

# For \$210, Radio "Ham" Talks With People in 73 Countries

For only \$210 Carlton Schaaf of 1133 Marshall avenue has been able to talk to people in 73 different countries.

One of a handful of amateur radio station operators in the city specializing in distance, the 28-year-old professional radio engineer was recently awarded the coveted WAC certificate of the International Radio Union for having communicated with persons in each of the six continental areas of the world.

He has talked with people with Arabic accents, those high on mountains and deep in jungles of South Africa, with Czechs behind the Russian Iron Curtain, with Germans suffering from an unbelievable shortage in radio equipment, and with people in more foreign countries than there are in the United Nations.

## Notes All Contacts

He spends time daily at his microphone and transmitter in the attic of his home, painstakingly noting every contact made by his station, W9QYH, and proudly tacking to the wall written acknowledgements from those with whom he has spoken.

Those with whom he talks are his friends. They became that way through an unwritten international kinship that springs up when two people with a hankering for radio can conquer thousands of miles of space.

This has even been extended to hapless Czechoslovakia, where he has talked with a shoe manufacturer in Prague. On his wall also are two acknowledgements from Soviet Russia. Unfortunately, they mean only that the two Russian amateurs heard him but didn't reply, or weren't allowed to.

Russia, Schaaf points out, is one of the areas where contact is hard to make because of that curtain. For example, no Russian amateur is registered in an international listing of all known hams and their addresses. Only a half dozen words appear under the title of Russia—"All communications are to be addressed to the Soviet Union Central Radio club, Box -N-88, Moscow, Russia."

Furthermore, he points out, the two acknowledgments were sent by the Russian government—which, like the U. S., licenses hams—and not by the individuals so that Stalin would know with whom his subjects have talked.

## Heard Korean Amateurs

Also not on his contacted list are Spain, Poland and the bulk of the Russian satellite nations. He has heard Korean amateurs but they couldn't hear him because of bad atmospheric conditions.

Schaaf has a 150 watt, 10 meter band station emitting skip waves. These differ from radio waves that follow the ground, on which commercial radio stations depend, in that they shoot into the atmosphere to heights of 40 miles. Then they bounce back to earth at an angle where they are picked up by amateurs thousands of miles away from where they originated.

Ground waves are completely dependable for known distances. Skip waves are not, since the distance you get from day to day depends on the condition of the atmosphere that controls the angle—the distance—of the bounce back to earth.

He started his hobby by accident 13 years ago. His present major pieces of equipment consists of a \$60 receiver, a \$150 transmitter and a \$10 tower standing 60 feet high, plus his extra parts, all war surplus.

His apparatus reminds the reporter of the government fumbling in selling a Texan intricate, surplus Air Force computers for a piddling sum and then buying them back at huge amounts. Schaaf says that certain radar tubes he buys as war surplus cost him 39 cents each, while the same newly-made tubes sell for \$12.50. Schaaf claims they are still available and that they are as good as the \$12.50 product.

In his 13 years he has talked with all kinds of people in odd situations. Among his acquaintances is a man who operates a jungle trading post miles from civilization in Basutoland, Union of South Africa.

## Talked With Missionaries

In Johannesburg, South Africa, he has talked with a construction worker building quarters for a diamond mine. From the heart of the Belgian Congo he has heard from missionaries trying to convert near savage natives and who mentioned lions slinking around their primitive villages.

From Aachen, Germany, he has received pictures of equipment a German national uses to communicate with Schaaf, a tiny 25 watt set. It was to him that Schaaf sent last year's copy of the international yearbook listing names and addresses of amateur operators. The German told him that only one copy of the book existed in his city of 150,000 persons.

In the vast, romantic oil fields of Saudi Arabia Schaaf has talked with American troops. From old friend Sam Polakow, at Port Elizabeth in South Africa, he received a birthday card. With Australians he has discussed sheep raising.

With the exception of Spain and Russia all the major nations are on his list, France, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Scotland, Norway, Japan, and of course, England. He is also proud of talking with the tiny country of Liechtenstein, smuggled in between Switzerland, Germany and France, which has no amateurs of her own but allows the Swiss to operate from there.

With Britain he has had memorable contacts. While talking with Kent, England, Schaaf was told that a war bride from Kent was living at Suamico. Schaaf arranged to have the war bride talk to her mother several days later.

Schaaf believes that the main reason for the continued existence of ham operators is for emergency use, particularly now that the United States faces the possibility of being bombed.

## Always Are Monitored

In the last war, when that chance didn't exist to the extent it does today, the government closed all ham stations to prevent smuggling of information. This time, he says, there is talk of allowing them to operate but under increased supervision and monitoring. Monitoring has always existed.



P-6 PHOTO

In his 13 years of operating a short wave set, Carlton Schaaf, 1133 Marshall avenue, above, has talked with people in 73 countries. He recently was awarded a certificate from the International Radio Union for having communicated with persons in each of the six continental areas of the world.

Their value in the event of attack would be tremendous, Schaaf points out. Assuming atom bombs knocked out the heart of Chicago, disrupting every known means of public communication, amateurs could still get through. If necessary they could use a round-about route; from Chicago's suburbs to Los Angeles; from Los Angeles to some city near Chicago from which help could come.

It has happened already. Schaaf recalls that an amateur with a mobile set in his car was snowed-in, along with a dozen other unfortunates, on the outskirts of Albuquerque. His 10-meter set couldn't make a direct call to that city. The ham called an Ohio amateur and had him relay the information in a matter of minutes to Albuquerque.

Like most avid hams Schaaf too has a battery powered mobile set in his car although it operates only on 30 watts compared to the 150 in his home. This, he explains, increases the worth of the hams during crisis.