

LEON LEVY AND ASSOCIATES CONSIDER BUYING CBS' 45% IN WTOP-AM-FM-TV

Dr. Levy would resign from the CBS board of directors and relinquish stock, if the transaction materializes. Washington sale along with possible transfers at Minneapolis and Pittsburgh would allow CBS to acquire 100% in two more tv stations.

DR. LEON LEVY, former president and co-owner of WCAU Philadelphia, is contemplating making an offer for purchase of the 45% interest in the properties held by CBS in Washington—



DR. LEVY

WTOP - AM - FM - TV. Dr. Levy was in Washington last Thursday and inspected the properties with President-General Manager John S. Hayes. The Washington Post Co., which owns 55%, has first refusal.

Dr. Levy, who has substantial stockholdings in CBS, reportedly is considering the Washington investment in conjunction with three associates, two of whom are in New York and one in Philadelphia. His brother, Isaac D. Levy, who was co-owner with him of WCAU and likewise has been identified with ownership of CBS virtually from its acquisition in 1928 by the Paley interests, reportedly is not associated with the group considering the WTOP minority purchase.

Philip Graham, president and publisher of

the Washington newspaper controlling WTOP Inc., has stated his company plans to buy the CBS minority if terms can be agreed upon.

Dr. Levy, who would be the primary investor, has not placed an evaluation on the WTOP properties.

The present market for properties having vhf tv is at an all-time peak. CBS paid \$6 million for its Chicago outlet and Westinghouse \$8.5 million for WPTZ (TV) Philadelphia and in excess of \$7 million (taking into account appreciated value of Westinghouse stock) for KPIX (TV) San Francisco. WTOP has a new \$2 million office building and plant.

Dr. Levy is a member of the CBS board of directors and, it is indicated, would resign from the board and divest himself of his substantial personal holdings if his group acquires the CBS minority interest. Mrs. Leon Levy is the sister of William S. Paley, CBS board chairman and principal stockholder.

Under the terms of the CBS contract with the Washington Post Co., the newspaper can acquire the CBS interest at the best outside *bona fide* offer made. WTOP-TV was formerly WOIC and was purchased in 1950 for \$1.4 million from General Teleradio, then a subsidiary of R. H. Macy & Co., New York.

That CBS had received outside offers for the WTOP properties and for its 47% minority holdings in WCCO-AM-TV Minneapolis was disclosed in B•T [Aug. 23]. A week earlier the report also had been published in B•T that the network would dispose of its minority interest in those two stations and possibly in KQV Pittsburgh, in which it holds 45%. Disposition of the Washington and Minneapolis properties would pave the way for CBS acquisition, either through original grant or purchase, of 100% ownership in two additional tv stations. It currently is in hearing before the FCC for ch. 11 in St. Louis and also has an application pending for ch. 5 in Boston.

Similar Contracts

Control of WCCO is held by Mid-Continent Radio-Television Inc., which owns 53% of the stock. Mid-Continent, in turn, is owned 50-50 by Northwest Publications Inc., Ridder controlled corporation, and Minnesota Tribune Co., of which William J. McNally is president. The CBS contract with Mid-Continent is similar to that with the Washington Post Co. in that Mid-Continent has first refusal. CBS has disclosed that a corporate group has evinced an interest in the Minneapolis properties.

WCCO-AM-TV, like WTOP, is regarded as among the most successful and efficiently operated companies in the broadcasting business. CBS is understood to place an even higher evaluation on the Minneapolis properties than on WTOP Inc.—in the area of \$10 million. CBS formerly owned 100% of WCCO but entered a merger arrangement with the Ridder-McNally group which was approved by the FCC in August 1952. No money was involved, with CBS relinquishing its control of WCCO, 50 kw clear channel station, for the 47% interest in the combined radio-tv facilities.

KQV falls in a different category as to CBS' disposition of its minority holdings. CBS last year acquired its 45% for \$235,000 and has a

Lots of Sales

TELEVISION can be a successful real estate salesman, as WCPO-TV Cincinnati verified when it helped the Ohio Valley Realty Corp. hang up a "sold out" sign on 273 housing lots after a six-week spot advertising promotion and set a 10-year sales record for the company. A similar campaign last year, employing newspapers and direct mail and a heavier advertising budget, required 16 weeks for a "sell out" of a similar housing site tract in the same area. WCPO-TV was given credit for 9 out of 10 land sales by A. B. Carter, general manager of the home site project. The campaign consisted of 20 spots, both humorous and informative, each week.

contractual arrangement whereby this interest can be returned to the principal stockholders in KQV Inc., at a predetermined figure.

In all three instances, however, CBS does not vote its minority holdings, but permits the majority stockholders to vote 100% of the stock under voting trust agreements.

Martin Named Gen. Mgr. For WMVT (TV), WCAX

STUART T. MARTIN, electronics consulting engineer and formerly with RCA and Sylvania Electric Products Co., has been named vice president and general manager of WMVT (TV)



MR. MARTIN

Montpelier and WCAX Burlington, Vt., C. P. Hasbrook, president of both stations, announced last week.

Mr. Martin has worked on the Montpelier ch. 3 project for the past two years, supervising construction of its tower on Mount Mansfield and of studios in Burlington.

Earlier, he had charge of the engineering and installation of WCAX's 5 kw transmitter and antenna system (620 kc).

Option Cardinal Road Games

ANHEUSER-BUSCH Inc., brewers of Budweiser and Michelob beer, have taken an option with WTVI (TV) St. Louis (Belleville, Ill.) for telecasts of the 1955 St. Louis Cardinal road games, it was announced last week by John D. Scheurer Jr., WTVI executive vice president and general manager.

Ch. 54 WTVI is telecasting the entire 77-game 1954 Cardinal road schedule and, Mr. Scheurer said, these telecasts have been supported by St. Louis' 25-county area in unprecedented numbers.

Hoag-Blair Final Preparations

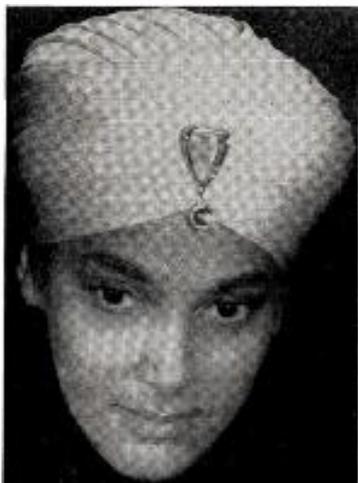
HOAG-BLAIR Co., new firm which is slated to commence Wednesday (Sept. 1) as national representative of tv stations outside major markets [B•T, Aug. 16], has taken office space in Chrysler Bldg., 405 Lexington Ave., New York. President Robert Hoag also announced he will be available in Chicago this week for talks with station operators attending the NBC-TV and CBS Radio affiliates meetings.

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