

Jan 21, 1974

Background Statement of
James H. Quello for Senate Confirmation Hearing
for Appointment to the Federal Communications Commission

I appreciate the opportunity of appearing before you to present pertinent data bearing on my qualifications to serve as a federal Communications Commissioner.

My general biographical data has been previously submitted to the committee. It lists industry, government and civic positions held during my career.

Also Senators Hart and Griffin have requested that certain letters be included as part of the official record of the confirmation hearing. These were letters or resolutions of encouragement and support received from a representative group of government, educational, veteran, religious, civic, ethnic and industry leaders and organizations. Hopefully, these letters will obviate the time and expense of calling numerous witnesses.

First, I believe I will bring to the commission a longtime record of accomplishment and fair, honest dealing with people and issues in all facets of my lifetime work--for five years in the army, for 28 years in broadcasting--for 22 years on previous government commissions and public service committees--and for the last two years teaching at the University of Detroit.

I have the will, vitality and desire to serve. I would consider appointment to the F.C.C. a signal achievement. I consider this type of government service as the ideal climax of my lifetime career.

I would bring to the Commission a combination of public service oriented broadcast experience and practical working knowledge about a wide range of government and civic commissions and study committees. This includes 21 years on the Detroit Housing and Urban Renewal Commission appointed by four different Mayors and 22 years on the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund appointed by four different Governors. I also gained further insight into government operations by being appointed to government study committees--the most significant were the Governor's Special Study Committee on Legislative Compensation, the Governor's Special Commission on Urban problems and the Mayor's Committee on Human Relations. It is encouraging and gratifying that through my public service record I received widescale bi-partisan support from the entire Michigan Congressional delegation, the Mayor and former Mayors of Detroit and the Governor and former Governors of Michigan and many other governmental and civic leaders.

As you know radio broadcasting has been my principal

2

career. I have always considered myself a "working stiff" type of manager. As a first generation American from a modest origin, I have worked hard all my life. I had paper routes, caddied, sold magazines, worked in CCC camps. In high school I worked after school but had time to be president of my Junior and Senior class. I worked most of my way through college and served in my senior year as editor of the Michigan State News and also in 1935 as the first student newscaster on the university 5000 watt radio station.

So too, I worked hard in broadcasting progressing successively over a 25 year period from advertising and public relations manager to program director to operations manager and then to general manager and vice president of WJR radio. I was never a large stockholder or president of any broadcast company, conglomerate or network. My holding of any stock never amounted to more than 1/4 of 1 percent. I believe I conducted my managerial duties with empathy and humane consideration for the sensitivities and needs of other associates. It is gratifying that so many of my former associates who worked with me have volunteered their help and offered to testify on my behalf.

It is generally accepted and a matter of record that station WJR has been identified over a period of years with quality programming; news excellence and distinguished public service. WJR also maintained the highest standards of advertising acceptance and commercial time limitations. WJR's programming, community involvement and civic consciousness have consistently won the enthusiastic approval of discerning adult listeners, the respect of government and civic leaders, laudatory articles in newspapers and magazines and numerous major awards and citations.

I am proud to have been the principal architect in the mid 50's of WJR's unique "complete range programming" and "programming with adult appeal (for adults of all ages)" -- a quality concept that has eminently stood the test of time.

While at WJR, the station won more major awards than any other station in the area: In a three year period 1968 through 1970 WJR received an unprecedented 32 significant awards and citations. This is a matter of record as awards and descriptions are listed in the 1970 WJR license renewal application filed with the FCC.

WJR instituted minority hiring and programming in the late 40's and 50's -- as the Executive Director of the Detroit Urban League stated "before it was fashionable or deemed mandatory by the EEOC".

In 1949, working in conjunction with the Urban League, WJR hired the first Black Disc Jockey on a major Detroit station, Bill Lane. In the 50's and 60's WJR also had an integrated chorus of 55 young singers on a program called "Make

Way For Youth" which originated at the station and was broadcast for one hour each week on the CBS network. The chorus trained and developed outstanding high school talent. Among the notable Black graduates of the chorus are songstress Freda Payne and Ursula Walker and several members of national singing groups. WJR also hired the Dorothy Ashby trio, a group of talented Black musicians for a five day a week program -- this too upon the suggestion of the Urban League. WJR also originated and broadcast 45 minutes of an all Black adult acapella chorus once a week in the 60's.

Over a period of twenty five years our relations with the Detroit Urban League were cordial. WJR was consistently on record as requesting Black engineers as well as talent personalities. Many stations in the 50's and early 60's found that qualifiable Blacks were not often available for announcing and production vacancies. However, Black education increased during the 60's and also interest and consciousness in Black employment. In the 60's WJR, generally, and I, personally, instituted an affirmative policy of additional Black hiring and Black oriented programming. This resulted in the hiring of two Black announcers -- Don Haney, now a ^{former} local TV personality, and Gene Elay, now a WJR department head. Patrick Patman, a student was hired as a production apprentice. We also hired three Black newscasters in the late 60's -- Gene Hamilton, Roy Wood and Joe Williams. Another talented Black newsman, Cliff Mosely, was added later. The Urban League again expressed their approval of this representation on such a highly regarded professional news staff. We hired a Black sports assistant, Matt Snorton, a good broadcast prospect, who decided he preferred the opportunities in the automobile business. We also hired Ursula Walker in the late 60's -- a talented Black songstress featured on the daily "Open House" show. We also hired several Black women in the production department and traffic department. WJR also participated in Columbia University's program for training minority newscasters in the late 60's.

In the 70's we hired a well known Black personality, ^{Ernie Durham} Ernie Durham. A Black salesman and a Black business manager were hired in 1971. Upon my personal recommendation, a Black student apprentice, Patricia Vincent, from University of Detroit was hired in 1971. It was also at my recommendation that WJR in 1970 started regular financial contributions to help defray publication costs of the NAACP reporter.

In the mid and late 60's we also instituted additional regularly scheduled and special programs that were minority oriented. The regularly scheduled programs included: "Action, Urban League", "Color of Achievement", "Urban Scene", "In Contact", "The Minority Report", "Religion in Action", "Ask the Professor", "Junior Town Meeting", "Sunday Supplement" and "Topic for Today". The more notable documentaries or special minority programs broadcast during the late 60's and 1970 included "Open Housing -- Fact or Fiction?"; "Tell It Like It Is", "Free at Last" (story of Martin Luther King); "Some Lessons

in Pride" (story series of ten 45 minute programs on outstanding Black contributors to culture and history of Negro "firsts"; "Of Greatness in Slavery" (story of Booker T. Washington) "Heroes Come in Many Colors", "Is There a Better Way?", "I Am Not Alone", "Psychology of a Rebellion", "Rebuilding Detroit" and broadcasts of principal speeches of the NAACP conventions. At my suggestion, we also instituted a daily program of signifi~~can~~ce to women's interests called "Women Are Great".

Established WJR daily programs like "Kaleidoscope", "Focus" and "Adventures in Good Music" in 1968, 1969 and 1970 along with the regularly scheduled Black-oriented programs and special documentaries combined to make a significant contribution to racial understanding and to Black history and achievements. In this area WJR surpassed Black or ethnic stations in Detroit. *with a large news and program staff*

It is interesting that after the tragic 1967 Detroit race riot, WJR news dominated the radio awards for responsible reporting and interpreting. WJR also became the communication center during the riot for BBC, CBC, Radio Copenhagen, and CBS. Most of the national UPI audio reports the first two days of the riot originated with WJR reporters.

It is significant, too, that ^{Federal} Judge Damon Keith, former Detroit NAACP Vice President, then Michigan Civil Rights Chairman, called me at 7 A.M. Sunday morning requesting I call all TV and radio stations and urge them not to broadcast inflammatory reports. Judge Keith and Congressman John Conyers were frantically using all their resources to prevent a serious disturbance from erupting into a full scale riot. I called the stations and most cooperated until the story broke on the noon network news carried by local stations. I called Damon Keith at emergency headquarters to inform him the story had broken. Tragically, by Sunday evening Detroit was embroiled in, perhaps, the largest riot in the nation's history. During the riots, I remained at the station all night directing operations --I remained in constant communication with official emergency command post and with city and state officials. ←

I mention in some detail the minority activities at the station and minority hiring and programming because it bears on a confidential memo unfairly characterizing me as insensitive to minority needs. Frankly, clearing my good name in this area is vitally important to me.

Two key WJR Department Heads, the News Director and the Chief Announcer, who had been urged by me to hire Black newsmen and Black announcers expressed their surprise and disagreement with the memo. Their letters are particularly relevant and are included as part of the record. Daniel Burke, now President of Capital Cities Communications Inc. who was my immediate superior at WJR for five years wrote "I always found Jim to be tolerant, thoughtful and completely unbiased with regard to

5-

the countless individuals and many different groups with which the station dealt."

Black leaders and officials in Detroit who worked with me or knew me over a period of years volunteered their support. Among the Black leaders supporting me are a Democratic federal judge who is a former Vice President of the Detroit NAACP and Chairman of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission; the Executive Director of the Detroit Urban League, the President Pro-Tem of the Detroit City Council; the Deputy Mayor of Detroit; the former President of the Detroit Housing and Urban Renewal Commission; the Executive Director of the Detroit Housing Commission; a prominent Democratic leader and Washington attorney; the Community Relations Director of Ford Motor Company; endorsements from the New Detroit Committee and a unanimous resolution from the National Association of Black Broadcasters. I was gratified to receive strong support from Black leaders in my community who know me best. I also received a letter from the President of the Detroit Round Table, who volunteered to testify in my behalf. The letters and resolutions are also included as part of the record.

More important and germane are my current attitudes and positions on minority hiring and programming. Today I believe ^{positive} pressure must be maintained to prevent discrimination in hiring and promotion. I believe there must be continual feeding of Blacks, minorities, women, and persons over 40 into the employment and management mainstream of all industry and, particularly, communications. I believe in an affirmative EEOC program. I also believe "qualifiable" minority personnel should be encouraged through apprenticeship and scholarship programs paid by broadcast companies. I further believe there should be more opportunities and encouragement for Black and minority management and ownership. I would favor some kind of government or industry financial or personnel subsidy for deserving new Black TV owners who might experience initial difficulty staying afloat. For example, some kind of subsidy could be considered for a pioneer Black owner TV station like channel 62 in Detroit. I also believe in programming opportunities for representatives or spokesmen of ^{minority} responsible minority groups. I also endorse the hiring of key Black personnel or community relations managers. I believe the hiring of Black executives like Mr. Jackson in a corporate headquarters in New York is in itself prima-facie evidence of an affirmative minority hiring attitude.

My biographical sketch mentions my 21 years service with the Detroit Housing and Urban Renewal Commission. I served as President four different times. It was during service on this sensitive and sometimes hectic city commission that I gained first hand understanding of the real housing and social problems of the underprivileged inner city minorities. Through this service and my stand on social issues and my forthright dealing with people, I gained a cherished friendship with fellow Black commissioners and civic leaders. Most have offered to testify in my behalf and three representatives will appear as witnesses.

the record shows

I believe their testimony will reveal that I was an early believer of adequate public housing for the needy, an early advocate of open housing, an antagonist to replacing urban slum housing with new relatively expensive apartments beyond the economic reach of the displaced persons. I also encouraged WJR news and special documentary programming to support public housing, to espouse open occupancy, to assure adequate police protection for the elderly and unprotected in public housing and to eliminate dope dens in housing projects. An example of a special documentary program promoting open housing was "Open Occupancy -- Fact or Fiction?".

The biographical sketch also lists my service on the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Board of Trustees for 22 years as a representative of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. This is a fund for the emergent need of veterans. I was appointed by four different governors and confirmed by the state senate. My nomination for the FCC has been endorsed by the Michigan VFW and DAV, American Legion and Amvet members of the Trust Fund. I served in the U.S. Army over five years during World War II. I served 32 months overseas with the 9th Infantry Division, the 5th Army and the 45th Infantry Division rising in rank from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. I participated in seven major landings--Casablanca Africa; Gela Sicily; Salerno, Italy; Anzio, Italy; Southern France on "D" day and assault crossing of the Rhine and Danube--the last two as infantry battalion commander. During our nation's tragic involvement in the Vietnam war, I approved of President Nixon's efforts to win and end the war in Vietnam and supported his candidacy for President. I had previously supported Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey.

As a broadcaster I believed it appropriate to maintain an official discreet political independency. I treated all parties and candidates fairly. We maintained a policy of fair treatment and equal coverage for both major parties. I was never active in any precinct or party organization of any kind during my years in broadcasting. I tended to personally support at the polls candidates that I believed were honest, diligent and most capable of serving the people's interest. Neither party claims a monopoly on these qualities.

Although we don't register by parties in Michigan, I have voted Democratic in the primaries for the past sixteen years. It is generally known that I greatly respect and support my Democratic congressmen, Lucien Nedzi, and before him I supported his Democratic predecessor. I consider myself a Democrat albeit an independent one. I have observed over the years a wide range of different philosophies and viewpoints among members of the same party.

The most recent addition to my biographical sketch has been teaching at University of Detroit. I instructed classes in "Broadcast Management" and also in "Practicalities of Broadcast and Government Regulations" in 1971 and 1972. It was a thoroughly interesting and rewarding experience. I enjoyed

the exchange of ideas with students. This past year I declined teaching because of my nomination to the FCC and the unsettled status of a confirmation hearing date.

I view service on the Commission as the ultimate opportunity in my career for independent public service. I have retired from broadcasting. I haven't been involved with any broadcast company as a manager or consultant since March 1973.

My retirement investment portfolio contains some stocks in broadcasting and communications. None of my holdings are significant from a standpoint of influence or control. None amount to even 1/4 of 1 percent of any company. As stated in a separate letter to the committee, I will unequivocally dispose of all communications stocks, bonds or funds so as to comply with all rules and policies relating to financial interests of Commissioners of the FCC. I will have nothing to gain financially or materially from any industry or service regulated by the FCC. I will be beholden to no one and I can be my own man. The only commitments I have made is to have an open mind toward all communications issues and problems and to search out and carefully evaluate all the facts so that I can propose or support a course of action that best serves the total public interest.

I can understand the concern of some consumer activist groups to my appointment. My opposition comes from those I have never met and who are not familiar with my public service record or my stands on previous government commissions I have served. The opposition is based on surmise and suspicion. In fact, I have never met Commissioner Nick Johnson or his former legal associate, Tracy Westen, now of a Washington public interest law firm, who opposed my nomination.

I believe I can effectively sell overall consumer needs and viewpoints to broadcasters. I hope to bring mature judgment and common sense reasoning to FCC deliberations. Consumer activist groups represent a sizeable constituency whose views certainly merit careful consideration. I will always respect and value their views--I believe in many cases their proposals have benefitted the public. However, their views should not be the sole factors in determining public interest. There are many other consumer viewpoints and public groups, many in disagreement with consumer activists, that must also be considered in determining total public interest. As this committee knows, there is considerable disagreement among many intelligent individuals and organizations of sincere intentions and worthy purposes as to what does constitute public interest on any given issue.

Broadcasters are in the consumer business. Every listener and viewer is a consumer. Broadcasters must satisfy consumers

not only for success, but for survival. Without public support of consumers, programs and stations fail and licenses may be subject to challenge.

I view service on the commission as an ideal opportunity to serve. At my age (an active, tennis playing 59) I'm not using the position as a stepping stone to a high paying job in the industry. Also, I'm not an attorney, who will use knowledge gained of the commission and its processes to represent high paying clients before the FCC. I believe this posture is most conducive to complete independence of thought and freedom of action. Advancement of public interest can truly be the sole dominant factor in my FCC service.

I also believe my lifetime career in radio should help me be a more effective commissioner rather than considered a detriment. I have some practical working knowledge of the business. I'm retired from it. I'm not wealthy but am economically secure. Because I'm familiar with broadcasting, I could use my knowledge to protect public interest if I have the will and integrity. Responsible people who know me best believe I do. I would not disappoint them.

I expect service on the FCC will be the final and most satisfying and productive years of my life. I will bring an open mind and knowledge of both the faults and virtues of broadcasting to the position. I believe I can provide the commission an element it needs in its deliberations. I have an understanding of the real life patterns of broadcasting in the areas of programming, business and personnel. I can bring this practical understanding to the commission level and complement the legal skills and procedural knowledge of others who now sit on the FCC. This way, demands made by citizens groups and the general public in these changing social times can be more realistically and effectively served. However, I admit there are many facets of FCC legal procedures and regulations that will require study and familiarization.

I trust my previous Michigan government and commission service will also provide helpful experience in meeting the challenging problems ahead.

I pledge to dedicate myself to carefully study issues, objectively evaluate all evidence and to arrive at recommendations or decisions that best serve total public interest. I am beholden to no special interest group--only to the oath I take and the public I serve. I am grateful to government leaders who had confidence in me and made this opportunity possible, Vice President Gerald Ford and Senator Robert Griffin who recommended my nomination to the President and my staunch friends Senator Phil Hart, Congressman John Dingell, Congressman Lucien Nedzi, Congresswoman Martha Griffiths and Judge Damon Keith who were a source of encouragement and support the past six months. I pledge to them and to this committee that, if confirmed, I will conduct myself so as to merit their continued trust and confidence.