Italians seek own radio

Community plan for non-profit Sydney station

THE Italian community is applying to have its own radio station.

It wants the station to provide a link between immigrants and the Australian way of life and to break down barriers which isolate housewives and older migrants.

The politically independent, non-profit station would cover the Sydney-Wollongong area of New South Wales.

The community has formed an organisation backed by religious, cultural and business interests to apply to the Broadcasting Control Board for a licence.

If the application, to be made in a few weeks, is successful, the Italians will be the first migrant group in Australia to have their own station.

The station would provide a link between Italian and Australian welfare agencies and cultural groups, broadcast courses in English and Italian and have access programs on schools and other aspects of Australian life.

The head of the organisation, Mr P. Bosi, a Sydney journalist and broadcaster, said yesterday that they had been encouraged by recent reports by the Department of the Media that licences would become available to group interests.

Mr Bosi said that having a station seemed the most obvious first step toward overcoming Italian migrants' cultural and social problems.

PROBLEMS

He said: "Many Italians suffer from a cultural starvation because they cannot properly understand the language or the way of life.

"It is wrong to imagine that social problems cease with the successful integration of a migrant community.

"The real problems begin when their children start to feel a sense of alienation from their families, whose culture and traditions they don't understand."

It was important that parents be taught the fundamentals of Australian life and history so they could adapt without abandoning their heritage, he said.

He added: "According to the main Italian welfare agency, the number of marriage breakdowns among Italians is increasing rapidly — as is the number of Italian children rebelling against parental authority."

He said his organisation had been planning its application for a long time. Plans are for eight hours broadcasting daily from 4 pm to midnight.

As well as language and entertainment programs, broadcasts would include all types of Italian music, plays, public debates, news, and news from Italy.

Italian companies in Australia were willing to advertise on the station but the aim was to keep advertising to a minimum, Mr Bosi said.

Similar stations catering for migrant communities were fairly common in Europe and the U.S., he said.

Costituito un comitato per una stazione radio italiana a Sydney

Costituito un gruppo cooperativistico per l'istituzion e di una

STAZIONE RADIO ITALIANA A SYDNEY

SYDNEY —"Una stazione radio italiana per la nostra collettivita'... questo l'ambizioso progetto lanciato da un comitato promotore che si battera' per ottenere una delle licenze programmate da una commissione di inchiesta governativa.

Il gruppo, presieduto dal Consultore Pino Bosi, comprende Padre Alfonso (dell' Ordine dei Cappuccini di Leichhardt), Padre Nevio (dell'Ordine degli Scalabrinani di Sydney), il Senatore del N.S.W. Frank Calabro, il Deputato del N.S.W. George Paciullo, Leandro Gambotto, Giancarlo Gambotto e l'avv. Bruno Nesci.

La stazione radio, che si chiamera' Radio Italo Australiana (R.I.A.), verra' impostata su basi non commerciali per conto di una co-operativa costituita da ascoltatori italiani.

A collaborare nella programmazione saranno chiamati vari Comitati: Scolastico, Assistenziale, Educativo, Sportivo, Culturale, Giovanile, ecc.,i cui membri verranno raccolti tra le file dei soci, delle associazioni e degli enti italiani.

L'impostazione dei programmi sara' politicamente neutrale ed oltre a trasmissioni di carattere musicale e ricreativo, comprendera' cosi di italiano, di inglese, di sociologia, con una percentuale di servizi della RAI ed altri prodotti in Australia.

Allo scopo di assicurare alla comunita' il controllo della stazione radio e per evitare che questo controllo venga a cadere nelle mani di gruppi o individui con interessi specifici, la direzione sara' condotta dall'Esecutivo della co-operativa, periodicamente eletto da tutti i soci.

Il Chairman del Comitato promotore, Pino Bosi ha dichiarato in proposito:

"Come a suo tempo si era sentita la necessita' di avere una stampa interamente italiana, oggi la situazione richiede la creazione di una stazione radio interamente italiana. Mentre infatti gli uomini si recano al lavoro, imparano l'inglese, leggono e si informano sui fatti inerenti all'Australia, le donne italiane che non lavorano vivono in una forma di isolamento che le taglia fuori completamente dalla vita australiana, rendendole schiave e vittime di una situazione che, a lungo andare, le turba e le rende infelici. Non e' a caso che, stando ai dati forniti dal Co.As.It., il numero di problemi a carattere coniugale e' in continuo aumento, come risulta in aumento il numero di casi di ribellione da parte dei figli verso i genitori. La stazione radio italiana dara' modo ai genitori di venire a conoscere piu' intimamente l'ambiente, la vita, la storia australiana nei quali i loro figli crescono. Al tempo stesso a questi figli di emigrati verranno insegnati elementi di cultura e delle tradizioni italiane in modo da accumunarli di piu' alle loro famiglie, senza contare che l'insegnamento dell'italiano permettera' loro di imparare una lingua con la quale potranno comunicare con i propri genitori, cosa che attualmente in troppi casi non avviene".

"Alcuni giorni or sono il Primo Ministro Whitlam, parlando dell'emigrazione, ha dichiarato che il suo Governo ha come scopo fondamentale quello di "far felici gli emigrati". Se e' vero che la grande ondata di emigrazione italiana e' ormai giunta al termine (almeno temporaneamente) l'esperienza americana ci insegna che i piu' grossi problemi sociali si verificano proprio con la seconda generazione, quando cioe' si crea una specie di rottura tra la cultura domestica (dei genitori) e quella dei loro figli (ambientale). Oltre a cio' si vuol dare agli italiani una serie di programmi radiofonici un po' piu' completi ed articolati di quanto non sia stato possibile fare fino ad ora a causa dell'alto contenuto pubblicitario nelle ristrette ore di trasmissione. Enti sociali, come il Co.As.It., associazioni, gruppi di lavoro, avranno tutti accesso ai programmi della Radio Italo Australiana, cosi' come i gruppi filodrammatici potranno estendere la loro attivita' attraverso la radio. Lo stesso dicasi di artisti, cantanti e musicisti. Non c'e' dubbio che una stazione radio italiana, cosi' come e' concepita la R.I.A., servira' a dare alla collettivita' un legame ricreativo e culturale come mai ha avuto, togliendo quel senso di isolamento che ha caratterizzato e che caratterizza sempre le societa' emigrate."

Il Chairman del Comitato promotore della R.I.A., Pino Bosi, parlera' alle associazioni ed al pubblico italiano su questo importante progetto nel corso di una riunione che terra' prossimamente.

RADIO STATION SCHEME

New licence sought

THE NATIONAL TIMES, JULY 15, 197

Pay and shut up

Italians in Sydney want their own radio station and have applied to the Broadcasting Control Board for a licence.

As far as the local airwaves go at present, ethnic groups might as well not exist. They've paid their licence money all right, but foreign-language broadcasting has actually been shrinking in the last few years. By the end of 1973 only 19 of Australia's 118 commercial radio stations were known to be broadcasting regularly in foreign languages, compared with 24 in 1972.

For many years the now defunct Immigration Department persuaded the authorities to severely restrict foreign language transmissions because the Department believed this was one way to force migrants to master English. Nobody seemed to bother very much about how they were to get hold of basic day-to-day information until they had mastered it.

The restrictions weren't lifted until early this year.

Proposals from a departmental committee, on "ethnic broadcasting" now under the umbrella of Labour and Immigration, were submitted last week to a conference in Sydney on public radio broadcasting and show bureaucratic thinking to have moved on a bit from there. FM broadcasting, said the committee, would offer an opportunity to set up ethnic broadcasting stations.

Certainly, the commercial stations and the ABC were not exactly rushing with enthusiasm into the new deregulated era, despite the size of potential audiences. In Australia's major cities one in ten of the population now speaks a European language other than English.

But the old nervousness and inbuilt distrust of the non-Anglo-Saxons still surfaced. The report said it did not want to see the facility abused "to pursue arguments and feuds." News scripts and even the commercials would therefore have to be fully translated into English before broadcasting. Somebody, somewhere, would supposedly have the job of censoring them.

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RADIO STATION MOVE

THE DAILY MIRROR
FRIDAY JULY 12, 1974
PAGE 15

MIGRANTS WANT THEIR OWN RADIO STATION

The Italian community is trying to get a radio station licence for the Sydney-Wollongong area.

A group representing the Italian community is organising a co-operative to run a station called Radio Italo-Australiana.

The head of the group, Mr Pino Bosi, said the station would be run on a non-profit basis and would take an independent political stance.

"Our aim is to provide an effective channel of communication for Italian and Australian welfare agencies and cultural groups," he said.

"An Italian radio station would help prevent a breakdown in communication between migrant children and their parents, and help the great number of Italian women who live a life of isolation as the martyrs of migration."

Mr Bosi said he was confident his group's plans would satisfy the Department of the Media.

The group includes churchmen and two politicians.

Mr Frank Calabro MLC and Mr George Paciullo MLA, members of opposing political parties, have joined forces in the project.

Mr Bosi said social problems among Italian migrants were the main reason the group decided to try to set up a radio station.

"It is wrong to imagine problems cease with the successful integration of a migrant community," Mr Bosi said.

MR BOSI: Leading Leichhardt businessmen have joined other members of the Italian community in making ...

ITALIANS TO BEGIN RADIO BROADCASTS

THE AUSTRALIAN
Friday August 9 1974—3

Broadcasting snake-up

Disband control board, says inquiry report

By GRAHAM WILLIAMS

CONTROL of Australia's radio and TV services should be transferred to new government authorities, the Federal Government's "think tank" — the Priorities Review Staff — has recommended.

The controversial Department of the Media would lose control of broadcasting in the shake-up. This would lop off one-third of its operations.

The Priorities Review Staff report on broadcasting also recommends that a third radio network for community radio stations be established apart from the commercial and ABC networks.

The 64-page report, commissioned by the Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, eight weeks ago, tries to eliminate existing fragmented controls over broadcasting.

It recommends that the Broadcasting Control Board be replaced with a new authority or else restructured to license all new community and commercial stations. The board at present can license only commercial operators. It also recommends that a five-man ministerial committee take control of all broadcasting policy.

ELIMINATING FEUDS

The recommendations are aimed at developing a system of planning, licensing and controlling the airwaves that will enable broadcasting to expand in harmony with the needs and aspirations of the community.

A key recommendation is that the proposed broadcasting control authority should be removed from the control of the Minister for the Media.

It recommends that it be placed under a "central, non-specialist" minister — either the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister or the Special Minister of State.

This is clearly aimed at eliminating the continual politicking and feuding between ministers over control of the airwaves.

Broadcasting powers are now fragmented between the Broadcasting Control Board, the Post Office and the Media Department.

The recommended five-man committee of ministers to control policy decisions on all broadcasting would include the minister in charge of the new board, and the ministers for Social Security, Urban and Regional Development, Media and the Postmaster-General.

This would weaken further the power of the Minister for the Media and his department.

The report envisages a multiplicity of community radio stations, some covering only 10 km range, others 30 km of high-powered stations covering entire cities.

These stations "would be fundamentally different from the existing radio stations which have been based on reaching the maximum number of people at the minimum of cost," the report says.

The community stations would be legally constituted so the communities they serve could participate in programming and share ownership and control.

Such stations may have financial or other support from the Government, but they must not be under government control.

SPONSORSHIP

The stations might be allowed to have commercial sponsorship as long as they do not make a profit.

Although the report is entitled Report on Radio, it has far-reaching implications for television because they are under the same controls.

In a barbed reference to the control board, the report says: "Bureaucratic agencies should be made to adapt to changing circumstances, to changing community aspirations and to changing government policies."

A new board would have to break away from the negative concept of control and adopt a more innovative approach to provide an atmosphere in which radio could flourish in Australia.

The PRS report also criticises the ABC national network because it is so "centralised and autocratic" and not open to the public to participate in decision-making.

The report discusses a proposal to abolish the ABC, but says that Australia needs a national broadcasting network because it has less history, greater distances and more cultural diversity than countries like Britain.

But because ABC stations had to cater for so many national interests they had no identity or character with which listeners could identify.

Any expansion of the ABC should aim to give stations identity by providing high fidelity stereophonic programs, removing school broadcasting from the airwaves during the day, providing tourist language programs, and public access broadcasting.

Observers say the plan makes sense because control of the airwaves is now fragmented between three departments and this has precluded the formation of any coherent, rational plan for broadcasting.

But the Minister for the Media, Senator D. McClelland, is expected to very strongly oppose any loss of control over broadcasting.

EDITORIAL — PAGE 8

'Government should not have control'

THE AUSTRALIAN Monday
September 2 1974—3

A PLAN prepared by the Federal Government's "think tank" — the Priorities Review Staff — conflicts with much of the Department of the Media's policy for setting up community radio stations.

The report says there are "political and social objections" to the media department's controlling public access radio stations.

By GRAHAM WILLIAMS

"Proposals for community stations should flow from the community and not be imposed by government or commercial planning," it says.

"Community stations should be so legally constituted that the community they purport to serve is entitled to participate in the programming and share ownership and control."

Rejecting the media department's proposal that "young-style" radio stations be established for 16 to 25-year-olds, it says: "No particular style of programming should be introduced by government fiat.

"It is desirable that programs and programming policies be developed in response to needs expressed by potential audiences in a participatory process."

The report envisages that low-power community stations may be established by community groups embracing church, welfare and sporting groups — or anybody who wants to set up a station.

These low-power stations would cover an area 2 to 10km (1½ to 6 miles) across. Also, some medium-power community stations (for a 10 to 20 km (6 to 15 miles) area) and a few high-power stations covering an entire city would be established.

WASTAGE

The high-power stations would probably cater for fine music, or educational or arts audiences.

The report also says it is essential that the licensing authority be separate from any body handing out funds.

"Promises of bureaucracy would ensure that a single funding agency would area the largest appropriation, so save and would consider it a duty to spend it," it says.

"This could lead to a waste of funds, a waste of the frequency and a distortion of local community priorities.

"Funding should come from outside the media generally — and this includes the Department of the Media.

"Nothing should inhibit funding of community stations from multiple sources in government," the report says. "We see spreading of funding as a positive value in enabling community broadcasters to be independent of particular interests and influence."

It says there is no doubt some community stations began with high hopes will end in disuse.

"But the Government should not shrink from that but should recognise that the best course is to terminate any funding or revoke the licence. The risk of failure is greater if a station is handed out to the community than if the community seeks it itself."

A key aspect of the report is its suggestions for an experimental phase of community broadcasting.

It recommends that a committee of five Cabinet ministers, charged with overall responsibility for broadcasting, establish an interim committee.

This committee, comprising community, media union, broadcasting and government representatives, would form the nucleus of the restructured control board.

The committee would allow experimental community stations to be established in the next few months.

These stations would "develop the skills of would-be broadcasters to understand what community radio can give them and what they can contribute to it."

On the licensing question, the report says when faced with competing claims for a community licence, the new licensing authority should establish social priorities.

Alternatively, several applicants might be persuaded to "join in applying for the one station, with time shared among them."

The report suggests paid officials be available as advisers to new community stations — but they should be paid by the station, not by the Government.

The report also calls for issue of any further commercial radio licences to be frozen for the time being.

SOME OF THE RECENT ARTICLES ON THE SUBJECT WHICH MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO YOU