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APCO members built the first land mobile two-way radios and systems. Industry and the FCC stepped in. The battle for spectrum was joined, and technology forced changes in concepts and planning. A more effective APCO organization was necessary. State and local government officials began clamoring for radios in other of their functions.

APCO had to be more representative. The GREAT BATTLE for changing the name and objectives of the Association began.

Friends screamed at friends. States fumed at states, and officials wrung their hands.

The angels in blue threatened everybody who didn't wear a shield pinned to a uniform. It was simply the end of the world. APCO was doomed.

When need is apparent, order prevails. Active membership requirements were amended at a national Conference, and the name was changed from "Police" to "Public Safety." The name was changed back to "Police" at the very next year's Conference. Then, the name was changed back to "Public Safety" again at the following year's Conference. This time it stuck. How senseless, and yet how so necessarily evolutionary, it all seems now. Three years of debate. All done in good faith.

Then came the need for a fixed national office. Another great battle was joined. The office was finally started. How senseless, too, was this argument when viewed from this date. Again, it was all done in good faith. Argument helps restate the problem and points to better means.

ASAE now says, hey, APCO members, you've done well in the past, but the future is upon you. It's time you moved on again. Those footsteps you hear coming up from the rear will trample you if you don't keep moving. You're now preparing to be a world player. You've got to prove that you're going to continue to be competent in meeting fast-moving challenges at home. What better way is there to prove that you can do as well anywhere?

The only purpose of this little history lesson is to prepare you for the fact that you're not the only APCO member who has faced such important decisions.

There's a message that shines steadfastly through those past tumultuous days. Your predecessors, no matter their personal feelings, listened, read and took part.

They made difficult decisions based on facts rather than on emotions.

You're going to be getting such facts in your own time. As the months pass, you, yourself,

are going to be making APCO history. You're going to do that by carefully considering all the information you'll be reading in the APCO Bulletin. There will be debates you'll take part in at Chapter, Regional and Annual Conferences.

Isn't that something?! Make your plans now to attend coming APCO functions. This next year will be so interesting that APCO meeting attendance probably will double. In the meantime, watch the Bulletin.

Isn't it exciting?!

**Read, listen and attend.**

***You're a player!*** ■

# Invitation to Change

J. Rhett McMillian Jr. has a long, distinguished involvement with APCO, serving as its President in 1965-66 while the communications director with the law enforcement branch of Florida's Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and other agencies. He retired in 1970 to become APCO's first Executive Director and to establish a permanent Association office in New Smyrna Beach, Florida, his home. While APCO President, he also served as APCO Bulletin editor. An accomplished author, he wrote "The Primer of Public Safety Telecommunication Systems," an easy-to-understand, non-technical book. He now is serving on the APCO Strategic Planning Committee.

