



Herbert Hoover, Jr., W6ZH, president, ARRL, addressing the 10th Annual Banquet of the Quarter Century Wireless Association.

**Herbert C. Hoover Jr. W6ZH \*1903-1969\* - 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet QCWA Assoc. Washington, DC - 5 Feb 1966 – Son of our 31<sup>st</sup> President of the United States.**

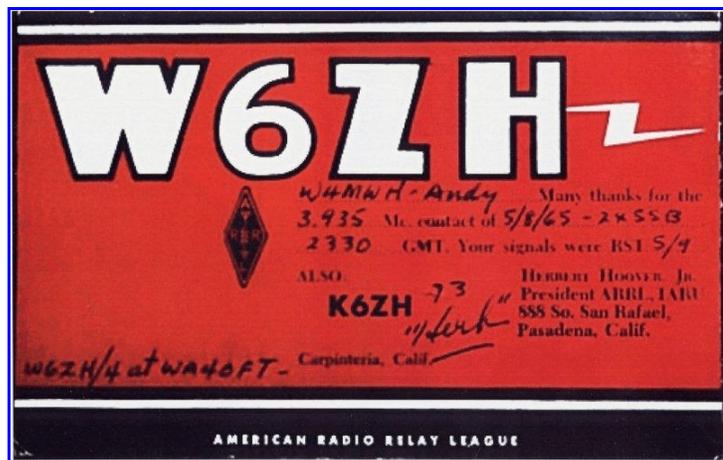
In Part; For more than 50 years, amateur radio has had a unique relationship with the government of our country. It was the determination that amateurs should have access to a limited but adequate share of the radio spectrum, under rules and regulations that would provide an incentive for voluntary public service, that originally made this activity possible - and has kept it going ever since. On the other hand, without that kind of support and confidence it has received from the responsible people in our government, there is not the slightest doubt in my mind amateur radio would not exist today - either in the USA or anywhere else in the globe.

When it got started some 50 years ago, amateur radio was a phenomenon that probably could have happened only in the USA. Most other countries in the world regarded it, at best, as a nuisance; and more often than not, with open hostility and suspicion. But our government fought for our amateurs over the years, not only because it was felt to be a valuable and legitimate activity in itself, but also because it seemed to fit in with our ideals of freedom –and the opportunity for the individual to be of voluntary service.

A great deal of credit must go to Hiram Percy Maxim, the founder of the League, for originally propounding this philosophy after WW1 – I know my father was deeply impressed by Mr. Maxim's vision of the future for amateur radio.

In 1927, at the International Conference of Washington, the question was hotly debated among the 80 participating nations as to whether or not amateurs should be allocated specific bands among the short waves they had discovered but a few years before. The USA viewpoint finally prevailed. At the concluding ceremonies my father, who was chairman of the American Delegation and also General Chairman of the Conference, had this to say in his closing speech; “At this point I should mention that this Conference for the first time has recognized the amateur as an important element in radio communication and has conferred upon him by international treaty certain definite wavelengths. The effects of these arrangements for the amateurs have been agreed by their representatives as increasing and assuring their opportunities to make contact with their companions overseas. To have given The Boys Of The World a status in international life by treaty is a fine recognition not only of the rights of all boys but a tribute to their service in developing the art.”

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Did Mr. Maxim or my father, or any of the others who so staunchly defended the existence of amateurs, have any real conception of what would take place in the future? I think they may have had an inkling, although their decision was undoubtedly based as much on faith in the future, as it was on any factual evidence of the moment.

But the **accomplishments of the boys** of whom my father spoke have far exceeded anything he – or anyone else might then have envisioned. Their accomplishments have tended to fall into two distinct categories. First, there are those which pertain to amateur radio per se, secondly, there are those of a more indirect nature, of which I will speak later.

In 1927 there were about 17,000 amateurs in the United States. Today there are over a quarter of a million. During the intervening period they have made great progress and in many instances they have pioneered the way in the technological revolution of communications.

Their technical and operating competence, their numerous contributions to the art and science of communications, their voluntary public service activities during emergencies and local disasters, their availability for National Defense, and their other activities have been told on many occasions.

In the past 50 years I estimate at least a million American youngsters have passed directly, or indirectly, through the ranks of amateur radio. These are the **“Boys”** my father referred to in 1927. What has happened to these youngsters?

Many of them, of course, have long since grown up – though quite a few are still active on the ham bands. But as they grew up they became the backbone of our telecommunications and electronics industries. Without them, I seriously doubt we would have gained the position of world leadership in electronics, communications, broadcasting, aeronautics, geophysics, space and so many other fields in which we now excel all other countries – both industrially and militarily. It has been said that amateur radio is one of our greatest secret weapons. And yet it has been out in full view, for all the world to see and hear for 50 years.

Lest this sound too far-fetched, let me ask where else a youngster of high school age – or earlier in many cases – could go through a similar process of natural selection for his life work? How else could he or she have its imagination better stimulated, or his scientific curiosity aroused? Where else, at an early age, is there a more unique opportunity to reconcile theory with practice, to build something and make it work? No wonder these youngsters go on to careers in science and engineering, never suspecting they had such an interest before. As a system for selecting and stimulating scientific aptitudes, it is second to none.

But what about the boys of tomorrow.....? Article continues. Excerpted from QST Journal Apr 66

Your author in prior statements said Secretary and then Pres Herbert Hoover was a friend to the amateur radio operator together with the ARRL's Lobby of Mr. Maxim was a potent force. The U.S.Navy fresh out of World War I did not want amateur radio to be a reality as they felt it would disrupt the radio bands. Hoover Jr's son Herbert III became W6APW and then W6ZH \*1927-2010\*

Long live the “Radio Boys Leave A Legacy!”

Robert Ballantine W8SU

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