

Remarks by Senior Commissioner James H. Quello

Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award

Eugene C. Bowler Foundation

April 5, 1995

I'm grateful to all my friends of PCIA and the Bowler Foundation for this most distinctive and prestigious addition to what I humorously call my pre-posthumous awards. As a fugitive from the actuarial law of averages, I'm glad to receive it when I can enjoy it and enjoy your company.

I'm not only honored to receive this Lifetime Achievement Award, but I am especially honored that former awardee, Big John Dingell, my longtime hometown friend and my Congressional Godfather made the presentation.

Incidentally, if you are looking for a leading argument against term limitations, you have them with you tonight. With term limitations, we would not have experienced the years of distinguished forceful leadership under the John Dingell Chairmanship or received the well seasoned, effective leadership of Republican Chairman Jack Fields.

I'm also glad that the Bowler Foundation is recognizing two deserving public servants -- David Leach, longtime respected telecommunications aide to Chairman Dingell and Judy Dunlap who is doing an outstanding job of electronic filing in the FCC's Gettysburg office.

However, in my case this distinctive PCIA award must be credited to the voluntary day and night dedication of the FCC staff members who were responsible for launching the exciting new personal communications service for America. It was through their exceptional efforts that we were able to accomplish the important report and order elements of PCS -- the spectrum allocation, eligibility and finally meriting the auction authority from Congress. Since 1979, the Commission had sought statutory authority to implement the proposal developed by the FCC's Office of Plans and Policy to use competitive bidding to license new services. Congress authorized auctions while I served as Chairman in 1993. During this period we also requested proposals from national auction experts who played a key role in framing our highly successful auctions.

Through the extraordinary efforts of the FCC staff, the initial PCS Report and Order was issued -- Spectrum allocation, licensee eligibility and implementing the underlying Congressional authority for auctions were all accomplished in the historic September 1993 FCC meeting.

In fact, I owe that FCC staff a resounding vote of gratitude. I must certainly share this honor tonight with that dedicated staff and refer to them by paraphrasing that Churchill wartime declaration "that never did so many owe so much to so few."

I can only take the time tonight to mention a few -- First, Brian Fontes, my Chief of Staff at that time, who worked day and night and did a distinguished overall job of coordinating the PCS task force and the offices of fellow Commissioners Barrett and Duggan. I'm lucky that Brian had the time honored work ethic of "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." rather than the less stressful policy of "When the going gets tough, the smart get lost." Next, Ralph Haller, who did an outstanding job as head of the PCS task force -- Tom Stanley who provided expert engineering guidance throughout our deliberation; Bob Pepper, a tower of knowledge, information and guidance; Dave Siddall, who drafted much of the initial report; Jonathan Cohen, an all around effective utility man; Rudy Baca, my valued adviser on wireless communications. Other names that came to mind for outstanding efforts are John Cimko, Peter Tenhula and Beverly Baker.

Later, under the chairmanship of Reed Hundt, the PCS rules were fine tuned, finalized and to Reed's and the FCC's credit, expedited -- the final rules were issued in less than one year. The rules were promptly and skillfully implemented and the auctions were a resounding success. Again, special recognition is due to outstanding efforts by Gina Keeney of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Jerry Vaughn, Don Gips, Bob Pepper, Jonathan Cohen, Jackie Chorney, and many others. But I did want to stress tonight the relative unheralded early heavy lifting that culminated in the most successful auctions in history.

The danger of naming a few names is you inadvertently omit many who deserve special credit. In fact, I would like all current FCC employees here tonight to stand and be recognized.

I repeat to all of you what I said at the 1993 staff meetings (particularly as it applied to PCS), "I need you a hell of a lot more than you need me." Fortunately for me, and like many people, they wanted to be needed."

In my professional life prior to my 20 years at the FCC, I was in the business of wireless communications -- Broadcasting. I knew then, as I know now, the importance of spectrum, interference, the licensing process, technology, competition and many of the other issues facing wireless communications. As I have said on many occasions, I have been around long enough to have voted against everyone at

least twice and sometimes thrice. As I look around the room I can see those of you involved in public safety spectrum battles, UHF/land mobile sharing battles, frequency coordination debates, mobile satellite/broadcaster/land mobile spectrum battles, not to forget spectrum refarming. All of us have survived these healthy public debates and difficult public policy decisions and all of us are the wiser.

I had earlier been impressed by the amount of money involved in past FCC licensing of cellular and thought the government should receive some funds through public auctions. I also decided that the FCC must not be overwhelmed by implementation of the Cable Act or finalizing the Fin/syn rules. I told my staff that this exciting new technology promised by PCS must be launched. I had been told that next generation mobile communications would generate between 200,000 - 300,000 jobs for Americans. I wanted the Commission to assist you -- the service providers -- in changing the way we would be communicating with each other in the future.

Today, everyone recognizes the important contribution wireless telecommunications makes to our daily lives. Here are just a few examples of wireless communications affecting our lives: energy management that lights this room tonight; wireless classrooms where children and teachers can now access new data bases; public safety services, including health care; and traditional voice and data services. We have seen technology move from simple base station to mobile set; dedicated voice/response channels to sophisticated wireless terrestrial networks; and soon, with the launch of the AMSC satellite next month, mobile satellite services. I have seen the wireless communications market grow in stature, recognition and competition. Today, it is a vital sector of telecommunication economic growth.

To those who have invested \$7.7 billion in the next generation of wireless services I wish you Godspeed and the best of luck. Over the years the Commission has done much to create a healthy, competitive wireless telecommunication industry. Now we must stand aside to allow competition rather than regulation better serve the public.

If you will indulge me a personal intrusion, I have a rather distinctive personal life achievement that I would like to share with you. I have been married to the same woman for 57 years! She deserves some kind of award too -- I'm glad we met before the growing current trend that women want a man in their life but not in their house. We were married way back in the old fashioned (outdated??) times when you said "I do" rather than "I did."

I am grateful that through all those years that she never filed a petition to revoke our license. She tells me she never contemplated divorce -- murder yes -- but divorce never!

Our longevity is a testimonial to what a sense of humor can do for a woman. Overall, I believe in marriage. If it weren't for marriage, some men might go through life thinking they had no faults at all.

Anyway, Mary was always good at letting me have her way -- and I hope she will continue to let me have her way in the coming years. (Stand)

Now, back to our principal subject today. Heartfelt thanks again for this distinctive award. It will have a very special place in my office, but more importantly, a distinctive pleasant place in my lifetime memory of the extraordinary effort of an under-manned underfunded staff to initiate an exciting new competitive communications technology and innovative government auctioning system that resulted in the single largest peacetime investment by an industry and the largest auction ever conducted by any government.

We are all at the starting line of a new era in mobile communications. The winning bidders will change the nature of communications in our great country and perhaps the world. All Americans will benefit. U.S. industry has again shown the way to our technological future in the coming century. Good luck to all of you in pioneering this fascinating technology -- and may your tribe increase.

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