOUGH — A SWITCH TO A HALF-HOUR FORMAT OF "ALL THE NEWS AND FEATURES TOO", WITH THE MASTHEAD OF "CHICAGOLAND'S NEWSPAPER OF THE AIR".

I GOT A NONCOMMITAL ANSWER FROM JACK WHO IMPLIED THAT HE WAS BOUND BY AN IRON-CLAD FIAT OF NO CHANGE FROM THE "ALL NEWS" FORMAT. TWO DAYS LATER YOU WENT ON A HALF HOUR BROADCAST BASIS AND I SAID "HOORAY". ONE WEEK AFTER I HAD PRESENTED MY IDEA YOU BEGAN EACH BROADCAST WITH A SONOROUS "CHICAGO'S NEWSPAPER OF THE AIR" AND I SAID, "HOORAY, HOORAY".

WHEN NOTHING FURTHER HAPPENED I CALLED JACK WHO SAID THAT HE HAD "NOT HAD THE OPPORTUNITY" TO SHOW YOU THE PRESENTATION AND THAT THE "CHICAGO'S NEWSPAPER OF THE AIR" MUST BE JUST A "COINCIDENCE". I CAN, PERFORCE, BUT AGREE WITH HIM. BUT, BOY! WHAT A MIRACULOUS COINCIDENCE. HOW STRANGE AND (TO ME) HOW PAINFULLY WEIRD A "COINCIDENCE". I HAD PLANNED TO PEDDLE THIS IDEA IN NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA IF YOU DIDN'T WANT IT, BUT THIS "COINCIDENCE" PRETTY WELL RULES THAT OUT.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

To - MR. McLendon

PAGE TWO

WITH REGARD TO YOUR SECOND SUGGESTION THAT I WRITE A NUMBER OF "FRONT PAGE STORY TYPE" BITS, I THINK I COULD WRITE THEM. WHEN I WAS A CUB REPORTER ON THE OLD CHICAGO DAILY NEWS I EARNED THE ENMITY OF THE VETERANS BY FOUR OR FIVE TIMES A WEEK SNAGGING THE COVETED COLUMN 2 ON PAGE 1, WHICH ALWAYS CONTAINED A FEATURE STORY AND WAS THE ONLY RELIEF FROM AN OTHERWISE STODGY MAKEUP. I ALSO LEARNED A LOT ABOUT "SELECTION" BECAUSE I WAS ALWAYS THE ONE SENT OUT TO THE CORRIDOR TO SEE THE CRACKPOTS WHO INSISTED ON SEEING THE CITY EDITOR. I NEVER TOOK THEM TO THE CITY EDITOR, OF COURSE, BUT WHEN I THOUGHT I SMELLED A GOOD STORY I WOULD TAKE THEM IN TO BEN HECHT, WHO AT THAT TIME WAS WRITING A TWO-COLUMN BACK-PAGE FEATURE CALLED "1,001 AFTERNOONS IN CHICAGO". FROM WATCHING WHICH OF MY VICTIMS HE CHOSE TO WEAVE INTO STORIES AND WHICH ONES HE REJECTED AS NOT NEWS-FEATURE-WORTHY, I LEARNED QUITE A BIT AT AN EARLY AGE.

NEVERTHELESS, I QUESTION FEASIBILITY OF NOW WRITING SUCH STORIES AT HOME AND GETTING THEM TO THE STATION BEFORE THEY ARE TOO STALE TO USE. READING OF YOUR MEMO LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THAT THE MAIN PROBLEM IS NOT SO MUCH IN THE WRITING, BUT IN THE SELECTION OF THE BASIC MATERIAL. PERHAPS YOU COULD SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM BY HAVING YOUR MANAGING EDITOR SELECT THE GOLDEN GEMS OR "GERMS" AND THEN TURN THEM OVER TO A PART-TIME RE-WRITE MAN WITH VERY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES AS TO PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH, GENERAL STYLE, ETC.

I FEEL THAT I CANNOT WASTE TOO MUCH TIME IN POURING OVER TONS OF PRINTED MATTER TRYING TO CULL OUT ITEMS FOR STORY DEVELOPMENT, AND THEN SPENDING THE TIME WRITING THEM AND GETTING THEM TO THE STATION. I HAVE SEVERAL WRITING PROJECTS ON HAND AND I DO NOT WANT TO DO INJUSTICE TO ANY OF THEM BY OVERBURDENING MYSELF WITH TYPEWRITER POUNDING. WE CAN DISCUSS THIS WHEN AND IF WE MEET.

I WONDERED WHETHER YOU REALLY NEED MY "GADFLY" SERVICES IN VIEW OF ALL YOUR RECENT "REFORMS" AND SO I LISTENED FOR TWO HOURS LAST NIGHT AND TWO HOURS THIS MORNING. YOU DO NEED ME, OR SOMEONE LIKE ME. AS A RESULT OF THIS LISTENING, I SHOULD, IF I WERE WORKING WITH YOU, SEND ALONG ABOUT FIFTEEN OR TWENTY MEMOS, OF VARYING DEGREES OF IMPORTANCE.

I'LL GIVE SEVERAL EXAMPLES, JUST TO INDICATE THE TYPE OF SUGGESTIONS I'D MAKE.

A. IN THE TAPED ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT "THE LIGHT THAT FAILED", THE ANNOUNCER SAYS, "ARE YOU AN ALUMNI OF A COMMITTEE THAT . . .". I'D POINT OUT THAT IT SHOULD READ, "ARE YOU AN ALUMNUS OF A COMMITTEE THAT . . ." AND THEN GO ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THE SINGULAR MALE IS ALUMNUS, PLURAL MALE OR MALE AND FEMALE COMBINED IS ALUMNI, SINGULAR FEMALE, ALUMNA, PLURAL FEMALE ALUMNAE.

B. IN THE TAPED ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT ALCOA INSTANT NEWS I'D POINT OUT THE POLICY INVOLVEMENT IN SUDDENLY CHANGING THE W-NUS COVERAGE AREA FROM CHICAGO OR CHICAGOLAND TO "MIDWEST" AND POINT OUT THE ABSURDITY OF MAKING THE CONTRARY-TO-FACT STATEMENT THAT "ALL MIDWEST HAS TO DO IS TO DIAL 471-9800", WHEREAS ACTUALLY "MIDWEST" (IF IT HAPPENED TO BE INFORMED BY MAIL OR WORD-OF-MOUTH ABOUT THIS SERVICE) WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE TO DIAL "AREA CODE - 471-9800".

C. I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH ALL YOUR POLICIES, BUT I WOULD HAVE QUESTIONED THE STORY WHICH BEGAN, "A 24-YEAR-OLD GIRL WAS RAPED AND STABBED TONIGHT BY A YOUNG NEGRO". I'D SEE NO OBJECTION TO THE WORD NEGRO LATER IN THE STORY AS A PART OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSAILANT -- HEIGHT, WEIGHT, CLOTHING, COLOR OF SKIN, ETC., BUT I THINK THAT A LEAD SENTENCE WOULD NOT CHARACTERIZE THE CRIMINAL AS A NEGRO ANY MORE THAN ONE WOULD SAY, "A 24-YEAR-OLD GIRL WAS RAPED AND STABBED TONIGHT BY A YOUNG WHITE MAN -- A YOUNG POLYNESIAN, A YOUNG CHINESE, A YOUNG AMERICAN INDIAN.

# John Ashenhurst

JANUARY 3, 1966

DEAR MR. MCLENDON:

I AM NOT QUITE SURE WHAT YOU EXPECT IN A RETURN MEMORANDUM, BUT I CAN SAY FORTHWITH THAT I AM INTERESTED IN YOUR SUGGESTION THAT I JOIN YOUR STAFF ON A TRIAL BASIS AS A CONSULTANT. I AM CONFIDENT THAT I COULD BE OF SERVICE TO YOU.

MORE THAN A YEAR AGO I HAD THOUGHT OF WRITING TO YOU AND SUGGESTING THAT YOU EMPLOY ME AS A MONITOR, BUT MY LETTER WOULD HAVE BEEN FULL OF SUCH HORRENDOUSLY UNBELIEVABLE DESCRIPTIONS OF WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE STATION THAT I WAS SURE YOU WOULD MERELY "CAN" IT AS THE WORK OF A CRANK. I BELIEVE I WAS FIRST DRIVEN INTO MY OBSSIVE LISTENING WHEN, A FEW SCANT HOURS AFTER CHURCHILL'S DEATH, I TUNED INTO A FULL 15-MINUTE BROADCAST OF RELIGIOUS NEWS IN WHICH THERE WASN'T EVEN A 30-SECOND BREAK-IN TO ANNOUNCE CHURCHILL'S DEATH. I LISTENED FOR MONTHS WHILE EVERY DAY, TWO OR THREE TIMES A DAY, YOU GAVE TWO INCORRECT TIMES AND ONE ALLEDGEDLY CORRECT TIME BETWEEN BROADCASTS. (CHICAGO DAY-LIGHT SAVINGS TIME, 9:32 A.M. - THE BIG HAND OF YOUR CLOCK IS AT 30 -- W-NUS TIME, 9:31 A.M. AND TIME FOR ANOTHER W-NUS UP-TO-THE-SECOND NEWSCAST.) THE MONTHS WORE ON AND I DECIDED THAT NO ONE FROM THE STATION EVER LISTENED. AFTER READING YOUR VARIOUS MEMOS -- WHICH PRODUCED A CERTAIN NOSTALGIA IN ME FOR MY TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS AS A HARRASSED EXECUTIVE IN THE RADIO BUSINESS -- I FEEL THAT I HAVE PROBABLY LISTENED TO YOUR STATION MORE THAN ANY ONE ELSE, ON OR OFF YOUR STAFF.

HAD I WRITTEN YOU PREVIOUSLY I WOULD HAVE DESCRIBED MY PROPOSED FUNCTION AS SOCRATES DESCRIBED HIMSELF TO THE ATHENIANS -- AS THEIR "GADFLY". MY IDEA IS STILL THE SAME, NAMELY:

1. FOR THE SAKE OF THE MORALE OF YOUR W-NEWSCASTER, I WOULD BE ANONYMOUS. BURKE WOULD KNOW, OF COURSE, BUT I'D WANT ONLY ONE CONTACT, YOUR MANAGING EDITOR. I SHOULD NEVER APPEAR AT THE STATION FOR STAFF MEETINGS, NEVER MEET ANY INDIVIDUAL STAFF MEMBERS, NEVER GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOSE SLEEP AND EFFICIENCY BY WASTING TIME HATING ME OR WONDERING WHETHER I WAS OUT TO GET THEIR JOBS.
2. I WOULD NOT WRITE SARCASTIC MEMOS. I'D LEAVE THAT UP TO YOUR DISCRETION. I'D ATTEMPT TO MAKE MY MEMOS PURELY DETACHED REPORTS OF ERRORS COMMITTED OR POLICIES VIOLATED.
3. MY MEMOS, IN ADDITION TO POINTING OUT THE ERRORS, WOULD GIVE THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES, WITH RELATION TO POLICY, GRAMMAR, SYNTAX, JOUNALESE, EUPHONY, PLAIN HORSE SENSE, ETC., SO THAT THESE MEMOS COULD BE ROUTED TO THE ENTIRE NEWSCASTING STAFF IN THE HOPE THEY WOULD PREVENT OTHERS FROM MAKING SIMILAR ERRORS.
4. I'D LIKE TO MAKE POLICY SUGGESTIONS, WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MANAGING EDITOR BUT IMPLEMENTED ONLY BY YOU.
5. I'D LIKE ALSO TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS IN THE SALES AND STATION PROMOTION DEPARTMENT. I ADMIRE JACK BURKE GREATLY AND THINK HE IS A WHIRLWIND, BUT I THINK THAT ANYONE, NO MATTER HOW GOOD HE IS, CAN PROFIT FROM OUTSIDE SUGGESTIONS.
6. I'D LIKE TO WRITE SOME PROMOTION COPY, STATION BREAKS, SLOGANS, ETC. (I FANCY MYSELF IN THIS DEPARTMENT, BUT YOU CAN BE THE JUDGE.) INCIDENTALLY, YOU MIGHT ASK KEV SWEENEY SOMETIME ABOUT WHERE HE GOT SOME OF THE IDEAS THAT HELPED HIM IN HIS EARLY DAYS WITH THE BROADCAST ADVERTISING BUREAU. IF HE'S FEELING HONEST AT THE MOMENT HE'LL TELL YOU HOW HE USED TO DROP INTO MY OFFICE TO GET NEW IDEAS OF PROMOTION, ETC.

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611



INCIDENTALLY, FOR YOUR SAKE, WHY DON'T YOU CHANGE IT TO "CHICAGOLAND'S NEWSPAPER" AS I HAD IT IN MY PRESENTATION? THIS CONNOTES REGIONAL COVERAGE, WHILE I'M AFRAID YOUR "CHICAGO'S NEWSPAPER" WILL HAVE A SUBLIMINAL RESTRICTIVE EFFECT ON THE EARS AND ORDER FORMS OF CHICAGOLAND TIME BUYERS.

SINCE JACK FEELS UNABLE TO PASS ON ANYTHING THAT ISN'T 100 PER CENT "ALL NEWS", I FEEL JUSTIFIED IN MAKING A COLD PITCH TO YOU. I'VE PUT A LOT OF THOUGHT INTO THIS AND I'D LIKE TO SEE WHAT YOU THINK OF IT. JACK SEEMED TO FEEL THAT "FEATURES" WOULD DRIVE AWAY AUDIENCE, BUT ON THE CONTRARY, I THINK THEY WOULD ATTRACT AND KEEP LISTENERS. YOU AND MR. KEYES HAVE DONE A MAGNIFICENT JOB IN TIGHTENING AND POLISHING YOUR NEWS BROADCASTS, BUT YOUR NEWSCASTERS ARE STILL PUFFING UP AND PADDING AND REPEATING STALE NEWS, DRAWING OUT WEATHER REPORTS, ETC. IN PALPABLE EFFORTS TO FILL A HALF HOUR WITH HARD NEWS WHEN THERE ISN'T ENOUGH OF THIS COMMODITY AVAILABLE TO FILL THE GAP.

I CONTEMPLATE SHORT FEATURES -- 30 SECONDS TO TWO MINUTES. NOTHING AS LONG AS YOUR 2-1/2 MINUTE SCHOOL NEWS OR YOUR FIVE MINUTE MUTUAL BUSINESS NEWS. PERHAPS ON WEEK-ENDS, WHEN NEWS IS SCARCE AND WIRE SERVICE FEEDS ARE CURTAILED, SOME LONGER FEATURES COULD BE TRIED OUT.

DON'T YOU THINK A LISTENER WOULD RATHER LISTEN TO A LISTING OF WHAT MOVIES WERE AT WHAT LOOP THEATERS THAN TO A REPEAT OF A LONG WINDED LONG DRAWN OUT WEATHER REPORT OF A LONG WINDED LONG DRAWN OUT WEATHER REPORT AIRED JUST THREE MINUTES EARLIER? DON'T YOU THINK A LISTENER WOULD RATHER BE EDIFIED BY A FAMOUS QUOTATION FROM THE PAST THAN LISTEN TO AN AGONIZINGLY SLOW PROMOTION ANNOUNCEMENT, WITH LANGOROUS BACKGROUND MUSIC, AND ON THE AIR FOR THE 939TH TIME?

DON'T YOU THINK THAT A LISTENER, INSTEAD OF HEARING THAT THE MAN WHO WAS DROWNED IN GREEN CREEK, TENNESSEE, WAS NAMED JERRY BROWN AND THAT HE HAD LIVED THERE FOR THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS, ETC., WOULD LIKE TO HEAR AN INTERESTING STATISTIC LIKE, "DO YOU KNOW THAT IN 1965 AMERICAN WOMEN WORE OUT 56 BILLION, 103 MILLION, 537 THOUSAND, 334-1/2 PAIRS OF NYLON HOSE? (THE ONE-HALF PAIR IS DUE TO THE FACT THAT THERE WERE AN ODD NUMBER OF ONE-LEGGED WOMEN IN THE SURVEY)." AND CAN'T YOU IMAGINE ANY NORMAL LISTENER SAYING, "THAT'S NEWS TO ME."?

THESE LITTLE INTERPOLATIONS INTO YOUR NEWS FORMAT ARE NO MORE INCONSISTENT THAN WHAT YOU ARE ALREADY DOING IN STARTING A PROGRAM WITH "CHICAGO'S NEWSPAPER OF THE AIR" AND FIVE MINUTES LATER TALKING ABOUT "ALL NEWS AND NOTHING BUT THE NEWS". HOW LONG DO YOU THINK A NEWSPAPER WOULD LAST WHICH MAINTAINED AND ADVERTISED THE POLICY OF "ALL NEWS AND NOTHING BUT THE NEWS"?

WHY NOT GO AFTER THE HOUSEWIFE AT THE IRONING BOARD IN MID-MORNING AND MID-AFTERNOON BY OFFERING HER ENTERTAINMENT, ENLIGHTENMENT AND INFORMATIVE AND HELPFUL INFORMATION ALONG WITH CRISP NEWS SO THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO IRON TO MOANS AND GROANS OR JUST PLAIN YAK-YAK ON OTHER STATIONS?

OR WHY NOT MAKE A PITCH FOR THE COMMUTER WITH THE NEW FORMAT? "MR. COMMUTER, WHY NOT READ YOUR MORNING PAPER WHILE YOU DRIVE TO WORK?"

YOU ARE MAKING A GREAT PLAY FOR THE AD BUYERS WITH YOUR INTRA-PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS ABOUT HOW ALERT AND BRAINY THEY ARE. YOU SAY THEY WANT TO BE "INFORMED", YET WITH THE EXCEPTION OF YOUR FINANCIAL NEWS, SCHOOL NEWS AND "QUOTES THE COLUMNS" YOU ARE

To - MR. McLENDON

PAGE THREE

NOT "INFORMING" THEM -- YOU ARE MERELY ACQUAINTING THEM WITH THE NEWS. AND A LOT OF THAT NEWS IS PRETTY PALLID STUFF AT THAT. WHAT THESE BRAINY MEN WANT IS GOOD CRISP NEWS AND SPORTS, ALA CBS, WITH A GOOD SPRINKLING OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL NEWS, TOGETHER WITH INFORMATIVE FEATURES. IF YOU DO HAVE THESE BRAINY MEN AS LISTENERS NOW (ABOUT WHICH YOU SEEM VERY DOUBTFUL) I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU WON'T KEEP THEM LONG WITH YOUR PRESENT FORMULA AND PERFORMANCE.

(WHY DID YOU DROP YOUR EDITORIALS? THEY WERE A GOOD FEATURE.)

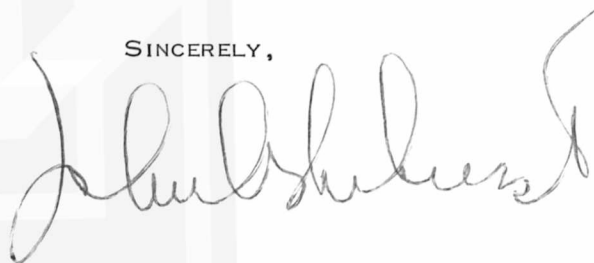
YOU AND KEYES HAVE DONE A WONDERFUL, IF TOO-LONG-DELAYED CLEANUP JOB, BUT I DOUBT IF YOU HAVE DONE MUCH MORE THAN THWART A PENDING MASS OF LISTENER DEFECTIONS OF THOSE WHO WERE JUST ABOUT "FED UP". YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING MUCH BETTER NOW, BUT BETTER ISN'T ENOUGH NOWADAYS. IT HAS TO BE BETTER AND NEW - ESPECIALLY IF YOU EXPECT TO LURE MORE LISTENERS AWAY FROM ESTABLISHED LISTENING HABITS ON OTHER STATIONS.

I COMMEND YOU HIGHLY ON THE BROADCASTS YOU DO IN PERSON. YOU HAVE A GREAT KNACK FOR MAKING THESE LEISURELY BROADCASTS EXTREMELY INTERESTING AND EASY TO LISTEN TO. I DID NOTICE, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN YOU HAD DIFFICULTY FILLING THE AIR NOW AND THEN. WOULDN'T A HANDFUL OF NICE ZINGY SHORT FEATURES HAVE BEEN A WONDERFUL THING TO TURN TO IN TIMES OF "WHAT'S NEXT?" AND WHILE YOUR OWN BROADCASTS ARE GOOD EVEN WHEN NEWS IS SCARCE, YOUR NEWSMEN JUST CAN'T PRODUCE THAT INDIVIDUAL GUSTO. AND I'M SURE THAT WHEN YOU PACK UP THE BLACKTHORN AND HIE BACK TO DALLAS THE QUALITY OF NEWSCASTS IS GOING TO SLIP AGAIN, UNLESS THE BOYS HAVE MORE THAN THEIR INGENUITY TO COUNT ON WHEN NEWS IS LIGHT.

I MAY BE DOING SOMETHING UNORTHODOX IN TRYING TO BRING THIS TO YOUR ATTENTION AFTER GETTING NO ANSWER FROM JACK, BUT SINCE HE SEEMS TO FEEL UNAUTHORIZED TO PASS JUDGMENT ON ANYTHING NOT STRICTLY "ALL NEWS" AND SINCE I HAVE PUT IN A LOT OF TIME AND WORK ON THIS IDEA, I FELT JUSTIFIED IN TRYING TO BRING IT TO YOUR ATTENTION. YOU HAVE A FLAIR FOR INNOVATION AND SUCH A GENIUS FOR PROMOTION THAT WOULD MAKE THE IMPLEMENTING OF THIS IDEA A JOY TO WATCH.

I'LL STOP NOW. I KNOW YOU'VE HAD SOME REALLY TOUGH DAYS AND YOU'RE TIRED AND WANT TO REST UP SO THAT YOU'LL BE IN SHAPE TO TAKE DOWN THOSE WANT-ADS OVER THE TELEPHONE IN LOS ANGELES. PARDON MY PROLIXITY. I HOPE YOU STILL HAVE THE STRENGTH TO TAKE A PEEK AT LEAST AT THE COPY OF THE PRESENTATION WHICH I GAVE TO JACK. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CALL ME. I WON'T CALL YOU.

SINCERELY,



MR. GORDON B. McLENDON  
W-NUS - CHICAGO

CC: MR. DONALD KEYES  
MR. JOHN BURKE, JR.



Dec' 1965 or  
Jan 1966

Dear Mr. Ashenhurst:

Certainly if there's one thing you are not, it is an "old fuddy-duddy".

Since August, fighting the handicap of terribly inefficient personnel which we have now taken long strides toward eliminating, we've been trying to achieve a number of the very things you point out in your letter. I will try to find copies of my memoranda to the Managing Editor of August and December first. Don't have them with me but I am sending along some other material which I hope you'll look over--particularly the "Front-Page Story Type".

My thought is that you might want to join us for a trial period of thirty days, during which we can both find out if it'll work out. You can (a) serve as a consultant, sending through a steady stream of unpleasant comments from your home to 8601 South Kedzie and (b) actually write a number of the "front-page stories". I can do the front-page stories but blamed if I can find anyone else who seems to be able to do so.

Please read the enclosed, fire me back a return memo--if someone will phone me at the station (4363911) I'll have it picked up--and we can shortly enough agree on some sort of arrangement. Funny, this whole thing works out better if you are not at the station--rather, where you can listen.

Respectfully,

Gordon McLendon

P.S.

Just found the first few pages of my December 1st memo. Would you return it since it is the only copy I have?

Forgive the spelling and the many punctuation and other errors in the enclosed mimeographed and dittoed memoranda--~~yeung~~ part-time secretary didn't even bother to proof-read her work.

Saturday night  
January 22, 1966

Dear John:

And well you might feel forgotten. And yet if you were here you'd see hanging on the bulletin board, with points of emphasis even further underscored by the writer, all points of your various memoranda which relate to other than the writer. I'll deal with those in a moment.

Your memoranda are everything I had hoped they would be and, if I may, let me add a few things which will make them that much more useful:

(a) Don't put TO:GBM FROM: ASH at the top. Anxious as we both are to preserve your anonymity, this prevents my putting them up immediately without editing or tearing, which looks strange. Just start off with the headline and then plow in.

(b) Write them as though you were writing to somebody you didn't know, some distant third party who was the Managing Editor but whom you'd never meet. And write them as though you were me. For instance, instead of saying, "I still don't understand how the wheel works", or something to that effect, you'd say, "Now, I may not understand how the wheel works...". I'd like to be able to have them slapped up on the board--because they are important and timely--without the necessity of rewriting anything at all. Anything that you have to say about my work should be written just as incisively but should be on different pages altogether because, obviously, I wouldn't be writing about myself in critiques. Occasionally, you won't know about something and will inadvertently include something that pertains to me alone without knowing about it--don't worry, we'll continue to read in advance, several times as always, and continue to edit out if necessary. The "we" is editorial and means me.

(c) Where errors in pronunciation are pointed out, list the time of day. Obviously, this goes for all errors where you can pinpoint a time; some errors you may catch while elsewhere and not remember the exact time when you get back home.

(d) I'd like to see you begin to get into stories that you wouldn't have used, for interest-factor or other reasons, and stories you'd like to have seen more made of. I'd like to have you, naming times wherever possible so that we aren't making some mysterious criticism of an omnipresent being, question why certain stories were used too long, not used long enough, not updated, etc.

(e) I'd like to see you get into the matter of word emphasis, ~~xxx~~ mistakes of inflection indicating that the joker had never read the item in the first place or didn't understand it at all, and also I'd like to see you begin to delve into matters of enthusiasm, lack of it or too much, failure to edit certain stories to make them more broadcast-stylish, notes to me on announcers you like or don't like for whatever personal reason, announcers you think could do better without having met them, etc.

(f) Note the headlines we're doing. During the weekdays, we have the front office call in what they take to be the headlines from the various editions to our studio. Frankly, these "local" headlines--which mostly turn out to be regional and national--haven't been any better or worse than I expected the girls up there to do and I'll take steps to see that it gradually improves. Still, they are phoning them in now, and when I go downtown I telephone them in.

1/23/66

Dear Gordon,

Once and for all -- an apology for my typing.

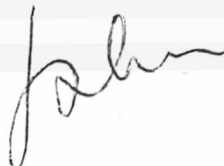
Since you commented on my eyesight when I was in your suite, I knew that you were aware of it and so no reason for going into the matter further at that time. I figured I was selling you my ears and my brains - not my eyes and my fingers.

Actually I am legally blind, and have been so for thirty-five years. I don't use the touch system, so I make a lot of errors. Will endeavor to improve.

Poor Art. I didn't even bother to correct his carbons.

I'll try to make memos which you may post on board as presentable as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", is written below the typed name "Sincerely,".

1/23/66

Dear Gordon,

For a while I thought no one was reading my memos.

Now I'm convinced that someone is reading my mind! I wrote the attached before I heard your new announcements on the air. They sound fine.

I'm sending this along anyway, sarcasm and all, just in case there are any positive suggestions your men haven't thought of.

Sincerely,

P.S. Your good letter received this afternoon. Have read it once. Will follow instructions, and answer tomorrow if indicated.



1/24/66

Dear G ordon,

Re your letter. In future upper left-hand corner of all memos which might be posted will be blank

All memos intended for you will bear that tiny little "g" you see up there. Watch for it. I may begin picking on you.

Trust this secret code is ~~MM~~ O.K.



# John Ashenhurst

2/4/66

Dear Gordon,

Since you didn't like my Chinese New Year present of the "Around the Town" announcement, I am sending you a belated Groundhog Day present -- enclosed.

I believe one item a day, like the enclosed -- enhanced with some pencil editing of your own particular brand of colorful language, would help the station's image as a "part of the Chicago scene."

Incidentally I think the new brand of public service announcements must also be helping a great deal in this regard.

I thought there would be a ready-made book with these items all neatly listed in day-by-day order. I got the enclosed through a bit of digging at the Chicago Historical Society and send them along as samples.

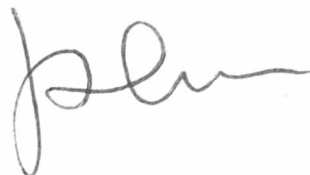
If you'd like a supply of these, in the form enclosed, ready for your editing, I know a woman who could probably do a pretty good job of digging them out. I could help her write them up in this form. She'd probably want \$2 or \$2.50 an hour and I imagine the final items would cost about 50 cents each.

If you're interested, let me know and I'll set her to work. It would be best to order several months supply in advance as this makes it easier to pick out items without having to search through for just one particular month.

If we got organized on this thing we could probably make them more interesting than the ones enclosed.

I send self-addressed envelope in case you want to answer me on this.

SU 7-5283



37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

John Ashenhurst

2/17/66

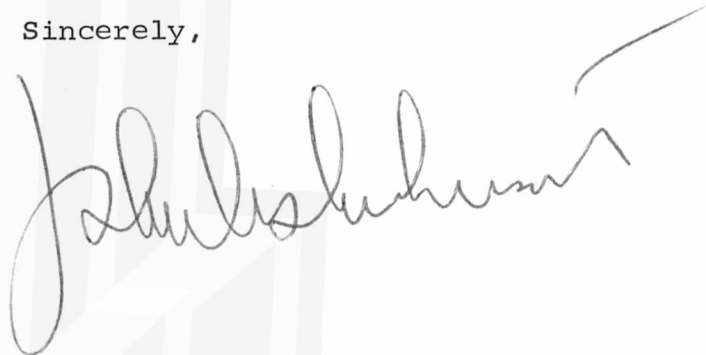
Dear Gordon,

WNUS will continue to sound like a second class station until:

1. You hire a manager (co-ordinator, supervisor) who will be on duty at 8601 S. Kedzie.
2. Permit copy to be edited before broadcast by me, or by someone of equal competence.

I volunteer once more. If you'd hire a driver for your truck, it could cover the half-hour distance to my apartment while advertising the station and you could have corrected copy back in less than two hours elapsed time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Ashenhurst", written in dark ink.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

2/18/66

## CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK TO YOUNG MC LENDON

(With a few suggestions.)

You don't know who I am, but I am interested in your career. When I was your age, with some experience on high school and college publications, I longed greatly to be a foreign correspondent, in the First World War.

All that happened was that I fought the Battle of Camp McArthur in the mud of Waco, Texas, in an officers' training school, and the Armistice came before I could graduate from the wamp-around puttees to the shiny leather ones we all coveted so much.

Eventually I became a newspaper man for ten years or so after I was out of college, and I am still interested in the art of Journalism. It is an art.

I listened rather carefully to the interviews with boys in service in Viet Nam which were broadcast on WNUS and I found them ~~much~~ only "adequate." I know you can do a better job and I hope you won't mind if I offer some suggestions, based on what I heard in the other interviews.

\* \* \*

Try to make them sound like "on the spot" interviews. Try to sound as if you had a date with a guy in front of a barracks, or at a village street corner, or in a canteen. In a couple of his interviews, Lovett said, "Thank you for coming to the Viet Nam desk," and these words ~~suff~~ only took all of the excitement out of the interview. It became routine and prosaic. Viet Nam is a strange and mysterious place and I think it destroys a wanted illusion for the home listener if he pictures two men sitting and talking to each other across a desk.

Get some "background" noise into the tape if you can without too much effort. I don't mean to "fake up" some audible scenery. If you have a choice, though, let some background noise filter in, rather than seeking out a ~~much~~ quiet place for the interview. In a couple of Lovett's interviews, we could hear jet planes overhead, and the effect was quite good.

I thought the previous interviews suffered from an unnecessary repetition of the same questions. This is hard to avoid, of course. You have to ask the name and where he's from in Chicago and what his duties are in Viet Nam. Oh yes -- and -- do you want to send greetings to anyone back home? Try to vary the other questions as much as possible. It might be a good idea to make a list ahead of time and watch yourself to see that you don't fall into the rut of asking the same questions time after time.

I thought Lovett didn't ask enough questions about the men's reactions to the Oriental locale. Maybe most of them don't see much but the inside of mess halls, offices, barracks and an occasional bar, but I think home listeners would be interested in their reactions to whatever foreign they did see. Do you get to see much of the Vietnamese people? Are they like what you thought they'd be? What's "most different" about life over here and life in the U.S.? Are the Viet Nam girls as pretty as they look in the magazine pictures?

It's O.K. to ask him about living conditions etc. but if you run into a fellow with a lot of gripes, start all over again and make a tape that won't worry the parents and other listeners over here. There's nothing wrong about this procedure because you'll have no way of checking the gripes and there's no percentage in passing on bad news if you can't check its validity.

Lovett asked very frequently, what are you going to do when you get home. and usually got an answer of go out on the town or get drunk. Don't be afraid to "feed" the boys with leading questions. Any plans when you get home out? Going to get married? Had all the schooling you think you need? Going to use the G.I. bill?

I know I'm not making these sound very interesting, but I am trying to suggest that you do more "leading and feeding" than Lovett did. Most of the boys seem quite unwilling to answer questions except in monosyllables and I think they need more cheerful prodding than they got.



YOU, being a Marine, being over there and being young will know what to say and ask far better than I. Be an INTERVIEWER. Con.t be just a man holding a tape recorder in front of a boy who is probably ill at ease at the thought of his words being heard by all his friends at home. Talk to him a little before the actual interview if you can and see ~~mm~~ if you can find out what general field of questioning perks up his interest.

MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL. Makes the boy's job seem significant!

Every job is important in Viet Nam. Lovett had a bad habit of asking, "What do you do over here?" and if the boy answered "mechanic or "clerk", there would be adull thud thud and everybody would be embarrassed that he wasn't out mowing down Vietcong with a machine gun. You can't make him a hero with three white horses shot from under ~~mm~~ him, but you can sound terribly interested in his job, and ask questions to show that ~~mm~~ you are interested and questions that will make his job seem significant. "oh, then you've got to keep alll these trucks out here in top shape to keep that ammo going into the battle area?"

I'm not very good at this, but I think you get the ~~picture~~ <sup>picture.</sup>

I have tried to make these suggestions from the point of view of the listener over here. If you keep them in mind, together with everything you must have already been told by the McLendon company, I know you'll do a bang up job. GOOD LUCK.

P.S. Why don't you try some one-minute vignettes of just ~~straight~~ "color?" "I'm standing here, looking down a long, white glistening road that stretches far to the south. Just four weeks ago this road was in the hands of the Vietcong. Today, it .. etc."

I think the American audience would like some descriptive, "on the spot" observations like this. Just pure description of locale. No other voices involved.

John Ashenhurst

g.

I don;t know whay I wrote this. It just came out.

Badly phrased and badly typed. I was tired but I wanted to write it somehow. The boy has a great opportunity before him.

If you think this would help, please pass it along.

J.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611



John Ashenhurst

4/27/66

Dear Gordon,

It won't hurt my feelings if you  
consign Bart's letter to the can.

I have taken so long to write it  
because I wasn't at all sure of  
what his assignment was, and am  
still not sure that my remarks  
may help.

You decide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", written in dark ink.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

John Ashenhurst

4/27/66

Dear Gordon,

You're falling down on the job.

WNUS needs Almanac announcements in  
your voice.

Also it needs some more promotions like  
Chinese New Year and Moscow. Don't let  
a few little oil wells, theaters and T.V.  
stations get in your way.

Don't let WNUS get dull.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", written in dark ink.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street.  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

# John Ashenhurst

4/27/66

Dear Bart,

Even though we don't know each other, I hope that you'll forgive me for writing to you about your coming adventure in Vietnam. Just put me down as an eccentric old ex-newspaper man, who, for some strange reason, is interested in your career.

More than a month ago, while engaged in my little chore of list-for errors on WNUS, I heard about your plans. The idea excited me so much that I immediately wrote you a 2-page letter on all about what you should and shouldn't do. I sent it on through your father, but somehow it got lost in the shuffle. This was just as well, because I then thought you were going to Vietnam to do what Dan Lovett had done, interviewing service men for the "folks back home." Even though I realize that you are not to be on that specific assignment, I still feel like writing to you. If my letter is meaningless, just toss it away, except for my wishes for your success.

When I was your age, I had already had some pleasant experiences in "journalism" on high school and college papers, and was longing to be a newspaper man, particularly, a foreign correspondent. I got no closer to the war (1st World) than a 2-month stint at the Battle of Camp McArthur, near Waco, Texas. The war ended even before I had an opportunity to shed the banal wrap-around puttees and the broad-brimmed hat for the slick leather leg-wear and snappy cap of a second lieutenant of infantry. I was bitter about it at the time, but happy later that I hadn't had the opportunity of being caught in the cross-fire between Germans and tough drafted men, a customary fate of cocky young college boy officers.

To return to the present. I can't give you any "feedback" tips because I have been out of the newspaper business for more than forty years, but I have done a lot of listening to radio news in my life, and I can tell you what I'd like to hear.

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

I want to hear about what's going on in Vietnam, and not "what's going on in Vietnam." I want to hear this, not from someone who is close to "reliable sources" or who has just heard from someone "close to the high-command," but from someone who says, "I was standing on a street corner in Qui Nhon today and I saw. . ." Or, "A bunch of us were having cokes today in the hot shade of a peasant's hut, when a girl ran up to us and said . . ."

I want to know what's going on in Vietnam from a guy who doesn't know "what's going on in Vietnam."

I want to hear from a fellow who knows what Rusk and McNamara and Ky said yesterday, but who never mentions it. I'd like to hear from a young man who has just arrived in Vietnam, what he sees and hears and smells and feels --- told to me in simple, conversational English.

Don't try to interpret. Just try to report. And don't try to report "dramatically." Tell the story of what you see as truthfully, briefly and simply as you can. The "drama", for the listener, will come from the truth and the simplicity. Leave the embroidery of the language for the big shots who have been in the business for a long time and who "aling words" for high salaries.

I realize that perhaps you have a special assignment. Maybe you are to report only of "the military." Maybe you are to "slant your news to the teen audience." None of that matters as far as your point of view and delivery are concerned.

Teens and all, we're surfeited with a whirlwind of high-class words and ultra-enlightened opinion. We are all longing for the cool fresh air of a flow of "news" from a young man who isn't trying to do anything but tell what he sees and hears.

Don't try to be Lowell Thomas this time around. Your lack of experience will surely show up in your reports if you try to be something you aren't. It won't show up at all, or will appear only as an asset, if you will merely "be yourself."

Above all, be brief and to the point. I have always thought that one of the greatest pieces of reporting in all history is found in the King James version of the New Testament. I refer to the reporter's treatment of a very important story. It goes, "Jesus wept ."

Incidentally, if you're ever in doubt about your "style," if you feel you're getting a bit too florid, just take a quick skim over the "Gospels." Those boys were real reporters.

I feel that the majoroty of Americans, like myself, are fed up with all this stuff about logistics, and ballistics, and statistics -- the pros and Congs, the implications and the imprecations. Here's your chance, my boy.

Behind all the simplicity of your reporting, there has to be, of course, a certain amount of "contriving." Every reporter has to do this to get news. I'd certainly get in touch with some of the A.I.D. and U.S.O.M. men, and see what we are doing in their field. Tell us particularly of the reaction of the Vietnamese. If you get "anti-American" talk, report it. It's part of the picture. But be sure to sprinkle in the good side too. That's part of your contriving. And no matter how much you contrive, always remember your point of view so that your stories always sound to the listener, "Here I am and this is what I see."

And this is what I see. I see that, despite my counselling, I have not been brief. What I have been trying to say, in all this fumbling discousse, is that you shouldn't feel that, simply because of youth and inexperience, you won't be listened to, respected and appreciated. I think ~~my~~ your youth and inexperience are a tremendous asset. You have something fresh and new for all of us. Don't try to imitate the old and tired. That's what they're all doing.

Again pardon my intrusion of your privacy.

THE BEST OF LUCK.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John Shulman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Sincerely,".



THE *McLendon* STATIONS/MEMORANDUM

To	John Ashenhurst	Date	May 3, 1966
From	Ursula Schweitzer Andre Dunstetter	Subject	Book of Memos

Upon redding Mr. McLendon's long letter to you we came up with the following: Simply do ONE book and send it to Ursula in Dallas. She will then XEROX it and make up the four books requested by Mr McLendon. From then on, all new memos being sent to Dallas anyway, it will be much simpler to Xerox them down here and put them into the books than have WNUS fax them and send them around...

It will also make it easier for you.

US:AD



File  
May 4, 1966

Mr. John Ashenhurst  
37 W. Elm Street  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear John:

I have your note on the necessity of keeping promotions on WNUS. You could not be more correct. I am enclosing herewith a copy of a recent memo I wrote on this subject.

One of the big problems that has existed to this point at WNUS is, I feel, a failure to assume correctly the abilities of Dennis Fraser. It has been left to Dennis, by and large, to manipulate the actual promotional ideas we have given to him. I did not realize this until the last week or so.

Dennis is one of the bright young men we are counting on for the future, but he certainly cannot be expected to be any more experienced than his age would permit. His writing leaves all sorts of things to be desired. He can take what should be a simple and almost self-explanatory promotional announcement and make it sound like a promotion for Preparation H.

He does not know the secret of simple, direct, lowest-common-denominator writing which tells, and then repeats again, the who, what, when, where, and whenever possible, the why of a promotion--and for that matter a news story. I also think Dennis needs a one-hour session with Art Holt on the subject of what a promotion is. I would strongly advise Art Holt, who is receiving copy of this note, to meet with you and Dennis so that the three of you can have a session in which you talk to Dennis about (a) what a promotion is along with instructions based on parts of my memo and (b) how to write clear and uncritical promotional and news copy concerning that promotion and/or news, and he should be made to listen to the tapes of our "Continuous news coverage of the Northwestern coeds murder case and the Fohrman Brothers shooting" both of which either are in our regular tape library or may still be retained as part of our 24-hour reels. Certainly PGW or Homer Odum or Gary Fuller will have the copy of one or another of these if not, Carlie Payne's 24-hour reels will contain a slightly different variation of KLIF's continuous news coverage on a Friday night of the recent Dallas flood disasters.

In short, I believe that there has been a mistaken attribution to Dennis of knowledge of the business than he presently possesses and yet I am confident that a searching session with him could put him forth on the

road to promotional proficiency.

In the meantime I believe that you and Art and Dick Thorne (who should be part of the meeting) are going to have to realize that, although we may hope for a string of brilliantly executed promotions by Dennis, he is likely to be slow in developing the skills than we wish, therefore you should all make up your minds that it is up to you to dream up schemes and execute the promotions yourselves. The next promotion which I've delineated is an Eliza Doolittle Day and I have given Art proper addresses where to write for background information.

While we are at it, and you can attribute the comment to me, Dennis should be made aware that if he wishes to improve himself to the maximum he should give some home study to his spelling and punctuation.

A plan should be devised between all of you when you meet so that, where something is clearly in need of immediate change or other areas, you can simply call Dennis at home (this in the event Art and Dick or Ron Ruth are unreachable) and get the matter taken care of forthwith without the necessity of going through any of the others.

With regards,

Gordon McLendon

# John Ashenhurst

5/11/66

Re: My Contract

Dear Gordon,

I was highly pleased at the portion of your recent letter in which you proposed to renew my contract for another six months. You know how much I enjoy working for you and for WNUS and you may be surprised that I do not accept your offer with silent acquiescence.

I feel impelled to offer two counter suggestions which I trust you will not regard as too demanding or inappropriate.

1. This is a minor financial matter. In order that there may be no later misunderstanding, you should know that I am currently being paid \$400 a month, although on a pro rated basis I am receiving \$533.00 per month. This is all due to the fact that at the time I was hired, I proposed to work for a total of three months for the same price which I finally got, although the wily Mr. Holt stretched the period to six months. I accepted, being a bit rusty at negotiation, and sure that I would have absolutely nothing to do for the last two months of the contract.

Secondly, it costs me approximately \$216.50 a month to work for you. This is because, in addition to losing my social security, I have to pay income tax on the money I earn to replace the social security loss (as well as the tax on additional money earned.).

(The next time you see L.B.J., tell him to fix up this inequity.)

I've hired enough men in my life to know how irritating it is to an employer to have to discuss a man's personal financial situation. I am telling you that I net only approximately \$266.50 a month merely to explain to you why I do not accept your very much appreciated offer at the price you suggested.

I find that I cannot work for WNUS without putting my heart and soul (and a great deal more time than I had anticipated) into the work. As a result, I have neglected a couple of

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

other projects in which I was involved.

Sorry to burden you with nickel and dime talk. I shall, however, be very glad to renew my contract for another six months at the rate of \$600.00 a month, or \$ 67.00 a month more than I am now getting on a pro rated basis.

2. I propose that you temporarily enlarge the scope of my services (off-the-scene monitor) and for six months give me the supervisory responsibility of station promotion and public service programming.

This, I firmly believe, would go far toward solving two of your biggest current problems (exclusive of sales, personnel, etc.).

In my opinion, it would be the best and quickest way to clear up the very messy promotion and public service situation which doesn't seem to get any better.

It would help solve your problem of training Dennis Fraser. I share your views that this fellow has great potential. I think he's a real firecracker. Some of his ideas (even some copy) are amazingly fresh and ingenious.

I have, in my quiet way, somewhat of a reputation for training men in the broadcasting field. I have trained many. Also, if you want a good emotional cry some time, you should listen to a tape which Petry station managers made on the occasion of my retirement, in which they tell me how much I taught them. (Even when you discount this 50% for emotional inflation, I sound pretty good.)

I'd like nothing better than to take Dennis in hand and give him the real Ashenhurst treatment for six months. I think I could turn over to you a real fire-ball of a promotion man (and minor executive) who would be a corporate asset and would require a minimum of supervision from then on. (He resents me right now, and I can't blame him, but I'm sure I could switch him around.)

Meanwhile during the process of training Dennis, I could be shaping up the promotion and public service aspect of your station into an operation which would be a favorable complement to the smooth running news organization you are soon to have.



I'm a good copy writer and could write some, although I'd prefer to edit stuff Dennis wrote so that he gets the practice. I'd supervise promotions so that they had maximum effectiveness and didn't make WNUS look too silly over the air.

Dennis and I would implement the promotions with which you and Art and others supplied us, and would supply what ideas of our own might be acceptable to you.

I hate to toot my own horn too much, but since there's no one else to do it for me, I'll say that I think this is the best way to solve this situation.

I feel that the freeing of Thorne so that he has time to take over promotion and public service is not a solution. From my observation, I think he's not the "promotion type". He's an excellent man and has done a wonderful job of whipping the news department into shape. Under any circumstances, he should not be freed completely from broadcasting, both to keep his hand in and as an example to the other men.

I don't mean by the above that I'd expect to go down to 8601 S. Kedzie and sit at a desk. God save the marque! I merely want additional responsibility, additional contact, and no authority except in the very narrow field of copy. I wouldn't want to spend all my time arguing with Dennis about whether he should put bad English on the air.

In brief, I suggest that for six months, you could have a reasonable facsimile of a promotion department, manned by Peck's Bad Boy and Simon Legree.

All of this, in one giant-sized package, for an additional \$200 a month, or \$800 a month for me, for six months beginning June 1.

Naturally, I'd want Art Holt's complete concurrence in this arrangement. I should think it would help him a lot too but naturally I wouldn't want it unless he were completely in accord.

Thank you very much for your offer to renew our arrangement. I hope this long letter hasn't bored you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be the name "John", written in a cursive, flowing style.



John Ashenhurst

5/11/66

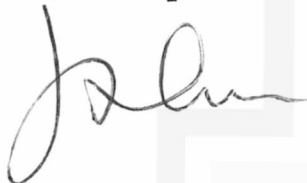
Re: My Memos

Dear Gordon,

I understand the section of your letter about how my memos should be handled henceforth. Art has sent me a supply of your memo sheets and when we get started on tight monitoring on the basis of the policy book, memos will be done on the basis of "from Holt to Thorne."

I believe, however, that certain memos, which are not to be seen by the men and which deal with Thorne's executive functions or the activities of Dennis, will have to be handled in a slightly different manner. Will work this out with Art.

Sincerely,



cc: Art Holt

# John Ashenhurst

5/11/66

Dear Gordon,

Thank you for sending me the letter from Bart. I was delighted with it.

I was particularly amused by his statement that, "All of those ideas that you brought up in the note were very good, and I'd like to pat myself on the back, because I had already brought up all but one of them to Dad."

A boy with confidence like that and with the nerve to voice it to a doddering old well-wisher, should go far in the field of journalism.

Your plans for him sound very good and very complete. He ought to do well. I'll be looking forward to hearing his work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John", written in dark ink.

5/11/66

Dear Art,

In case you might want to run a follow-up contest based on the "send us your knob" campaign -- just in case -- I have a suggestion.

Incidentally, I found no objection to this promotion. I thought it was typically Wnuzany and quite quite. I was merely afraid that the savage acerbity of some of the copy might produce retributive action from competitors. If I were WMAQ I'd start an aire feature and call it "Heard On WNUS today."

You might have a contest on "Why I like to listen to WNUS all the time." and give away prizes of radios which are "locked in" to receive WNUS only.


I enclose a folder from Southern Carloading in which you will see an Item R -- a 14-transistor portable radio. This actually has a battery charger with it and actually also works on regular AC current. It's not a bad little set at all. I bought a couple of them and I use one downstairs in my apartment, always tuned to WNUS and set up to operate on the light circuit. Whenever I plug it in, it starts at once. It's of light construction, of course, but it wouldn't be a bad minor prize and it sounds good -- "14-transistor, with battery charger and connection to use on any light circuit."

The alleged list is \$44.00 and the catalogue shows \$8.50, but when I bought my two they were being remaindered at an individual price of \$7.50 each. Maybe if you bought in some quantity, you could get them for less.

My thought was that a radio technician with little trouble could rig these sets so they could be tuned to 1390 only. Maybe your own engineers could do it. Or maybe I'm just nuts.

It would be a cute prize anyway -- a 14-transistor radio that received WNUS only.

Sincerely,



cc: Gordon McLendon  
Richard Thorne

Book

May 12th, 1966

Mr. John Ashenhurst  
37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

Dear Mr. Ashenhurst:

It was good of you to write me your wonderful letter of May 7th. There is no pardon forthcoming from me to you on account of the first-name salutation. The reason being that you need not have asked for it in the first place. I would have found it strange indeed to receive a letter from one of our team members, calling me Miss Schweitzer.

The books have now been completed as per Gordon's instructions. Both Andre and I felt it was too much to ask of you to put 4 books together. Moreover, had your memoranda been thermofaxed it would not have been a good way to go about it in view of the permanency we want for the material. Thermofax paper deteriorates over a lengthy period of time whereas Xerox paper does not.

In line with Gordon's instructions, I assume you will now mail your memoranda to Art Holt, addressed: "To: Dick Thorne - From: Art Holt", with copy being sent to me here in Dallas. WNUS will have to keep their own book current, and I will do the rest down here. Could I ask one favor of you? Please do not type the date too closely to the top of the page as the Xerox machine does not always catch it.

Another question: The material is now current as of the beginning of January through April 18th, and then we jump to May 8th. Since this represents a gap of almost 3 weeks, I was wondering whether there aren't some memoranda I should have for that period of time. Would you please let me know?

In closing I would like to tell you that I find your critiques absolutely delightful reading.

Sincerely,

Ursula Schweitzer

cc:  
GBM  
Art Holt  
Mitch Lewis  
Don Keyes  
Bill McDowell

THE *McLendon* STATIONS

EXECUTIVE OFFICES / 2008 JACKSON STREET / DALLAS, TEXAS 75201 / RIVERSIDE 7-9311

May 3, 1966

Mr. John Ashenhurst  
37 E. Elm Street  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear John:

Thank you for both your first and second memoranda to Bart. Both were simply excellent and I appreciate them more than I can say. Bart had written you an earlier letter which, as is typical of any teenager, he left to me to mail and I am just now discovering it. I send it along to indicate you his own gratitude for your interest in him.

I am returning to you a considerable number of your memos. I would appreciate it very much if you would check all copies of same again--copies which you have no doubt retained in your files--and assemble for me a complete book of "Ashenhurst Memoranda" embracing not only those which are enclosed herewith but also the great number which I have, no doubt, missed in my frequent absences from Chicago. Since you will not have an extra copy of missing memos, simply have them faxed at WNUS and then you can put them together. I would rather you put them together than Art, or anyone else, because you are



the authority on whether your books of memoranda are definitely completed or not. I'll want 4 complete books, one of which is to be retained in the apartment in Chicago, another of which is to be kept in the Dallas Office and a third will be sent to Bill McDowell, so that he may be fully conversant with what we are doing (and he is to keep this in his apartment and eforce for personal use)

Upon completion all 4 of these books should be sent to my secretary, Ursula Schweitzer, who will receive copy of this letter. She will make distribution and give proper instructions to each party.

By the way, for your information, I have engaged the services of a fine Pro, Dave Ward, to go along with Bart. Dave is head of the Journalism Department at Wichita State University. He is a former UPI and NEA correspondant, an ex-naval intelligence and ex-CIA, a Yale graduate (a limited liability) and various other qualifications. If you have any thoughts which would aid Dave be sure and write them to him at Wichita State University.

I am sending you copy of a long memo I have sent to various people about Bart's trip and I would like any thoughts you might have.

I just want to let you know, John, that I hope our association will be



a long one, as lasting as it has already been gratifying. I am ready to renew it for another 6 months at the same \$500.00 a month figure and unless I hear from you otherwise will assume that the arrangement is to be so continued. Through all of our efforts, WNUS has seen a strenuous profit for the first time and, however strenuous it is at present, I believe that we have in prospect a real financial winner.

Bart has not received your second memo yet but I am transmitting it to him immediately.

Henceforth, I believe that your memos should be clearly labeled "from Art Holt to Dick Thorne" (by the way I want all my copies of your new memos sent to Dallas, so that Ursula can include them in my "John Ashenhurst" book, and on that point--Art's copies continuing to be mailed to him in Chicago). The purpose of having the memos read "from Art Holt to Dick Thorne" is so that Art will simply be able to tell Thorne to put them directly on the bulletin board if he, Art, agrees with the exact wordage of the memo. Otherwise Art can have Dick Thorne re-type them or black out certain portions, in order to put them in a form in which he desires the announcers to see them. I see absolutely no reason for the wording or tone of your memos to change. You need only keep in mind that henceforth a great many of them, in fact all but

a few, will go as you write them to the announcers and therefore will go to them as representing Art Holt's views. Above, I do not wish you to be any less critical or direct or to avoid in any way the usage of names. That would destroy the whole business. After receipt of a few with the new heading, which we proposed here in, Art Holt will be in touch with you and might suggest slight changes in style.

John, I would like to have those four books in Ursula's hands no later than Monday May 9th.

I send you my warmest best wishes and hope that this finds you and yours well along towards a fine Spring.

Sincerely,

*Gordon McLendon*

Gordon McLendon

cc: Mitch Lewis  
Art Holt  
Don Keyes  
Bill McDowell  
Ursula Schweitzer

# John Ashenhurst

May 28, 1966

Dear Gordon,

RE: A WNUS "IMAGE"

I have an idea for WNUS promotion which I think may possibly be good enough to merit your consideration. I am transmitting this by letter, rather than by memo, because I am never quite sure whether you are taking a vacation from reading my memos.

I have been haunted by a constant feeling that WNUS has lost "personality" since the end of the frantic reconstruction period of January-February, and that nothing seems to be developing which would tend to produce an "image" of vigor, direction and consequence. Under Art's persistent prodding and Dick's continuing supervision, the station has developed a very smooth sound. To the casual listener it must sound very good, although there is still room for much improvement.

The Eliza Doolittle promotion was very good. Staff, newscaster, and audience reaction was so good that it inspired my "idea", which is:

## A 12-MONTH PROMOTION CAMPAIGN BASED ON "LISTENER PARTNERSHIP."

Please don't be dismayed or misled if much of what I say from now on sounds "corny." This is because I have not taken time to work out details, slogans, etc., and shall not take time unless you think this idea worthwhile. If you do, I'll be curious to see what specific plans arise from the combined thinking of you, Art, Don Keyes, Thorne, Fraser and any others on your staff who are "promotion-minded."

Here are the basic details of my suggested plan:

1. In a completely pre-planned 12-month promotion campaign, WNUS will seek to build an image of a news station built strictly on the specifications of listeners -- not on (now widely discredited) surveys, but on what actual listeners actually tell WNUS day by day.

2. Listeners' reaction to the Doolittle Day indicated their shock and pleasant surprise that, despite its low-keyed boasting about how good its broadcasters were, it was willing to subject itself to correction from listeners. I have an impression that this made listeners "feel good" toward the station in that it gave them an outlet for that feeling of, "If I were running that damned station I'd ... etc." I'm sure that this goodwill feeling was enhanced by the memory of the days of blatant bragging and over-promotion when the station was boasting unmercifully about how good it was in the midst of such bungling broadcasts as have rarely been heard before or since. WNUS is growing up! Everyone of us, deep down within, appreciates having his opinions respected and listened to. For listeners to be heeded in terms of individual response rather than as digits in a pulse survey, would be a novel thing indeed, a novel station operation.

3. The promotion should be long-range and consistent. The "listener partnership" idea should not be exclusive in the overall promotion picture, but it should be dominant. Just when the listener thinks the idea has been dropped and forgotten, like all others in the past (except "nothing but the news"), another "listener partnership" promotion pops up. As far as the station's internal promotion structure is concerned, management should know in July what will be on the air in November. And in November, what will be on the air in the following May. (Another Eliza Day, of course.)

In between the dominant main promotion campaigns, any promotion idea can be put on the air, preferably on the zany side, but with some effort at restraint and horse sense (and supervised production).

4. Some painfully awkward, but hopefully suggestive, slogans:

You listen to WNUS because WNUS listens to you.

WNUS. The station that listeners built.

You're telling us? Sure you are. And we like it!

Our motto. "The listener knows best what the listener wants most."

May 28, 1966

(Suggested slogans, continued):

Sure we broadcast "managed news." We manage to broadcast what our listeners want.

If we make a mistake today, it's because you neglected to correct us yesterday.

5. Here are some admittedly hastily conceived promotion ideas:

Obviously, the next one, about a month from now, should be "Henry Higgins Day." Husbands, male friends, and male relatives of women listeners have complained so much that they didn't get a chance to show off their prowess in the use of Good English that WNUS will oblige. It will have a listener vs newscaster contest in the hours between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. Women won most of the prizes on Eliza Doolittle Day, but men say that's because they didn't get a chance to listen during contest hours. WNUS gives them a chance. Same prizes -- same conditions.

Pronunciation contest. This would be very tough to handle, but could be done. No proper nouns, place names, etc. Certain standard reference works as final authority, etc.

Pronunciation of Chicago street names and proper appellation as "street" or "boulevard." This needn't be a one-day deal, but could run quietly for a month with a \$5 or \$2 prize to listeners, with a gong announcement any time of day or night that listeners caught a mispronunciation. Commissioner of streets and alleys or Chicago Historical Society, or some outside outfit as final authority.

Listeners write the commercials for one day. DON'T LAUGH. Properly handled, with a two-month preparation period, the proper administration of martinis to account executives and time buyers, this could be a tremendous promotion which could arouse a great buzz-buzz in local advertising circles. Think of it! A station willing to spend the time to give listeners a chance to write the kind of commercials they want to hear and to give agencies and advertisers a chance to get listener reaction to their commercials without the expense of hiring one of those top-notch subliminal, psycho-motivation guys, at a sackful of dollars per minute.



May 28, 1966

Amateur night for newscasters. Candidates studying to be radio announcers or newscasters in local schools (I assume there are such institutions) selected in competitive contests, and allowed to broadcast actual ten minutes of news on the air over WNUS. Properly prepared, this would not chase listeners, and would interest friends, relatives, faculty, fellow students of contestants, etc. WNUS would be doing a constructive good deed to improve the quality of radio broadcasting in general, etc. Again, listeners would be partners in station's efforts toward better radio. Listeners would provide contestants and added listening to well-advertised contests.

Listener-produced editorials. Not the ordinary, painful-to-listen-to kind. Well-prepared, well-sifted, well-rewarded, and well-produced. You'll be surprised as to what this could bring out in listener response and increased prestige -- if properly done, as it would be in the long-range plan I suggest.

Note that none of the above suggestions would interfere with the present broadcast time format. They do not run contrary to the "all news, nothing but news" policy any more than do any other of your promotions, because they can be run in your promotion-allotted time spots. Actual promotions should not eat up any more time than did the Eliza Doolittle venture.

The reason I have written at such length is that I truly believe this idea would enable you to build an image of WNUS as a new and exciting radio operation -- on top of the novel "all news" idea, the "listener parntership" idea that will make WNUS a reflection of the community's wishes and provider of its desires in news broadcasting and community cooperation.

Well, that's about the size of it. I do not mean to indicate, of course, that WNUS will necessarily change its policy or operation because of listener attitudes. I mean that, outwardly, every promotion will be not merely a gimmick to attract listeners by giving them prize money, but will purport to be improving the station for the benefit of the community -- which might actually happen. If you like the idea, why not toss it to the boys and see if they can come up with enough real solid ideas to justify



Gordon McLendon

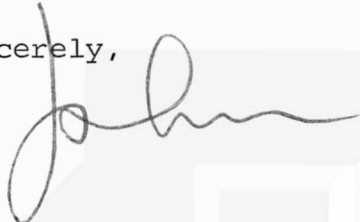
-5-

May 28, 1966

building a 12-month campaign as I have suggested -- or an improvement of the idea resulting from the combined thinking and judgment of all concerned?

Best regards, and

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be the name "John".

Mr. Gordon McLendon  
The McLendon Stations  
2008 Jackson Street  
Dallas, Texas

pcw

CC - Art Holt

June 1, 1966

Mr. John Ashenhurst  
37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear John:

Ursula had me read your letter concerning "A WNUS Image" before forwarding it to Gordon.

Your over-all concept is food for thought and several of the proposed promotions were very good. I'll be interested in Gordon's reaction.

Please don't feel "left out" by Gordon's long silences. He's traveling quite extensively and his paper work really accumulates. In that area I say, "Welcome to the club!"

Regards,

Donald C. Keyes  
Vice President

DCK/ys

6/1/66

TO: Art Holt and Gordon McLendon

CC: Nobodt. (Not to be filed in "the book.")

FROM: Ash

DENNIS, ANYONE?

Events of each passing day seem to confirm my opinion that it's going to take more than a one-hour conference to take care of this guy. He seems to have an absolute genius for having brilliant ideas or writing very snappy copy and then, somehow, of flapdoodling it up.

This wouldn't be so bad except that so many times the flapdoodle gets on the air in addition to the brilliance.

I think he's a great asset, what with having those out of date virtues like being a hard worker, conscientious, and stuff like that.

I think someone should ride ~~hman~~ herd harder.

John Ashenhurst

6/2/66

Art  
cc: Gordon

I hope you can find time to read this  
long memorandum at your leisure (if any).  
I\_ think it is worthy of your perusal.

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

# THE McLendon STATIONS MEMORANDUM

To Dick Thorne  
cc: John Ashenhurst  
Gordon McLendon

Date June 3, 1966

From Art Holt

Subject ASHENHURST MEMORANDUM REVIEW

## SIGNOFF SIGNATURE

Having developed a chronic childhood phobia, called formatophobia, actually during the time that John still thought that WGN was the world's greatest radio station, I would like to insist that we completely standardize the newscaster's signoff signature. Obviously, the "has been" signoff is nothing but a red flag warning the listener that something has just come to a stop on W-NUS. This we don't need.

## DATED COMMERCIALS

Can't really think of anything to say about dated commercials except the obvious; that neither the Continuity Department, the newscasters, the engineers, (a) are listening to the station, or (b) give a damn what it sounds like. Both of these alternatives make me very uncomfortable and, in the long run, undoubtedly make them uncomfortable also. But since continued association with Ashenhurst has made me rather more cynical than was formerly, I guess I would suggest that Jerry Campbell make appropriate note on a wall calendar of all scheduled copy which is dated. Then if we can teach him to look at the right date on the calendar, he will be able to tell what day that piece of copy, be it promo or commercial, should be removed.

## CORRECTION OF ERRORS IN THE USE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The following is a statement of management policy: Ashenhurst, on the subject of the use of the English language, is always correct, never to be ignored, and greatly to be feared. All corrections in language received in memorandum form from Ashenhurst should be acted upon on the day of receipt without exception.

## THE GOOSE THAT LAID THE GOLDEN EGG

One reason our promos, that John refers to as long winded one-minute promos, are just that - is that it is about ten times as hard to write a good 10-second spot. Thirteen insertions in a half hour is admittedly riding the horse pretty hard, but it is not something that I can guarantee will not happen again. Actually, we are raising the rates across the board on July 1, and I am facing the prospect of diminished commercial insertions with no small degree of trepidation.

Take the ABC logo out of the Paul Harvey newscast.



## PUBLIC SERVICE

As we discussed this noon, the only reasonable and realistic method of scheduling promotional and public service announcements is by means of a broadcast order containing exactly the same type of information as a regular commercial order. Until this system, which I have been suggesting, urging and demanding from Dennis for about three months now is instituted, there is absolutely no way that we will be able to handle non-commercial broadcast time in a logical and sensible way. The way things are now, there is absolutely nothing other than luck or accident to determine how long any particular public service announcement will run or how much saturation it will receive.

John mentioned the other day, and in checking I find he is quite correct, that we have been running Illinois Tape Recording for the Blind and the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind in Springfield, Illinois from five to twenty times a day over the past four months. These off-beat (there are about 7,000 blind persons in Cook County so just how wide could the appeal be?) announcements stay on the air month after month while we largely ignore such things as Easter Seals, Mental Health Week, Muscular Dystrophy, etc. It just doesn't make any sense, but then there is no way to find out exactly when they start, much less any way to find out when they are likely to stop. We do need to tremendously broaden scope of our public service involvement but that can be the source of later detailed discussion. Right now, we need to set up a system of organization of the basic public service category.

Just a reminder that we are continuing to run light on bulletin cut-ins from the teletype room, particularly during the morning hours. Also, have sent, without any apparent result, to Dennis several recent examples of the type of weekly report I should be receiving from the studio recapping general activities and problems. Wrest these from his grasp, review them, and join me in insisting that such a report should be forthcoming to John and myself.

Best regards,

AHH/ss



# THE McLendon STATIONS ~~MEMORANDUM~~

To John Ashenhurst  
cc: Dick Thorne  
Gordon McLendon ✓

Date June 3, 1966

From Art Holt

Subject

First, an ammendment to your memorandum of 5/28 concerning suggested policy change and correction of errors. Present policy, as far as I can make out, is if Ashenhurst suggests correction, ignore it. If correction in promo - increase schedule to increase annoyance value. If Holt orders correction - institute immediate saturation schedule.

I say this only to say that, John, whatever the frustration that you have encountered in monitoring is unlikely to exceed that which I have encountered in managing.

This noon a couple of hours with Dick Thorne were aimed at one thing only; getting results when errors are pointed out and changes are suggested or ordered. The bottleneck here, as one of your recent memos points out, seems to lie in Dennis' apparent inability to cope with specifics. In the area of concept he is fine, but the execution breaks down sometimes to an alarming degree. Until such time as Dick Thorne is relieved in substantial measure (perhaps 40% to 50% of his time at the station) by the addition of a ninth newscaster, there simply is no one of maturity and judgment sufficient to evaluate instructions, suggestions and criticisms in the framework of sound business practice. Apparently there is just no way that eagerness can compensate for lack of years when it comes to supervising an extremely sophisticated and complex broadcast operation.

As an interim solution, I am assigning myself two half-days weekly at the studio, beginning immediately. This decision is a reluctant one, since my greatest value to the station should logically lie in areas other than supervision of production and copy changes. However, I concur totally with your every specific criticism over the last couple of months. Have attempted by telephone, conversation and memorandum to obtain the desired changes with glaring lack of success. After next week, blame me directly, not indirectly.

One thing I have been forgetting to mention in response to your comments on lack of zing in promotions - that is, their failure to measure up to a Chinese New Year type of thing, is that there is no longer any way that W-NUS can mount heavy promotional

campaigns as we did during the days of Chinese New Year. Our absolute limit is eight minutes of commercial and/or promotional time per half hour. When this time is all sold, there is just no way to run even a single promotional announcement, sometimes for as long as three or four hours. Thus, it is almost impossible to generate the level of continuing excitement that we did when the station was almost completely non-commercial.

Yes, we do attempt to compensate with plug lines in newscasts and by promoting the hell out of it when we get a chance, but I would be less than honest if I said you would ever again hear a really massive promotional effort like Chinese New Year on W-NUS. At least not as long as we're making money.

This just means that we're going to have to try harder because we do need, in spite of these limitations, to keep that kind of promotion constantly on the air.

Best regards,

AHH/ss



6/18/66

TO: ALL NEWSCASTERS

CC: Gordon McLendon

FROM: Art Holt

MONITOR REPORT

Here are some "tendencies" observed in spot listening to broadcasts at various times of the day.

Some of the men are overdramatizing time announcements. They allow too much of a pause before and after chime and are too "ponderous" in announcing time. This holds up the flow of the newscasts, whereas time should be absorbed automatically by listener, identified by chime, but not done so laboriously as to delay broadcast.

Strange things sometimes happen when time is given in conjunction with temperature. Gregory, in these cases, generally sounds chime in front of temperature instead of in front of time. Thorne sometimes omits chime when giving time and temperature. We mention these two only because we are sure they are unaware of this particular lapse from grace. Ordinarily they do a fine job with time checks, but in these instances, occasionally lapse.

Tendency to under-use "from the teletype room." Unless there is only one man on duty, there is no excuse for remarks like, "Just in to WNUS," or "This has just been handed me." Such items should come from the man in the teletype room.

Tendency to repeat unimportant stories from teletype room. The fact that the President has called an unexpected news conference, that he has appointed a new head for a minor agency post, or even that some movie actor has died, is not justification for repeating a news item. If the listener can understand the regular news item preceding and following the bulletin, he'll understand the bulletin without its being repeated. Policy book says, "Don't double-read for false emphasis."

MONITOR REPORT 2

Tendency to eliminate 5-day-weather forecast altogether. It was not management's intention to eliminate this item when it was stopped as a regularly scheduled feature. It is now rarely heard, although it would still be an item useful to listeners particularly on Wednesdays and Thursdays when so many people are interested in what weekend weather will be like. By Friday the regular weather forecast should take in Saturday and Sunday conditions.

Tendency to too much brevity in news items. Some items are cut too short and thereby very essential factors are eliminated. Just one example at this point. A recent story about a truck driver receiving a jury award of more than \$700,000 was heard on five or six broadcasts with no mention of what the injuries were -- a cracked fingernail or quadruple amputation. Brevity is an admirable and necessary feature in radio news stories but can be carried too far.

XO 7

6/19/66

TO: Art Holt

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

RE: POLICY BOOK MEMOS

If it's O.K. with you, I'll write all policy book memos like the attack not content. Later this week monitoring when the men have had ti ves with policy book.)

ASHENHURST

Each memo will from you to all Thorne, on your wasted in posti

July - Dec 1966

REPORT" and be sent direct to no time will be

&

General Corresp.

I think it wise then if I make damned monitor, for a memo over your signature.

eport," because say, "Oh, that the direct blame

I'm sending this memo direct to you instead of to Thorne just to make sure this procedure meets with your approval.

6/19/66

TO: Art Holt

CC: Richard Thorne, Gordon McLendon

FROM: Ash

RE: POLICY BOOK MEMOS

If it's O.K. with you, I'll write all policy book memos like the attached. (I refer to format, not content. Later this week I'll do some "hard" monitoring when the men have had time to familiarize themselves with policy book.)

Each memo will be headed with "MONITOR REPORT" and be from you to all newscasters. It will be sent direct to Thorne, on your blue memo paper, so that no time will be wasted in posting it.

I think it wise to label this "monitor report," because then if I make some big boo-boo, you can say, "Oh, that damned monitor," and won't have to take the direct blame for a memo over your signature.

I'm sending this memo direct to you instead of to Thorne just to make sure this procedure meets with your approval.



*file*  
John Ashenhurst

WNU S

6/28/66

Dear Ursula,

I stand, forlorn, atop a predicament, midway between a dilemma and a contretemps.

ON My 3 Gordon wrote me: " . . . I hope our association will be a long one, as lasting as it has been gratifying. I am ready to review it for another 6 months at the same \$500.00 a month figure and unless I hear from you otherwise will assume that the arrangement is to be so continued."

Being a gentleman of honor I felt obliged to inform him that actually I was receiving only \$400.00 a month at the time, but that on a pro-rated basis over the 6-month period I was being paid \$533.33 per month. I said I'd be glad to renew for \$600 a month. When I signed I did not expect to be working full pace in the last months of my contract nor had I foreseen the expense of hiring a typist, because of the number of corrected carbons I had later been asked to provide. (I also made a proposal that for \$800.00 a month I would take over full responsibility for supervision of the public service and promotion departments.)

I have had no further word from Gordon and my contract expires on Thursday. I am writing this to you, not that I expect you to do anything about it but merely to be on record that I am not the reluctant one in this situation. I'd be delighted to have my contract renewed.

The station still needs help badly. Apparently eternal vigilance is the price of good broadcasting as well as the price of whatever it is that it is the price of. Also, I hope that you don't fall into too deep a fit of depression at the thought of reading no more of my delightful memos. Bear up. Also, accept my best regards.

Sincerely,

CC: Don Keyes

SU 7-5283

37 East Elm Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

*Gordon: I do think it might be of some importance to contact Ash when you get to Chicago! Please try--whatever your decision*

# John Ashenhurst

7/8/66

Dear Gordon,

Congratulations on KGLA.

I suggest this offers a great opportunity for a "noble experiment" during opening months of the operation when there will presumably be time to show what can be accomplished with a properly operated public service department which was an asset to both the community and to the station.

All you'd need is one good "reporter type" guy who would treat activities of public service organizations as "news" and "human interest" rather than just giving them the "here I am with tincup in hand" treatment.

"Keep tuned to KADS for 'THE STORY OF LOS ANGELES'.! might not only draw and keep an audience but might be a significant factor when license renewal time came around.

Good luck!

Sincerely,



To - MR. McLendon

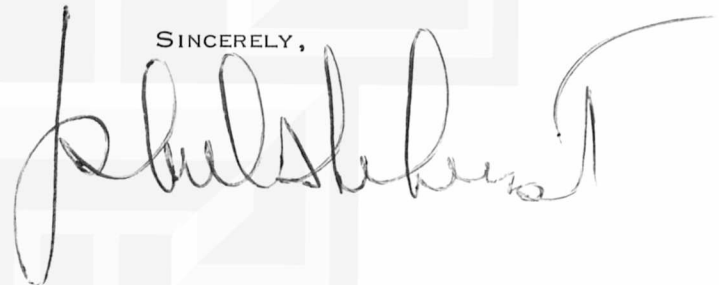
PAGE THREE

I SHAN'T BOTHER TO RECITE THE OTHER ERRORS, SOME OF WHICH WERE JUST OUT AND OUT "FLUFFS", NOT TOO BAD IN THEMSELVES, BUT REPEATED IN THREE SUCCESSIVE BROADCASTS BECAUSE THEY WERE ON TAPE.

I TRUST THIS MEMO HAS BEEN FULL ENOUGH TO LET YOU KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE IN MIND IF WE HAVE A CONFERENCE. IF YOU STILL WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME I'LL BE GLAD TO COME OUT TO 8601 KEDZIE BUT SINCE I DON'T HAVE A CAR THIS WOULD MEAN A TAXI RIDE AND A RESULTANT INCREASE IN DIVIDENDS FROM YELLOW CAB STOCK. I HUMBLY VENTURE THE SUGGESTION THAT IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE "DOWNTOWN" AT ANY TIME, YOU MIGHT HAVE A DRINK WITH ME AT THE TAVERN CLUB, WHICH IS JUST A BLOCK FROM YOUR MICHIGAN AVENUE OFFICE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR MEMO AND ENCLOSED MATERIAL. I RETURN HERewith THE PARTIAL MEMO OF DECEMBER 2 AS YOU REQUESTED.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul Shubert", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

MR. GORDON B. McLENDON  
STATION W-NUS, CHICAGO

CC: MR. JOHN BURKE, JR.

