

Artists Ask a 'Music Trust' Inquiry

By Paul V. Beckley

A group of eminent songwriters, playwrights, actresses, cartoonists and novelists joined with the Songwriters' Protective Association yesterday in a criticism of radio and television broadcasters' influence on the determination of what music the public can hear.

Oscar Hammerstein 2d said broadcasters not only own two of the largest recording companies (RCA-Victor and Columbia Records) but by acquiring control through Broadcast Music, Inc., of 2,000 of the less than

3,000 music publishing firms in the country were "in a position to favor songs in whose popularity they have a financial interest."

The group, which included Paddy Chayevsky, Helen Hayes, Rex Stout, W. C. Handy, Al Capp and Arthur Schwartz, expressed enthusiasm over the report issued on Sunday in Washington by the anti-trust subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee concerning the activities of broadcasters in the music field.

The committee did not name

B. M. I. in its report but found it was "of importance" for the Justice Department to investigate all phases of the music field "to determine whether the anti-trust laws have been or are being violated."

Republican members of the subcommittee added views of their own, pointing out that "we cannot and should not take any action or say anything which will in any way prejudice any party" in the \$150,000,000 civil anti-trust suit now pending against the broadcasters and B. M. I. The Republicans are

Reps. Kenneth B. Keating, N. Y., William M. McCulloch, Ohio, and William E. Miller, N. Y. The suit was filed in 1953 by a group of composers, members of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

A spokesman for B. M. I. said yesterday that although officials of that organization do not endorse anything in the body of the Congressional report, they were content with the propriety of the committee's conclusions and the minority views of the three Republican members.



Herald Tribune photo by Morris Warman

CRITICIZE BROADCASTERS' INFLUENCE—Abe Burrows, at the piano, with, standing left to right: Rex Stout, Otto A. Harbach, Al Capp and Oscar Hammerstein 2d, at the Waldorf-Astoria yesterday.