

November 21, 1984

CONCURRING STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JAMES H. QUELLO

In re: Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to release 900 MHz
reserve spectrum for private land mobile use.

I have no reluctance to release this 12 MHz for use by private land mobile licensees because I recognize the value of this service. I also recognize the need for additional communications channels in a few of the nation's largest cities.

My reservations in approving this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking lie only with its favoring a 12.5 KHz channelizing plan for land mobile use in the new spectrum. I believe that the proposal is far too conservative and that the Commission should propose a 5 KHz channelizing plan. I am well aware of the controversy within the technical community with respect to 5 KHz channels, and I believe that this Notice is an appropriate vehicle to thoroughly air that controversy on the record. Therefore, I hope and expect that there will be extensive informed, thoughtful comments on the various channelizing plans proposed--including 5 KHz--so that the Commission can go forward in a responsible manner.

My concerns regarding efficient use of the spectrum are not limited to private land mobile use but extend to cellular radio and to studio transmitter links and intercity relay channels at 900 MHz. Where technological developments seem to make such efficient use practicable, the Commission should encourage the rapid use of such technology.

Clearly there are costs associated with adoption of different technologies, but these are minimized where new spectrum is involved. No investment is incurred through displacement of existing users. I believe that there are significant costs imposed, as well, by adhering to existing technologies when more efficient ones are readily available. The Commission, in proposing allocation of the remaining reserve spectrum at 900 MHz in this and related proceedings, declined to authorize two new radio services because there was not enough spectrum to accommodate all legitimate needs. Stated more precisely, there was not enough spectrum given the existing channelizing plan. Thus, the inefficient use of spectrum has cost the development of two new services either or both of which might have provided significant benefits to the American people. Who can guess what other services have been or will be foregone because of a lack of available spectrum?

While I believe that the Commission has responded to legitimate short term needs of the land mobile community, I also believe that we have fallen short in responsible consideration of longer term needs. There is a need for the orderly allocation of additional spectrum, but I can only concur with the proposed channelizing plan to the extent that it appears to favor 12.5 KHz channels.