

# Ross Reports ON TELEVISION

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EDITOR: Jerry Leichter  
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BUS MGR: Marjorie Oxley

PRODUCTION • PROGRAMMING • TALENT

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UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

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WEEKLY REPORT

## THIS WEEK -- NETWORK DEBUTS & HIGHLIGHTS

### Wednesday(20)

ABC- 8:30-9pm EST; DEBUT; Mr. Citizen; from WABC-TV(NY), 36 stations live, 44 kinc. Sponsor- Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co (L & M Filter Cigarettes) thru Cunningham & Walsh, Inc(NY); Acct Exec- Fred H. Walsh; Agcy Superv- Norman Gort; Commls- On Film. Pkgr- Cunningham & Walsh, Inc(NY); Prod- Edward A. Byron; Assoc Prod- Marx B. Loeb; Dir- Charles Tate; Editor- Peter McGovern; Reporter- Leonard Safir; Head Researcher- Mary Lee Fletcher; Music Dir- John Gart; Writers- Robert J. Shaw, Howard Rodman, alternate weeks; Asst to Prod & Casting- Gwen Campbell (at Byron office, 8 E 52 St). Allyn Edwards is host and narrator for this live series of dramatizations of true stories of people who have helped their fellow men, either by heroism or inspiration, without thought of themselves. The individual whose story is re-enacted appears on the program and receives a citation from a noted public figure who appears as a guest. The program replaces the New Stu Erwin Show for the sponsor; last show April 13.

### Thursday(21)

ABC- 7:30-8pm EST; SPECIAL; Eddie Fisher Salutes Young America; from WFIL(Phila), no. of stations indefinite. Sponsor- General Mills (Institutional) thru Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, Inc(NY); Acct Exec- Joseph Holmes; Agcy Superv- Dave Nyren. Pkgr- Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, Inc(NY); Exec Prod- Dave Nyren; Prod & Dir- Herb Sussan; Music Dir- Axel Stordahl; Writer- Gordon Auchincloss. Eddie Fisher is m.c. for a variety show at the Bellevue Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia. John Daly will announce the Betty Crocker All-American Homemaker of Tomorrow, from among 48 state winners at a banquet at the hotel. Program replaces The Lone Ranger for the sponsor in this time spot, one time only.

### Sunday(24) - DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS

NBC- 4-4:30 EDT; RETURN; Comment; from WRCA-TV(NY) & WRC-TV(Wash), to the net. Sustaining. Pkgr- NBC Public Affairs; Superv- William R. McAndrew; Dirs- Julian Goodman(Wash), Ann Gillis(NY). News documentary with staff commentators and overseas correspondents interpreting international events. The program will be presented again on May 8, June 5 and June 19. Presented alternately in this time spot will be Background, the Elder Wise Men filmed conversations and NBC Opera Theatre (May 15).

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THIS WEEK

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Service includes: Unlimited telephone and mail information service, except research; weekly reports on current television production, programming; talent movements; annual industry directories; periodic reports on special aspects of television; and The Television Index card file.

OTHER NETWORK CHANGES & ADDITIONS

CBS- Lassie (Sun, 7-7:30pm EST) Re-runs of films started March 13. (Only 26 films were produced for the first season's series).

The Search (Sun, 4:30-5pm EDT) Last program in series, April 24; titled "The Search Sums Up," including highlight excerpts from previous programs.

NBC- Today (Mon thru Fri, 7-9am all zones) Originates from Detroit, April 18-22.

Home (Mon thru Fri, 11am-12noon EST) Originates from Washington, April 18-22.

The Big Story (Fri, 9-9:30pm EST) Alan Cooke added as director, alternating with David Rich, effective April 22.

NEW NETWORK SPONSORSHIPS

BROWN & WILLIAMSON TOBACCO CORP (Viceroy Cigarettes) thru Ted Bates & Co., Inc(NY) is sponsoring the Friday, 2-2:15pm segments, alternate weeks, of the Robert Q. Lewis Show (Mon thru Fri, 2-2:30pm EST) over CBS, effective April 15. It also sponsored the segment on April 8, but alternate week sponsorship is effective April 15.

LOCAL STATION ACTIVITY

WATV(Ch 13) - Schedule changes: Barry Gray and Wilson, Glickman and Lee, both Mon thru Fri programs scheduled to debut April 11, cancelled (See page 39).  
Newark, NJ

WATV - Deutsche Fernsehstunde; DEBUT April 16; Sat, 8-8:30pm EST. No production info available. German-American show featuring German songs and news, and interviews with German-American personalities. Herbert Oettgen is m.c.

WATV - La Revista Hispana (The Spanish Revue); DEBUT April 16; Sat, 10-11pm first week, then 9-10pm EST. No production info available. Perucho Iroguyen and Carmen Correa are hosts for the show which features a half-hour live situation comedy, preceded by three five-minute segments of news, features and interviews, and followed by segments of the same types.

WNAC-TV(Ch 7)- 59th Annual B. A. A. Marathon; SPECIAL April 19; Tue, 2-2:30pm approx. Boston Sponsor- Carling Brewing Co thru Harold Cabot & Co, Inc(Boston). Telecast of the last portion of the famed Boston marathon, from Hopkinton to Boston, with three camera positions along the end of the run.

WLW-T(Ch 5) - Paul Dixon Show; STATION DEBUT April 18; Mon thru Fri, 3-3:30pm first Cincinnati week, then 3-4pm with feed to WLW-D(Dayton) and WLW-C(Columbus). Participations. Paul Dixon returns to Cincinnati with his music and pantomime show, featuring Sis Camp. He originally developed his program in Cincinnati over station WCPO-TV and was on the ABC and then the Du Mont network from Cincinnati. The program origination moved to New York Oct 13, 1954, and went off after the April 8, 1955 program. WLW-T carried the Du Mont feed starting this January.

KTLA(Ch 5) - Milady; DEBUT April 11; Mon thru Fri, 3:30-4pm PST. Participations. Los Angeles Dorothy Gardiner is hostess for the program, presenting tips on home-making, women's interest info and interviews. Tuesday and Thursday segments feature Corris Guy with her "Tricks and Treats" cooking comment and demonstrations.

KTLA - Playcrafters Club; FORMAT & SCHEDULE CHANGE April 16; Sat, 11-11:30am. Program was previously seen Mon thru Fri, 4-4:30pm. Arnold Pike now acts as host and coordinator, introducing the various guests.

LOCAL FILM SERIES -- DEBUTS & RE-RUNS

(New York, Chicago & Los Angeles)

<u>STA &amp; CHAN</u>	<u>SERIES TITLE &amp; DISTRIB</u>	<u>SPONSOR &amp; AGENCY</u>	<u>START DATE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>
<u>New York</u>					
WABC(7)	*"Soldiers of Fortune" (MCA- Revue - correction of p. 39 listing)	-Seven-Up Co thru J. Walter Thompson Co.	4/9	Sat	6-6:30pm
WABC(7)	#"Crown Theatre" (CBS Film Sales)	-Participations	3/14	Mon	9-9:30pm
WABC(7)	#"15 Minutes from Hollywood" (MCA - same as Playhouse 15)	-Participations	3/14	Mon thru Fri	6:30-6:45pm
WABC(7)	#"The Two-Story Hour" (MCA half-hour packages)	-Participations	4/11	Mon thru Fri	9-9:55am
WABC(7)	*"The Eddie Cantor Show" (Ziv)	-P. Ballantine thru Wm Esty	4/11	Mon	10-10:30pm (was seen Wednesdays)
WCBS(2)	*"Buffalo Bill, Jr" (Leo Burnett)	-Mars, Inc(Milky Way) thru Leo Burnett, Inc.	3/26	Sat	5-5:30pm
WABD(5)	*"The Ames Brothers" (MCA-Revue)	-Royal Crown Bottling Co of Newark thru BBD&O	4/1	Fri	6:30-6:45pm
WRCA(4)	*"Science Fiction Theatre" (Ziv)	-Emerson Drug Co(Bromo Seltzer) thru Lennen & Newell	4/5	Tue	7-7:30pm
WRCA(4)	*"Britannica Junior Theatre" (Encyclopedia Britannica)	-Open	4/17	Sun	9-10am
WOR(9)	*"TV Baseball Hall of Fame" (Flamingo Films)	-Open	4/9		pre-baseball games quarter-hour
WOR(9)	*"Adventures in Sports" (Sterling)	-Open	4/9		post-baseball game quarter-hour
WPIX(11)	#"Clubhouse Gang Comedies" (Interstate)	-Participations	4/9	Sat	6:30-7pm
WPIX(11)	*"The Christopher Half Hour" (The Christophers)	-Sustaining	4/17	Sun	10:30-11am (in addition to M thru F show)
<u>Chicago</u>					
WNBQ(5)	*"Science Fiction Theatre" (Ziv)	-Emerson Drug (Bromo Seltzer) thru Lennen & Newell	4/2	Sat	10:30-11pm
WNBQ(5)	*"TV Baseball Hall of Fame" (Flamingo Films)	-Nelson Chevrolet, Inc thru Gordon Best Co	4/16	Sat	1-1:30pm
<u>Los Angeles</u>					
KABC(7)	*"TV Baseball Hall of Fame" (Flamingo Films)	-Open	4/18	Mon	10:45-11pm
KXT(2)	#"The Range Rider" (CBS Film Sales)	-Participations	4/4	Mon thru Fri	5:50-6:20pm
KTLA(5)	#"Pride of the Family" (MCA)	-Zandt Carpet Co	3/11	Fri	7:30-8pm
KTLA(5)	#"Public Prosecutor" (George Bagnall)	-Open	4/12	Tue	7:30-7:45pm
KTLA(5)	#"Conspiracy" (Re-runs of "Foreign Intrigue" - Official)	-Open	4/10	Sun	10-10:30pm
KTLA(5)	*"Cartoon Carousel" (Guild-Looney Tune Library)	-Participations	4/11	Mon thru Fri	4-5:30pm
KTTV(11)	#"Ramar of the Jungle" (TPA)	-Quaker City Choc & Confec Co (Good and Plenty) thru Adrian Bauer(Phila) and Schwinn Bicycles thru Ted Fenberg(Chi)	3/27	Sun	6-6:30pm (Time and sponsor changes)
KTTV(11)	*"Buffalo Bill, Jr" Leo Burnett )	-Mars, Inc(Milky Way) thru Leo Burnett Co., Inc(Chi)	3/26	Sat	5:30-6pm
KTTV(11)	*"Science Fiction Theatre" (Ziv)	-Olympia Brewing Co thru Botsford and Pictsweet Foods thru Brisacher, Wheeler	4/12	Tue	9:30-10pm
KTTV(11)	*"Sports Mirror" (George Bagnall)	-Seven-Up Bottling Co of L.A.	4/2	Sat	4:45-5pm
KTTV(11)	#"The Lone Wolf" (MCA)	-Open	3/14	Mon	10-10:30pm (was across-the-board)

CODE: \*First run in market #Re-runs in market "Open" - avail for full or part sponsor





THURSDAY APRIL 21 (Cont'd)  
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|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| JUSTICE<br>(Gary Merrill)               | NBC 8:30  | <u>A Shot in the Dark</u> - (O) by Art Wallace; with Vanessa Brown, John Cassavetes, Joe DeSantis, others to be announced; (SD)                                                                                                                                 |
| IMAX!<br>William Lundigan)              | CBS 8:30  | <u>Flight 951</u> - (O) by Milton Geiger; with Paul Douglas, Barbara Britton, Irene Hervey, Cathy O'Donnell; (SD, FROM H'D)                                                                                                                                     |
| STAR TONIGHT                            | ABC 9pm   | <u>The Giants' Stair</u> - (O) by Wilbur Daniel Steele, (A)-(SW); with Bruce Gordon, Ruth White, Laurinda Barrett; (SD) by Joel O'Brien                                                                                                                         |
| <u>Dragnet</u> (Jack Webb)              | NEC 9pm   | regulars & Olan Soule, Rosemary Day, Jimmy Ogg, Douglas Evans, James Stone; (SW & SD)                                                                                                                                                                           |
| FORD'S THEATRE                          | AEC 9:30  | <u>Thunder Rock</u> - (O) by Robert Ardrey, (A) by Jere Daniel; with John Earagrey, George Voskovec, Alexander Scourby, Sally Chamberlin, June Dayton, Dan Morgan, Conrad Bain, Joe Maross                                                                      |
| <u>Ford Theatre</u>                     | NBC 9:30  | <u>Sunday Mourn</u> - (O) by Roger West, (A) by Jerry Sackheim, George W. George, George F. Slavin; with Marilyn Maxwell, Wallace Ford, John Bromfield, Percy Helton, Tyler McVey, Brian Keith; (SD)                                                            |
| <u>Public Defender</u><br>(Fred Hadley) | CBS 10pm  | <u>A Pair of Gloves</u> - (O) by Jerry D. Lewis; with Bill Goodwin, William Boyett, Aline Towne, John Bryant, Patricia Burke, Russell Gaige, David Bruce, Bill Ealdwin; (SD)                                                                                    |
| LUX VIDEO THEATRE<br>(James Mason)      | NBC 10pm  | <u>An Act of Murder</u> - (O) by Ernst Lothar (from novel <u>The Mills of God</u> ), screenplay by Michael Blankford & Robert Thoren, TV (A) by Sanford Barnett; with Thomas Mitchell, Ann Harding Ray Danton, Dayton Lumms, Howard St. John, Ruth Warren; (SD) |
| <u>Willy</u><br>(June Havoc)            | CBS 10:30 | <u>Willy and the Counterfeiters</u> - with regulars & Paul E. Burns Madge Black, Noel Drayton, Barbara Morrison; (SD)                                                                                                                                           |

FRIDAY APRIL 22  
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<u>Adventures of Rintintin</u> (Lee Aaker)	ABC 7:30	<u>R. T. T. &amp; the Dead Man's Gold</u> - (O) by Douglas Heyes & Eve O'Hara; with regulars & Millie Doff, Lane Bradford, Terry Frost, Tom London, John Hart; (SD)
<u>Topper</u> (A. Jeffreys)	CBS 8:30	<u>Topper's Uranium Pile</u> - with regulars; (SW & SD)
THE BIG STORY (Norman Rose)	NEC 9pm	<u>Allen Cowperthwaite, Helena, Montana Independent Record</u> - (O) by Max Ehrlich; with Murray Hamilton, Jerry Stiller, Michael Conrad, Steve Gravers, Fred Sadoff, Joan Chambers, Frank Overton, William Forrester; (SD) by Alan Cooke, new alternate director effective this date
<u>Schlitz Playhouse</u>	CBS 9pm	<u>Who's the Blonde?</u> - (O) by John MacDonald, (A) by Jack Patrick, Don Taylor, Maxine Cooper, Robert Cornthwaite, Alexander Campbell, Thom Conroy, Robert Williams, Joy Lansing, Len Hendry; (SD) by Jus Addiss
<u>The Vise</u> (Ron Randell)	ABC 9:30	<u>The Schemer</u> - with Brian Smith, Linden Travers, Brian Worth, Donald Gray; (SW & SD)

MULTIPLE AND ACROSS-THE-BOARD SHOWS FRIDAY APRIL 15 THRU FRIDAY APRIL 22  
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|                                                                           |            |                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MORNING SHOW<br>WITH JACK PAAR                                            | CBS 7am    | M - Ken Cord (M), Cliff Miller (double talk); Thu - Hermione Gingold (C)                                                                                                 |
| GEORGE SKINNER                                                            | WCBS 9am   | Thu - Ruth Manecke (animals), Chick Darrow (balloons)                                                                                                                    |
| GARRY MOORE<br>(Durward Kirby)                                            | CBS 10am   | W - Jimmy Jeffries (C); Thu - Charlotte Rae (C); F - "Senator" Clarke Crandall, The Florida Trio (variety)                                                               |
| ARTHUR GODFREY TIME                                                       | CBS 10:30  | M - James Stewart                                                                                                                                                        |
| WAY OF THE WORLD<br>(Gloria Louis)                                        | NBC 10:30  | M thru F (5 episodes) - (O) by Harry W. Junkin; with Margaret Hayes, Natalie Trundy, Whitfield Connor, Leora Thatcher, Judson Reese, Jock MacGregor, Loren Gilbert; (SD) |
| ENTERTAINMENT                                                             | WABC 12:30 | Dori Brooks (S) & regulars M thru F                                                                                                                                      |
| HAWKINS FALLS                                                             | NBC 4pm    | M thru F - add regular: Bill Adler; (SW & SD, FROM CHICAGO)                                                                                                              |
| WORLD OF MR. SWEENEY<br>(Charlie Ruggles,<br>Eileen Wagner, Glenn Walken) | NBC 4:30   | regulars &: M - Jocelyn Brando, Jeff Harris; Tu - Jean Cleveland, Janet Fox, Jimmy Little; Thu - Joe E. Jarks; F - Ann Thomas, Roy Johnson, Jim Milhollin; (SW & SD)     |
| ROSS REPORTS - 4/17/55 - Page C                                           |            | TALENT SHOWSHEET (more)                                                                                                                                                  |



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VOLUME 7 NUMBER 16 A

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MID-WEEK SPECIAL

*49 Fine Arts*  
APR 25 1955

NEWS - POSSIBILITIES - COMMENT

Du Mont's announcement last week of its new Electronicam, a dual-purpose live television and motion picture camera using the same lens system, following the earlier announcement in Hollywood of a similar development by Al Simon of McCadden Productions, was cued to the fact that it may revitalize network programming, or at least create a new avenue for Du Mont to remain as the fourth effective television network. If Du Mont's programming ideas for the future, based on the full use of its new equipment, prove out then it would not be a "fourth" interconnected net, but a "first" time-connected network. It would follow current network practice in booking time on stations from a network office for spot placement of network films for a sponsor, the delayed play dates. The new cameras may pose future problems, but under a current agreement between AFTRA and SAG, as long as the film is a record of a live program, or a program shot continuously without extra footage or special editing, AFTRA would be the union in control of actors' agreements. If the cameras were used to produce a full film program photographed over a period of time, in takes or for integration with other footage, then SAG would be the vital union. The SAG-AFTRA agreement does not actually concern the new cameras, but was worked out some time ago covering cases relating to kinescopes and programs like You Bet Your Life, which is a television show recorded on film.

Because of heightened interest on the part of movie makers and others in the live one-hour drama series, it might be worth noting that the Robert Montgomery production for May 2, "Bella Fleace Gave a Party," is expected by the Montgomery staff to be exceptionally good. Fay Bainter is starring and script is by Doria Follett from Evelyn Waugh's original.....Wally Cox will still be playing "Mr. Peepers" when his program winds up its current season, although plans call for the final program or programs to be in the form of a revue with possible guest stars playing in sketches.....Caesar's Hour goes off for the summer after June 20, with the summer replacement, a Caesar (Shelllic Corp.) package, starting July 4. Phil Foster has been signed as the lead, with Bill Hayes and Bobby Sherwood under consideration as male support. The femme side is still in the air. The program will be either in vignette form or will have a semblance of a running story. Charles Andrews will head the staff of writers, which may include younger, new writers, depending on the format.....Maurice Evans' once-a-month Sunday series for Hallmark in the fall will cost less over the season than the current weekly Hall of Fame programs and will obviously attract more critical notice since any Evans production is newsworthy, whether on the stage or on television.

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(MORE)

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Future subs for Martha Scott as narrator on Modern Romances until the star returns from Hollywood and "The Ten Commandments," will be Kathi Norris, April 25-29; Margaret Hayes, May 2-6; and Dorothy Hart, May 9-13. Madge Evans began the rotation last week and Jayno Meadows is doing current episodes.....CBS Chicago has signed jockey Howard Miller to an exclusive three-year contract, effective July 18 when he winds up his NBC commitments. Miller would work both TV and radio under the agreement, including one CBS net radio program and four hours of television over WBBM-TV, at a salary minimum of \$4,000 weekly. The Wrigley Company will sponsor the radio show, but the television program format or frequency is still undecided. Miller currently stars on a Monday thru Friday program, Close Up, over WNBQ, which also stars his wife, singer June Valli. Miller will also make an audition film within the next few weeks which would be for the CBS TV net.....Tom Corbett, Space Cadet, NBC Saturday morning feature, loses Kraft Foods as a sponsor after June 25, with the kid program's future status indefinite after the date.....Big Story (NBC, Fri, 9-9:30 pm) goes off for summer hiatus after July 8 and returns Sept 9. Its summer replacement will be The Best in Mystery, the same as last summer, made up of re-run films. from MCA-TV, mainly from the current Pepsi Cola Playhouse series.

Charles Collingwood will be narrator for Conquest of the Air, the new half-hour film series being produced by CBS with the cooperation of the Air Force and other branches of the government for fall scheduling. Producer Perry Wolff is writing many of the scripts which provide the continuity for the film clips being culled from the archives. Collingwood's footage won't be shot for several months. The 26-part series will probably debut in September as part of CBS's Sunday afternoon public service spread.....Over 100 stations are already on the list to use Life Magazine's new series of five-minute documentary films, America's Arts and Skills, each scheduled to be shown at approximately six-week intervals, coinciding with related features in the magazine. The series traces the nation's culture through eight historical periods, with the first, illustrating Colonial contributions, released for station viewing last Wednesday. Chet Burger, of Ruder & Finn Associates, New York public relations firm, is adviser and TV promotion consultant on the films, which are written by Life staffers and distributed by Life, Inc. The films are free, on request (contact: Shirley Potash, Life, Inc., 9 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20. JU 6-1212).

Barry, Enright & Friendly is reported to be winding up interior shooting in New York for a "sneak" pilot for an underwater series made in Florida, starring Jerome Courtland. The firm will make another pilot in New York soon, based on material approved by the National Assn for Mental Health; a case history of a psychotic with the script by Reginald Rose and possibly directed by Sidney Lumet.....The Loretta Young Show (NBC, Sun, 10-10:30pm) resumes filming in July for its fall series. The series will show three repeat films during May. The May 15 program time will be preempted for a special and May 29 may be the last showing of the season before hiatus. Cameo Theatre, produced and directed live by Albert McCleery in Hollywood, will probably be the summer replacement for the Young series. McCleery originally produced a live series in New York under the same name in 1950 and 1951, working close up and with a minimum of sets. Ethel Frank is script editor for the new summer series, at NBC in New York, 1270 Sixth Ave. The market is open for a wide range of material; stories with upbeat endings.....Kraft Television Theatre will present "A Seacoast in Bohemia" in a new production on April 27, director Fielder Cook's last program before he leaves to direct the "Patterns" movie on the coast. "Seacoast" was originally presented on Kraft on June 6, 1951, the first play written by Ben Radin for television. The new production will star Ray Rhodes, who will repeat his performance in the leading role in the original when he made his acting debut as Ray Rizzo. William Graham moves over from Pond's Theatre to Kraft to replace Cook as an alternating producer-director for the duration of his leave. No replacement has been set for Graham.

Studio One Summer Theatre returns to CBS on June 20 for 13 weeks, with Alex March returning as producer; doing new scripts, no re-runs of winter hits. Casting is by March through Laim Dunn of CBS casting. March is also acting as script editor 's at 524 West 57th St., New York 19. JU 6-6000, Exts. 345, 346). Direction will be by CBS staffers. Some of the scripts already set are "The Terrible Day," an original by Carey Wilber; "The Voyage Inheritance," an adaptation by Michael Dyne of a Granville Barker original; "For the Defense," an original by George Bellak; and a repeat of "Julius Caesar," a Leo Penn adaptation originally presented in 1950. As in the past, Betty Furness will do the commercials on the first three or four programs and then be replaced for the summer by June Graham.....Hollywood director William Castle is concluding negotiations with Doubleday & Co., Inc., to use "Crime Club" for the name of a new TV series. The agreement would give him first crack at books or stories published by Doubleday as "Crime Club" mysteries, but not a blanket right to the publisher's suspense and crime list.....The current run on adventure and military stories continues with NBC reportedly sponsoring a pilot for a series to be called Submarine, to be produced by John Florea from a pilot script by Milton Geiger. Pending Navy approval, plans call for using naval facilities at San Diego for the primary background.....The Medic TV Productions staff, Frank LaTourette, writer James Moser and Lonnie D'Orsa, form another group prepping an aviation series, tentatively called Flight. (Warner Bros. Sunset Productions recently announced Men of the Skies as its first TV series).....U.M. & M.'s new police series, based on the files of the New Orleans Police Dept, Official Files, N.O.P.D., debuts over WDSU-TV (N.O.) tonight and will be sponsored in about 15 markets by a southern ice cream distributor. Packager is listed as Motion Picture Advertising Service, one of the firms making up U.M. & M. Films were produced by Victor Stoloff and others and were directed by various west coast directors. Stoloff had originally announced the series over a year ago about the time he was in pre-production planning on another about the Canadian Mounties, both apparently shelved for his motion picture activities.

CBS has acquired first purchase rights to new television plays by Rod Serling, following a similar agreement with Reginald Rose. (Serling has one of the most misspelled names in the trade with every proof reader trying to insert a "t" where it doesn't belong. Serling (cq).).....Although Arthur Godfrey dropped nine from his staff, including three of his four writers, with the explanatory phrase that "no radio or television program can endure unless it can sustain interest despite the dreary dearth of ideas and the inherent limitations of the media," his shows will still be simulcast in the fall. Trade feeling is that as long as his programs are merely visual radio, they will remain static, even with an infusion of new faces.

PEOPLE GOING PLACES: Robert F. Blake appointed to the new post of manager of special projects of the CBS Television press information dept., effective May 31. He resigned as director of publicity for NBC's owned and operated stations.....James S. Pollak has joined Compton Advertising, Inc., as agency producer on P & G's new Fireside Theater starring Jane Wyman, working with producer-director William Asher on stories, casting and production, in Hollywood.....Gary Stevens has been named general manager of Warner Bros. TV division which will produce its ABC-TV show, Warn-Bros. Presents. Solly Baiano, head of Warner's casting, has been appointed casting head of all the company's TV activities, including its Sunset Productions subsidiary. ....Ray J. Mauer named director of radio and television, Geyer Advertising, Inc... ....James E. Robertson appointed to head radio-TV production in the Chicago office of N. W. Ayer & Son, Inc.