

COMMENTS BY FCC COMMISSIONER JAMES H. QUELLO

BEFORE THE BROADCAST PIONEERS

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It takes the broadcast pioneer leadership and showmanship of a Ward Quaal to get the youngest FCC Chairman in history and the oldest serving commissioner on the same Broadcast Pioneers podium.

The drastic age difference between Dennis and me is particularly troublesome for an old timer like me . . . just think, I'm more than twice his age! If we go into a bar they are liable to ask young Dennis for his I.D. card while every store automatically offers me a 10% senior citizens discount! The most memorable recognition of my longevity was a telegram sent by Chuck Adams etc.: "Congratulations. Hang in there until they name the building after you!"

I do think Dennis is entitled to an honorary membership in the venerable Broadcast Pioneers. He deserves triple time credit for his embattled FCC service. I once tried to comfort Dennis by repeating a warning my friend, Chairman John Dingell, gave me back in 1974 when I first sought the FCC job. Big John said "Why do you want the damn job? You are going to get beat up by Congress and overruled by the Courts."

Chairman Dingell's (self fulfilling) prophecy is somewhat true, but somewhere between the complex contention of legislation and the complicated legalities of the courts, the FCC still has strong regulatory power for good or evil . . . and

Under Chairman Patrick and Chairman Fowler, there have been much more de-regulatory good than harm despite my occasional strenuous vocal disagreements on one or two items.

I once told Mark Fowler and it applies to Dennis -- "I'm with you 95% of the time" Mark said "Yes, but the other 5% are the major broadcast items." I remember someone once asked Mark what the difference was in going from 7 to 5 commissioners -- his candid answer was not too surprising -- He said "It means I have two fewer butts to kiss."

Last year at the NAB convention, I even recommended Mark for a Distinguished Service Award for his active longtime de-regulatory service . . . at the same time I said we both merit purple hearts for some of the wounds we inflicted on each other on the few occasions we disagreed.

My senior citizen status should permit some public tolerance for my over-judgmental remarks. For example, I view Chairman Patrick as a bright, attractive lawyer with a great future but a somewhat embattled present. I'm sorry for the few times when I may have contributed to his embattlement.

Both of us have that neurotic compulsion to do something -- we haven't learned what someone called the effective principle of "dynamic inaction" of doing nothing with "effervescent sincerity" that works so well in some government circles. When two active people confront the many contentious issues in the government and law, some disagreement is unavoidable. Eventually, you reach the mature realization that you can disagree without being disagreeable. Dennis and I reached that accommodation some time ago. In fact, I enjoy agreeing with him much more than the occasional disagreements. I envy his promising future at his relatively young age. So, Dennis, until the next 15-item FCC meeting -- my fraternal affection and peace!

Now on to the pleasant principal subject tonight . . . again, I'm delighted that Ed DeGray, Sol Paul and Ward Quaal asked me to present the original license and the distinguished operational record that led to the prestigious Golden Mike award to pioneer station KOMO Seattle. KOMO today joins the prestigious ranks of the few broadcast leaders in America that have earned this honor.

So it is a special pleasure, John Behnke, president and CEO of Fisher Broadcasting, Inc., that I present you this certified true copy of the FCC's initial assignment of the TV license to the station in March 1922.

It is particularly gratifying that this pioneer license is in such good hands. Fisher Broadcasting has been a most worthy custodian of this distinguished pioneer station. Your stewardship has been characterized by dedicated adherence to quality, integrity and responsibility in programming and management.

So heartiest congratulations and best wishes for continued accomplishments and broadcast leadership in the exciting years ahead.

The broadcaster's goal of serving public interest is a vital part of the FCC's overall goal of industry and government working together in a constructive spirit of mutual cooperation. Thereby, we maintain America's communications leadership and assure that Americans continue to be the best informed and best served people in the world.