



TRUMPER COMMUNICATIONS INC.

April 27, 1998

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

RM-9208
RECEIVED

APR 29 1998

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Federal Communications Commission
Room 222
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

VIA FACSIMILE

Re: FCC File nos. RM-9208 and RM-9242

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are writing to you to express our dismay that the FCC is considering enfranchising low power "pirate" radio broadcasters. Our most worrisome concern is the potential interference that amateur broadcasters may cause to the quality of our stations' signals. Our Company has invested heavily in state of the art equipment in order to bring our customers, the listeners, unequalled audio quality. Our livelihood depends on the uninterrupted delivery of quality information and entertainment. We not only compete against other radio broadcasters but we compete against other mediums. It is in our interest as well as the interest of our listeners not to jeopardize signal quality.

As broadcasters, we sometimes chafe at FCC restrictions and directives, but nobody can say that the Commission has not brought order to the radio spectrum that benefits everyone. In the 1930's, a Los Angeles AM station owned by the Four Square Gospel Church drifted up and down the radio spectrum in search of listeners. We chuckle when we hear this story retold, but until now we never contemplated the effect on the competing Los Angeles broadcasters. The prospect of sharing radio spectrum with amateur broadcasters certainly takes the humor out of this story.

In reading news stories on pirate radio stations, proponents justify low power radio stations by referring to the first amendment right of free speech, recent radio industry consolidation squelching community expression and the lack of programming diversity. We strongly disagree with these assertions. Our stations continually identify community problems and needs. We air programs by community leaders to discuss problems. Moreover, our stations support beneficial community and minority causes with promotional advertisement and in some instances financial support. At KISN-FM (one of our Salt Lake City stations) we established KISN Cares for Kids, a non-profit trust which raises money and interest in worthy children's causes, i.e., medical bills, children's charitable organizations, etc.

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FCC

-2-

April 27, 1998

As anyone with some industry knowledge knows, radio industry consolidation is a result of Docket 80-90, which allowed a significant increase in the number of station signals, and resulted in severely damaging the industry. Consolidation permits certain economies of scale, greater access to public capital markets and, generally, a healthier business climate for radio. In addition, radio clusters let group owners offer wider choice of formats to listeners. Before market clusters were allowed, there was an economic necessity to pursue popular formats. Now, group owners can (and do) pursue more niche formats than before, delivering greater choice to our listeners.

We ask you to consider all of these issues as you form your opinion on FCC File nos. RM-9208 and RM-9242.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Burke
Vice President, Corporate Finance

RPB:aeg

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RM 4208
9242
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APR 29 1998

From: Anita Wallgren
To: FCCMAIL.SMTPNLM("books@crabsystem.win.net")
Date: 4/29/98 10:25am
Subject: LPFM stations -Reply

**Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary**

Dear Ms. Smith:

I have forwarded your comment to the Secretary of the FCC for inclusion in the record. Thanks for writing.

>>> "A. Smith" <books@crabsystem.win.net> 04/29/98 10:11pm >>>

Please do what you can to lift restrictions on low-powered FM sites. I've worked for commercial radio for years, and would like to start a low-powered community station. Please keep me updated on your progress.

Thank You!
April Smith
425 N. Atlantic ST.
Boise, ID 83706

CC: msalas

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R.M. 9208
9242

From: "Joseph D'Alessandro" <jdman@magpage.com>
To: A7.A7(SNESS)
Date: 4/28/98 2:34pm
Subject: LPFM RADIO

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APR 29 1998

**Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary**

WHY DONT YOU HELP THESE PEOPLE HELP THE POOR

MR.D'ALESSANDRO
Black Liberation Radio

For six years, Black Liberation Radio, a small unlicensed pirate radio station in Decatur, Illinois has courageously exposed police brutality, official misconduct, and government attacks on the black community. Broadcasting at 99.7 FM on a 15-watt transmitter from their home, Napoleon Williams, Mildred Jones, and their supporters have waged a campaign to challenge the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for their role in destroying and tearing apart black families, and specifically for the abduction and relocation of their own children, Unique Dream and Atrue Dream. BLR has also played an important role in building ties between their community and the largely white work force at the local Caterpillar Tractor plant during the bitter strikes there in recent years. BLR has consistently refused as a matter of principle to ask for a license from the Federal Communications Commission, arguing that they need no one's permission to exercise their freedom of speech.

The authorities have responded to this bold stand with a sustained series of police harassment and raids. Williams and Jones have faced trumped-up charges, fines, prison time, seized equipment, and have even lost custody of their children. Yet they refuse to be silenced.

This Black Liberation Radio Solidarity Page is intended to spread news, information, and generate support for BLR. It has been assembled by an ad hoc group of activists from Chicago who feel that the attempts to silence BLR are a grave injustice and must be fought. Their situation is analogous to the current attempts to censor and control the internet, and are representative of the concurrent attacks on poor and black communities today on a variety of levels.

BLR Information, News, Solidarity

***Background and History**

Here you will find information on Decatur and BLR, as well as timelines and general background pieces. *Updates

A compilation of updates sent out by BLR supporters regarding the raids and repression, as well as news pieces from independent sources. You'll especially want to see the latest Chicago Ink piece below. *Mainstream News
What the capitalist press has to say regarding BLR. *Solidarity!

How YOU can support BLR, and how you can connect to groups that already are doing support work. *Other Links

Connections to Pirate Radio and many other sites that are relevant to BLR.

*Audio

Hear BLR speak out!

Rattling Cages in the Land of Lincoln:
Decatur's Black Liberation Radio Draws Fire From Local Law Enforcement

By Tracy "Jake" Siska & Dharma Pfeiffer

May 29, 1997

In the heart of the Land of Lincoln, a radio station that answers the phone simply as "Liberation" sends a signal that ripples out like a pebble in a pond. It purls over the town of Decatur, past the Macon County jail and the Decatur Police Department, to the County Court building and the local State's Attorney's office on Water Street.

Black Liberation Radio is an unusual spot on the dial by any measure. With only fifteen watts of broadcasting power, BLR is too small to be licensed by the FCC. It airs from Napoleon Williams' and Mildred Jones's living room on equipment roughly worth that of a modest home stereo system. That's a far cry from a licensed station with start-up costs that open at \$100,000 and can reach into the millions in major markets. BLR's message is militant, populist -- and openly disliked by the Peoria state's attorney and local law enforcement. The station has consistently railed against a host of local injustices, from police brutality and racism to the strikebreaking tactics of management at the local Staley and Bridgestone/Firestone plants.

BLR's unique brand of micro radio has cost them. Williams, who was just bonded out of the County jail on three state charges of felony eavesdropping, reflects on his legal troubles.

"I feel like I've gone from maximum security to minimum security," he says.

This most recent arrest is the latest in a long pattern of intimidation for BLR, a pattern that smacks of tactics more commonly found in third world dictatorships -- or in the Jim Crow south. The harassment raises serious questions about the right to circulate a militant and critical voice of opposition in a milieu -- radio -- that is increasingly dominated by corporate conglomerates with conservative, and even reactionary, political agendas.

Williams was first arrested only ten days after BLR began broadcasting in 1991. The couple say that, over the years, they've been the victims of repeated raids and harassment, unconfirmed allegations, uncooperative and unsympathetic public defenders, incompetent Department of Children and Family Services case workers, and a biased judiciary. The harassment has hurt them economically and emotionally: currently, two of their children are in state custody.

Decatur residents know that if you call BLR, your call will be broadcast;

their listing in the phone book says "All phone calls recorded". For years, BLR has spoken with officials from the State's Attorney's office over the air, but until now no-one had been prosecuted for eavesdropping. That may account for State's Attorney Lawrence Fichter's reluctance to bring eavesdropping charges directly through his office; instead, the case was handed over to the Illinois Attorney General.

Though felony eavesdropping is a class D felony, the least serious felony under Illinois law, the Attorney General's office took the unusual step of launching the Decatur Police on a three hour raid of BLR last month. On May 10, the police cordoned off a two block radius around the house, cut BLR's power, batter-rammed the front door, and entered in full riot gear with gas masks and automatic weapons.

This current round of legal woes stems from three phone calls that officials say Williams recorded and played over BLR without the consent of other parties to the conversation. All three conversations were with DCFS employees and dealt with their children's cases. "Can you give me one reason why I don't have my children?" Williams asked David Chesko, the DCFS caseworker assigned to their children, Atrue Dream and Unique Dream. Chesko replied, "No I can't give you a reason."

Williams believes the charges were concocted to seize DCFS reports and tapes of conversations with DCFS officials. Jones may also have been arrested in an attempt to seize the couple's baby boy Miracle: during the May 10 raid, a DCFS official waited outside to take the child.

"The poor people don't have a voice in this town," Jones explains, "If we don't speak out, who will? This is really the people's station. We're coming from the hurt and pain of black people, but anybody who tunes in who has a desire to be free will be inspired. We're motivated by bringing people together, not by how many more ad dollars we got this month compared to last month...and anybody can call and speak their minds. If they see the cops beating somebody up, they can call in right while it's happening and know they'll be live on the air. They can get people out there to see what's going on."

On the surface, BLR's story reads like any other case of small-town, low-tech lynching. But the potency of racial stereotypes -- black man as dangerous predator, poor black woman as unfit mother -- carry enough currency to undercut the state-wide or national support that is often necessary to enforce civility on hostile local officials. While support has trickled in from micro radio groups as far away as Australia, Jones says she understands why the town's only black lawyer would want to distance herself from people who challenge the powers that be.

"We've contacted Oprah, Sally-Jesse, Geraldo -- they don't want to hear about us. Every lawyer you can name, they know about us." Racism, she says, is only part of the problem. "They don't want people to know how easy it is to do this."

"If we were just another jukebox on the dial, we probably wouldn't receive this kind of harassment," says Williams. "When you have people calling in talking about a speed trap, or city council, or this corrupt judicial system, when you get on them and say 'Why are you crazy for Nike sneakers? Nike sneakers are put together by slave labor', now they want to stop you. I am the descendant of slaves. I see Black Liberation Radio as a New African drum used to tell the truth. Slaves were killed for drumming, because their communicating was a threat to the slave master."

Williams and Jones say they look forward to the day when people learn to create 'pirate' television as well as micro radio, which is spreading globally as an alternative to mainstream media.

"This is the Land of Lincoln," Williams says. "A lot of people don't know that Lincoln said he didn't care if the slaves were ever freed. They're so filled with the myths they've been told. A few miles down the river a man named Elijah Lovejoy started up a newspaper to tell people the truth about slavery. He was hung. His printing press went into the Mississippi river. We feel we're only a continuation of the struggle."

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