250 WATTS AT 1490 Kc.

Don Lee BROADCASTING SYSTEM

KDB

Mutual BROADCASTING SYSTEM

RADIO SQUARE • SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA • TELEPHONE 4131

January 11, 1950

Kermit Geary
R.F.D. #2
Walnutport, Pa.

Dear Sir,

I am pleased to verify your reception of Radio Station KDB, in Santa Barbara, California. The exerpts you quote coincide with our engineering log exactly.

Ever since WWSW changed frequency I have been flooded with DX'ers reports. And all of them are from the same section of the country, Pennsylvania and New York State. Most probably the fellows who haven't had a crack at 1490nKC. DX for years are the ones who are hot on the frequency just now.

All of the letters quote KWIK as our interference, they are only about 80 miles from here. (With a couple of mountain ranges in between.) However here in Santa Barbara, when KDB signs off the air we never hear KWIK. It is usually KAFY in Bakersfield, KICO in El Centro, or KTYL in Mesa, Arizona.

You congratulate us on our fine transmitting equipment. Well, we have that, however, 250 watts is 250 watts. Now lets look at the antenna. About 2 years ago we changed location and antenna here. Previously we had been using a 20 year old flat-top "T" type antenna. With that antenna our local coverage was only fair. But, we got into New Zealand consistently. We have on file here hundreds of reports of reception from 'down under' with that antenna. That antenna threw out a lot of sky-wave. Now we are using a vertical tower 260 feet high. Our local coverage is superb, which after all is the object of a local station. But we don't put out all that sky-wave content any more. And the reports from New Zealand don't come in any more.

Moral: The more sky-wave an antenna puts out, i.e. the higher the angle of radiation, the happier the DX'ers, the poorer the local ground wave signal. The poorer the local ground wave signal, the unhappier, the local listeners, the local sponsers, and the local balance sheet.

The better the local coverage, which is ground wave radiation, the better the station is for its designated purpose- which is local coverage. The less sky-wave, the less DX signal.

When they invent an antenna whose radiation is solely ground wave, every broadcast station in the country will have it, and the broadcast-band DX'ers will go out of business. The point of all this discussion is, that you DX'ers are congratulating a broadcaster on a feature that is only a novelty at best. DX reports are of no technical or commercial interest. If you were to send us a report from Ojai, California, about 40 miles from here, and say that you had enjoyed a certain program, presented by so-and-so, and that the reception was excellent and the program so good you drove into Santa Barbara to do business with Mr. So-and-so, then, your letter would be framed and hailed all over the station.

You get the point, that I am trying to get across.

Actually I am delighted with our DX reports and am constantly amazed at the number of people who have the time to sit up until 3 or 4 in the morning, listening to the horrible mess of squeaks, tones, jive records, garble, gargle, that one hears on 1490 kc.

Wishing you the best of DX'ing in 1950.

Forrest T. Choate

Forrest T. Choate
Chief Engineer - KDB