

ROSS REPORTS — TELEVISION INDEX

JULY 29-AUGUST 4, 1957

VOLUME 9 NUMBER 31

EDITOR: Jerry Leichter

PROGRAMS · ADVERTISERS · TALENT

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WEEKLY REPORT

THIS WEEK -- NETWORK DEBUTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Monday (July 29)

NBC- 11:15pm-1am EDT, Mon thru Fri; DEBUT - Tonight - LIVE from WRCA-TV(NY), 61 stations live, 7 quick kine. § Sponsors- Participations. § Pkgr- NBC-TV(NY); Exec Prod- Richard Linkroum; Prod- Perry Cross; Assoc Prod- Ed Cosgrove; Dir- Garth Dietrick; Assoc Dir- Dick Gillespie; Music Dir- Jose Melis; Writer- Jack Douglas; Continuity Writer- Paul Keyes; Talent Coordinator- Patti Ruben. § Jack Paar is the star of this completely new show under the old Tonight title, featuring comedy, music and conversation. Pianist Jose Melis will be the only performing regular on the show, in addition to Paar. Melis will conduct a 12-piece orchestra, play the piano and join Paar in banter. Guest talent will appear for periods of two to five days a week. Other guests will be unusual or interesting personalities appearing for interviews or in spot features. The new show succeeds Tonight! - America After Dark (last show July 26) in this time spot.

Thursday (August 1)

ABC- 8-9pm EDT; DEBUT - Cowtown Rodeo - LIVE remote via WFIL-TV(Phila), to the net. § Sustaining. § Pkgr & Prod- Howard "Stoney" Harris; production staff from WFIL-TV(Phila). § Harold "Stoney" Harris is m.c.-host for events in the rodeo arena of his 14,000-acre ranch at "Cowtown," N. J., featuring top rodeo riders competing for cash prizes in regular rodeo events. The program replaces two half-hour documentary film series in this spot.

Sunday (August 4)

CBS- 3-5pm EDT; SPECIAL - National A.A.U. Swimming and Diving Championships - LIVE from WCAU-TV(Phila), to the net. § Sustaining. § Pkgr- CBS Sports Dept(NY); Exec Prod- Pete Molnar; production staff from WCAU-TV(Phila). § Telecast of the National A.A.U. Men's Swimming and Diving Championships from Fairmount Park in Philadelphia. The program is in open time.

OTHER NETWORK CHANGES & ADDITIONS

CBS- Ed Sullivan Show (Sun, 8-9pm NYT) Dan Dailey is m.c. in place of vacationing Ed Sullivan, July 28 and August 4.

Strike It Rich (Mon thru Fri, 11:30am-12noon NYT) Warren Hull is on vacation during August. Replacement m.c.'s named thus far are Don Ameche, August 1 thru Aug 9, and Joe E. Brown, August 12-16, with other replacements to be named.

I've Got A Secret (Wed, 9:30-10pm NYT) Garry Moore is on vacation for six weeks beginning July 22. Replacement hosts are Bill Cullen, July 24; Henry Morgan, July 31, and Hal March, August 7, 14, 21 and 28.

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OTHER NET CHANGES

TALENT SHOWSHEET JULY 26 - AUGUST 4

Most of the shows on July 26,27,28, were listed in last week's report. Changes and additions are included here for the record. Multiple and across-the-board shows are grouped together after the listing for Friday August 2. Script identifications used are: (O) Original, (A) Adaptation, (SD) Staff-Directed, (SW) Staff-Written. Performers are identified as singer (S), actor (A), dancer (D), comic (C), musician (M). Actors who appear regularly are listed in the premiere cast, then subsequently referred to as "regulars". Live shows are listed in caps in the left column; filmed shows are in upper and lower case letters, underlined.

Generally only first runs of a film series are listed. During the summer when many shows are re-runs, credits are not repeated below, but are available, and may be requested by phone at any time. Currently inre-runs (and omitted from the listing) are: Adventures of Rin-Tin-Tin, Adventures of Robin Hood, Blondie, Jim Bowie, Broken Arrow, The Buccaneers, Burns & Allen, Cheyenne, Circus Boy, Conflict, Joseph Cotten Show--On Trial, Crossroads, Bob Cummings Show, Father Knows Best, Ford Theatre, General Electric Theatre, Gunsmoke, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, Lassie, Life & Legend of Wyatt Earp, Life of Riley, Millionaire, Mr. Adams & Eve, Navy Log, Panic, People's Choice, Playhouse 90, Private Secretary, Phil Silvers Show, Schlitz Playhouse, Telephone Time, 20th Century-Fox Hour, Wire Service, You Are There.

FRIDAY JULY 26

HELEN O'CONNELL SHOW NBC 7:30pm DELETE: Bob Eberle(S).
THE BIG BEAT ABC 10pm ADD: Eileen Rodgers(S).

SUNDAY JULY 28

CAMERA THREE CBS 11:30am How Can One Not Read Stendhal?; (O) Clair Roskam; with Peter Falk, Lisa Daniels, Ellen Madison, Kay Lyder, Lisa Howard, Casey Payson; Dir - Clay Yurdin.
STEVE ALLEN SHOW NBC 8pm ADD: Shelley Winters(A).

MONDAY JULY 29

GEORGIA GIBBS SHOW NBC 7:30pm Jim Reeves(S).
TALENT SCOUTS CBS 8:30pm (Emanates from San Diego, Calif.) Steve Rossi(S), Eileen Christy(S), The Skytones(S).
Those Whiting Girls CBS 9pm with regulars & Johnny Mercer, Kathy Nolan; (SW&SD).
TOP TUNES & NEW TALENT (Lawrence Welk) ABC 9:30pm John Adomono(M), Frank Scott(M), Ray Allen(S).
Richard Diamond, Private Detective(David Janssen) CBS 9:30pm No information available at press time.
ARTHUR MURRAY PARTY NBC 9:30pm Tallulah Bankhead(A), Raymond Massey(A), Jose Iturbi(M), Eli Wallach(A), Bambi Linn(D), Rod Alexander(D), Sono Osato(D).
STUDIO ONE SUMMER THEATRE CBS 10pm The Human Barrier; (O) Richard DeRoy; with Skip Homeier, Patricia Smith, John Beal, Pat Hingle, Phil Bourneuf, Henderson Forsythe, Florence Anglin, Fred Scollay, Fred Campanella, Peter Von Zerneck, Tom Middleton; Dir - Perry Lafferty.

TUESDAY JULY 30

Meet McGraw (Frank Lovejoy) NBC 9pm The Torn Map; with regulars; (SW&SD).
IT'S POLKA TIME ABC 10pm The Antonio Alba Flamenco Spanish Dancers.
SPIKE JONES SHOW CBS 10:30pm Tommy Sands(S).
NAT KING COLE SHOW NBC 10:30pm Sammy Davis Jr.(S-D), The Hi-Los(S).

WEDNESDAY JULY 31
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VIC DAMONE SHOW CBS 8pm Lilo(S), Gogi Grant(S), Arnold Stang(C), The Gene Krupa Quartet(M), Lee Sherman & Dancers, The Spellbinders(S).

KRAFT THEATRE NBC 9pm Success; (O) Virginia Radcliffe & William Hurst; With Kent Smith, Everett Sloane, Ann Rutherford, Eileen Heckart, Arch Johnson, John Gibson, Tuesday Weld; Dir - David Greene.

US STEEL HOUR CBS 10pm The Change In Chester; (O) Arthur Hailey; with John McGiver, Mary Sinclair, Tom Poston, Alan Hewitt, Barbara Hall, Marcel Hillaire; Dir - Don Richardson.

THURSDAY AUGUST 1  
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COWTOWN RODEO ABC 8pm PREMIERE: Coming from the rodeo arena of the Howard "Stoney" Harris ranch at Cowtown, N.J. Producer & emcee - Howard Harris.

CLIMAX! CBS 8:30pm (Art Gilmore) The Giant Killer; (O) Mann Rubin; with Dane Clark, Inger Stevens, Shepperd Strudwick, Jerry Colonna; Dir - Buzz Kulik.

LUX VIDEO THEATRE NBC 10pm (Ken Carpenter) Dark Hammock; (O) Mary Orr & Reginald Denham; (A) Sanford Barnett; with Barton MacLane, Francis Reid, Jean Carson, Mary Wickes, Forrest Lewis, Ruby Dandridge; Dir - Norman Morgan.

FRIDAY AUGUST 2
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Date With The Angels ABC 9:30pm (Bill Williams, Betty White) Pique's Peak; with regulars & Ted DeCorsia, Wally Brown, Dave Willock; (SW&SD).

THE BIG BEAT ABC 10pm (Alan Freed) Al Hibbler(S), The Four Coins(S), Gogi Grant(S), Mickey and Sylvia(S-M), Jerry Lee Lewis(S), The Tyrones(S).

MULTIPLE & ACROSS-THE-BOARD SHOWS JULY 29 - AUGUST 2  
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JIMMY DEAN SHOW CBS 7am Elton Britt(S), will be the special guest this week.

CLUB 60 NBC 1:30pm (Dennis James) with regulars only.

NBC MATINEE THEATRE NBC 3pm 7/29 - Ann Veronica; (O) H.G. Wells; (A) Ronald Gow; 7/30 - Boys Will Be Men; (O) Harry Junkin; 7/31 - The Forbidden Search; (O) Don Stanford; (A) William Altman; 8/1 - The Fawn With The Crooked Leg; (O) Lucile Duffy; 8/2 - Sunday in Sonora; (O) James Dombrowski; (A) Shelley Stark.

MODERN ROMANCES NBC 4:45pm (Martha Scott) Portrait of Jenny; (O) Elinor Lenz; with Georgann Johnson, John Kellogg, Cort Benson, Dorothy Elder, Harry Worth.

TONIGHT, WITH JACK PAAR NBC 11:15pm PREMIERE: 7/29 - Helen O'Connell(S), Johnny Johnston(S); 7/30 - Genevieve(S), Johnny Johnston(S); 7/31 - Mary Mayo(S), Johnny Johnston(S); 8/1 - Genevieve(S); 8/2 - Mary Mayo(S). Prod - Perry Cross; Dir - Garth Dietrick; Orch. - Jose Melis.

SATURDAY AUGUST 3
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|                                       |             |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TRUE STORY<br>(Kathi Norris)          | NBC 12N     | <u>The Destructive Angel</u> ; (O) Michael Morris; with Patricia Wheel, Bill Daniels, David White, Walter Brooke, Carol Porter.                                    |
| JULIUS LA ROSA SHOW                   | NBC 8pm     | Elaine Malbin(S), Joey Adams(C), Al Kelly(C), Rose Marie(S), The Frankie Carle Trio(M), The Maxwells (novelty).                                                    |
| <u>George Sanders Mystery Theatre</u> | NBC 9pm     | <u>And The Birds Still Sing</u> ; with Mae Clark, John Archer, Tristram Coffin, Havis Davenport, Mary Webster, John Berardino; Author & Dir credits not available. |
| COUNTRY MUSIC JUBILEE                 | ABC 10pm    | Carl Smith(S).                                                                                                                                                     |
| JIMMY DEAN SHOW                       | CBS 10:30pm | Les Paul & Mary Ford(S-M).                                                                                                                                         |

SUNDAY AUGUST 4  
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LOOK UP AND LIVE	CBS 10:30am	<u>The Legend of Saint Christopher</u> ; (O) Mortimer Frankel; with Bob Blackburn, Pat Meikle, Tommy White, Judy Sanford, Seth Edwards, Peter Lazer, Lou Halpin.
ED SULLIVAN SHOW	CBS 8pm	Dan Dailey(A-S), Marion Marlowe(S), Herb Score, Kirby Stone Four(C), Jay Lawrence(C), Chiquita & Johnson(D), The Everly Bros.(S), Cesare Valletti(S), All-American Chorus from Colorado.
STEVE ALLEN SHOW	NBC 8pm	Marie McDonald(A-S), Floyd Patterson, Jack E. Leonard(C), Brenda Lee(S), Don Rondo(S), The Four Diamonds(S).
GOODYEAR PLAYHOUSE	NBC 9pm	<u>Weekend In Vermont</u> ; (O) Ernest Kinoy; with Dorothy Stickney, Howard Lindsay, Patricia Barry, Tony Randall; Dir - Herbert Hirschman.
<u>The Web</u> (William Bryant)	NBC 10pm	<u>Kill And Run</u> ; (O) Robert Leslie Bellem, Jerry Davis; with James Darren, DeForest Kelley, Robert Anderson, Bing Russell, Connie Dugovic, Marianne Stewart; Dir - Walter Doniger.

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AUGUST 7, 1957

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MID-WEEK SPECIAL

NEWS - COMMENT - POSSIBILITIES

Leave it to Beaver is the title for the domestic comedy series, originally sold as Wally and the Beaver. The program debuts Oct 4, Fridays, 7:30-8pm NYT over CBS, sponsored alternate weeks by Remington Rand thru Compton Advertising. The series will concern itself with the trials and adventures of two small boys and their parents, with Hugh Beaumont and Barbara Billingsley co-starring as Ward Cleaver and his wife June with eight-year-old Jerry Mathers as Beaver Cleaver and 12-year-old Tony Dow as his older brother Wally. Creators and writer-producers are Joe Connelly and Bob Mosher, with Gomalco Enterprises as the producing organization..... Another Gomalco Enterprises program, The Show of George Gobel, has really admitted defeat in trying to counter a successful identification set by Gobel during his first season on the air. Jeff Donnell, who has periodically played the role of Gobel's wife Alice on the comedian's programs, and at one time was dropped from Gobel's Saturday night program, will make six appearances during the coming season on his new one hour Tuesday evening program. John Scott Trotter is the only other major hold-over from the half-hour series, as music conductor and occasional foil. The new Gobel producer-director will be Alan Handley.....Dr. Frank Baxter, the U.S.C. professor of English who has become a successful television entertainer, will be the host and narrator for ABC's Telephone Time series, replacing John Nesbitt, beginning with the program of Sept 10.....Everett Sloane will play the lead in the NTA-Desilu series, Official Detective, playing the part of an investigator for "Official Detective" magazine, which provides the documentation for the program. Sloane is the only permanent member of the cast, acting as narrator and introducing each episode's storyline.

One hour live dramas have changed swiftly from the glamor children of television to step-grandmother status, following the capricious nature of the medium. Westinghouse's Studio One, could end its nine-year run this December if often-denied rumors finally become fact. Kraft Television Theatre, now in its eleventh year, is reported to be struggling to stay alive with upped budgets expected to counter vague network displeasure with its audience pull. Some grumblers have cited the end of Robert Montgomery Presents and the coming bow-out of Alcoa Theatre-Goodyear Playhouse as evidence of the "betrayal" of the best in regularly-scheduled live television drama. The fall debut of Suspicion with its 22 live dramas out of 42 programs to be presented during the year is viewed as a temporary condition designed to permit the producers to work into an all-film series slowly as was done with General Electric Theatre, previously a live and film series. The major future hope of discerning critics is that videotape, which has proven that it is a more faithful duplication of live television than any other facsimile process, may help live television to come back. Taping will eliminate the bugaboo of sub-standard kinescoped program repeats, one of the several factors that contributed to the replacement of live drama programs by filmed series. Film, of course, has too firm a hold to be threatened in its position

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(MORE)

as king of bread-and-butter television, but the 1957-58 season may prove to be a year of forced decision for certain types of filmed programming. If the one-hour programs to be filmed for next season can hold or build audiences then one may have to kiss goodbye to live television drama with its excitement and challenges. Thus far, only a Western series has survived as a one-hour filmed series, and it is entirely possible that a surfeit of cowboys and roving Army officers may even take the edge off that one next season. If legends or fairy tales can generate on film the excitement that a few similar programs have already achieved in live form, then that might be the final clincher for those who decide whether programming fare in the evening should be live or film. There are two possible answers for the future -- for both sponsors and networks -- if they are serious in their wishes to have programs that will sell products and also be superior to ordinary program fare in every market area. The great live drama series may be wearing out their time franchises. No one seems to have considered that no matter how inviting the weekly stars and weekly dramas, television viewer patterns have changed. The quality of live television drama may not have changed, but all entertainment industries patterns have shifted over the years. One answer, a daring one, to the question of survival may be for a program and its sponsor to move to a new time period -- or for a new sponsor to open up a previously-unexplored period. The second answer to the question is possible because videotape has achieved its present quality, and because one of the querulous criticisms of live television drama is that great programs (great because of the combination of writing and producing and the crackling tension of acting "live"), go down the drain, never to be seen again. Taped repeats of well-received programs, offered periodically, would generate new viewer interest in series that seem to be lagging. Exciting programming, rather than well-intentioned habit, creates audiences and increases them.

Phyllis Adams, one of the feature writers of Home, joins George Kirgo and Mike Morris on the writing staff for the new Arlene Francis Show, starting Monday over NBC.....The AAU has stirred up another fuss with its pre-program threat to declare track star Lee Calhoun a professional if he goes ahead with his plans to be married Friday on NBC's Bride and Groom show. Calhoun affirmed his decision yesterday (6) to be on the program despite the threat of loss of his amateur status. The AAU says that the televised wedding would constitute an "exploitation" of his athletic fame. The AAU position, naturally not stated, but seemingly honored in practice, is that only educational and AAU-recognized organizations and promoters may have the privilege of "exploiting" amateur athletes. The Bride and Groom fuss developed because of the gifts given to each couple married on the program.....Philip Morris, Inc., will sponsor Suspicion during a half-hour, alternate weeks over NBC. Ford Motor Co is the alternate weekly sponsor for a full hour for the program which debuts Sept 30, Mondays, 10-11pm NYT.....Cole Porter has signed to write the music and lyrics for "Aladdin," one of the programs in the Du Pont Show of the Month series, to be presented on Friday, Feb 28, 7:30-9pm NYT. S. J. Perelman is writing the book for the program, which will be supervised by Richard Lewine as exec producer.

Kaiser Industries is sponsoring ABC's network telecast of the Seattle Gold Cup hydroplane races over a limited Western network group of stations. An interesting local Seattle note is that KING-TV, which will present six hours of sponsored coverage of the race will not have a single product plug on the air during five of the six hours. Sicks' Rainier Brewing Company is paying for five of the six hours (the company relinquished the final hour for Kaiser), but in following a Washington State regulation which does not permit a beer commercial for a Sunday event, there will only be three brief company mentions during the five hours. Sicks' programs involving the cup races on Saturday and Monday, before and after the race day, will be fully commercial.

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The Verdict Is Yours is the new title for the former You Are The Jury, debuting over CBS on Sept 2, Mon thru Fri, 3:30-4pm EDT, with Jim McKay as the "television reporter.".....Tammy Grimes will replace Barbara Nichols as the star of the Aug 7 Kraft Television Theatre comedy, "Sextuplets!" Miss Nichols was seriously injured in an automobile accident.....Valiant Lady, which stuck around on CBS for several weeks past its intended termination date, finally leaves Aug 16, being succeeded starting August 19 by Hotel Cosmopolitan, a Mon thru Fri strip packaged by CBS, but produced for the net by Roy Winsor Productions.

NBC's 1957-58 schedule of special series and specials, thru next summer, lists the play dates and some program notes for shows previously announced: Dean Martin will star on two music-variety programs, with the first set for Oct 5, Saturday, 10-11pm. His ex-partner, Jerry Lewis, who starred on two special programs last season, will have six during next season; the first on Nov 5, Tuesday, 9-10pm NYT; others following on Dec 13, Friday, 8-9pm NYT; Jan 21, Tuesday, 9-10pm NYT; Feb 18, Tuesday, 8-9pm NYT; April 14, Monday, 8-9pm NYT, and May 16, Friday, 10-11pm NYT.....The new Shirley Temple fairy tale series kicks off Jan 12, Sunday, 8-9pm NYT and will then be seen: Feb 2, Sunday, 6:30-7:30pm NYT; Feb 19, Wednesday, 7:30-8:30pm NYT; March 5, Wednesday, 7:30-8:30pm NYT; March 23, Sunday, 6:30-7:30pm NYT; April 18, Friday, 7:30-8:30pm NYT; May 22, Thursday, 7:30-8:30pm NYT; June 8, Sunday, 8-9pm NYT; July 15, Tuesday, 8-9pm NYT, and August 19, Tuesday, 8-9pm NYT. The remainder of the 16 programs scheduled for the series will be seen during the fall of 1958.....Hallmark Hall of Fame will open its six-program series on Oct 17, Thursday, 9:30-11pm NYT, property to be announced; then will be seen Nov 18, Monday, 9:30-11pm NYT; Dec 15, Sunday, 6:30-8pm NYT (with a special Christmas show); Feb 9, Sunday, 6:30-8pm NYT (Maurice Evans starring in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night"); a production scheduled for either March 17, Monday, or March 30, Sunday, 5:30-7pm NYT; ending its season on April 25, Friday, 9:30-11pm NYT, with Evans starring in "Dial M for Murder.".....Other gleanings from the NBC listings: The first Texaco Command Appearance on Sept 19, Thursday, 10-11pm EDT, will honor Ed Wynn, with production by Ezra Stone. Other programs in this series are not set.....Standard Oil's 75th Anniversary show, a musical variety program, will be on Oct 13, Sunday, 9-10:30pm NYT.....A special Oldsmobile announcement show will be presented on Nov 4, Monday, 9-9:30pm NYT.....The one-time Omnibus nighttime program will be on Jan 14, Tuesday, 8-9pm NYT.....The Emmy Awards presentations will be on March 18, Tuesday, 9-10:30pm NYT, while the motion picture Oscars will be presented on March 26, Wednesday, 10:30pm-12:15am NYT....."Amahl and the Night Visitors," will again be scheduled during the holiday season.....NBC Opera Theatre will present five productions (including "Amahl"), with four of them on Sunday afternoons this season; the first on Dec 8, Sunday, 2-4pm NYT.....Other specials have been listed previously, such as the Bob Hope series, "Pinocchio," "The Pied Piper," and the alternate Sunday Wide Wide World and Omnibus series.

Even though NBC's production of "Annie Get Your Gun" (Nov 27, 8:30-10:30pm NYT) is still four months away, the net is ready to begin intensive promotion on the Irving Berlin musical, which will star Mary Martin and John Raitt. A pre-TV stage version of the musical (presented on Broadway from May, 1946, to February, 1949) will open Aug 25 in San Francisco and then move to Los Angeles on Oct 7 for a five-week run there before its one-time telecast. The photos for the TV promotion were made last week in Hollywood, with more sessions set during the run of the show on the Coast.....George Gobel's writing staff for next year will be repeaters Elon Packard and Harry Winkler, joined by Milt Rosen and Jack Brooks.....Kukla, Fran and Ollie returned to the ABC net Monday (Mon thru Fri, 7-7:15pm EDT) for a final five-week run in ABC evening time to finish out its commitment for the four-city sponsor, Gordon Baking Co (other cities show the program co-op). Beginning Sept 2, ABC will bring back Kukla's summer replacement, Sports Focus, which will become a regular net program in the time spot for the fall season. Howard Cosell presents sports news, features and interviews on the sports show.....Wayde Preston will be in the lineup of the fall season's Western heroes as the star of the ABC-Warner Bros. film series, Colt .45. He'll play the well-dressed and well-armed Christopher Colt, "gun salesman on a secret mission for the Federal Government to smoke out the lawless elements who hold the frontier in a reign of terror." (He could make a fortune just visiting the Hollywood studios to lease his guns on 13-week, 26-week and 39-week deals for next season -- with lower rates for those who survive to go into summer re-run).

The Pat Boone Show, starting over ABC, Oct 3, Thursday, 9-9:30pm NYT, will be packaged and produced by General Artists Bureau, Inc., GAC subsidiary. Producer will be Joseph Santley, with Frank Satenstein directing. Mort Lindsey will direct the musical backing and Selma Diamond and Jerry Seelen are the writers.....The Patrice Munsel Show, ABC, Fridays, 8:30-9pm NYT, starting Oct 18, is being packaged by M-S Productions, Inc., thru the William Morris Agency, with Robert Schuler as exec producer. Clark Jones will be producer and director, with Charles Sanford as musical director and Hugh Martin handling arrangements and the chorus. Larry Gelbart will write the show.....Milton Berger, at CBS, will handle talent booking for Patti Page's The Big Record, starting Sept 18, Wednesdays, 8-9pm EDT. Interested in big name talent only.....Arthur Arent is the new story editor at the Theatre Guild for U. S. Steel Hour, succeeding Dorothy Hechtlinger.

Jack Gould of The New York Times raised an unholy fuss among the top network brass with his front page claim last Thursday that "The television industry, which for ten years has thought in terms of continuing boom, is experiencing the 'softest' demand for air time that it has ever known." CBS was in the vanguard in producing statistics to show that CBS sales were ahead of last year in order to refute the Gould statements. The Gould piece, if it served no other purpose, demonstrated the power of the writer and his paper in exciting the industry when he touches on the financial elements of TV. While everyone jumped on Gould's lead, they stayed away from his comments about the uneasiness in the industry about the first and second option periods on some of the new series. Third-quarter financial reports for some prominent advertisers, if not as expected, could affect advertising budgets -- and some trade paper writers are panting to be the first to note signs of a "panic." The Gould story certainly influenced Robert Sarnoff's press conference Monday, during which he outlined NBC's specials for the coming season, noting that, aside from some of the special projects and public service shows, they have already brought in 40 million dollars in gross billings. If there is any evidence of 'softness' in the coming season, it is in the caution displayed by some agencies and advertisers who have hesitated to commit several million dollars for series that either might fail on their own through lack of enough audience, or might get slugged by an unexpected success of an opposing show. There may not be any clear-cut victories in the coming season, but the sponsors would like to have some assurance of a reasonable success with their new properties.