

# PRESSTOP!

## FCC May Ban Police, Fire, Medical Monitoring!

The Federal Communications Commission has begun a formal inquiry into the feasibility of removing police, fire and emergency medical frequencies from all scanners and amateur transceivers.

Introduced by attorney Eric Malinen, the measure was endorsed and inquiry approved unanimously by FCC commissioners. The Commission is now polling manufacturers of scanning receivers as to the cost of excluding public safety frequencies.

### Transistor Inventor Dead

John Bardeen, a co-inventor of the transistor, has died at the age of 82. Bardeen, along with two other scientists, Walter Brattain and William P. Shockley, first announced their discovery in 1948. Its first commercial application was in telephone switching equipment.

The invention literally transformed the electronics industry, pushing aside bulky and inefficient vacuum tubes and making portable radios, computers and appliances -- and even the space program possible.

Bardeen, who received the Nobel Prize for his invention, once remarked, "I knew the transistor was important, but I never foresaw the revolution in electronics it would bring."

### Packet on MIR

Packet radio communications have been carried out between the Soviet Mir space station and many ground operators on 145.50 MHz. Callsigns of U2MIR and U2MIR-1 were used.

Mir now has a fully operational packet radio bulletin board system, complete with standard PBBS command system capable of supporting mail exchanges between users as well as disseminating news bulletins to all users of the system.

### Tag That Baby

Retailers use them to keep shoplifters from walking off with their merchandise. Now hospitals are using electronic security devices to protect a far more precious commodity: newborn babies.

Some hospitals even sew or tape the sensors inside diapers to prevent kidnappings, hospital officials say.

The security system is almost identical to those used in retail stores where merchandise is tagged with an electronic sensor that triggers an alarm when passed through a sensor at the exit.

"You have something you want to protect, so you put a sensor on it," said Sam Shirley of the Deerfield Beach, Florida-based Sensormatic Electronic corp. "In this case, it's babies you want to protect."

Ninety-three infants were kidnapped from American hospitals from 1983 through October of 1990, say officials. A baby sensor system costs \$40,000 to install. Says Joseph Baccile, director security at Abington Memorial Hospital in suburban Philadelphia, "It's better to be safe than sorry."

### Viking Founder Dies at 91

Edgar F. Johnson, 91, the founder of the E.F. Johnson Company, has died of cancer. Johnson, known as "a modest man from poor beginnings," founded E.F. Johnson Co. in 1923. His radios, the Johnson Viking, Valiant and other transmitters, were real workhorses.

Before beginning the process of selling rigs to hams, Johnson concentrated on marketing components to radio stations and amateur radio operators and listeners. During World War II, his company manufactured components and transmitters for the military.

By 1949, E.F. Johnson was the first company to build and sell ham radio transmitters. From 1959 until 1979, it led the nation in CB products.

When the popularity of CB faded in the late 70s, E.F. Johnson turned to manufacturing parts for cellular phones. The company later merged with Western Union and was sold to DEI Corp.

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