

FOR a newcomer in the television field, Daniel Harrison Overmyer would appear to be a man in a terrific hurry. He's brand-new to broadcasting and admits it, but his plans are as extensive as the law and marketplace allow.

He wants to get seven UHF stations on the air—and quickly. He even made a plea for special dispensation to the FCC, hoping the government would allow him, as a wholesale patron of UHF, an eighth construction permit.

He's already on the air with channel 24 WDHO-TV Toledo, has construction permits in Pittsburgh; Newport (Cincinnati) Ky.; San Francisco; Atlanta; Rosenberg (Houston) Tex., and an application for Dallas.

Mr. Overmyer will have committed at least \$10 million to his broadcasting operation through 1967, probably more. He's unabashedly bullish about the prospects for UHF broadcasting. "There'll be a fourth commercial network certainly by the fall of 1967," he says. "U's are going to change broadcasting as it hasn't been changed since television came in." He predicts "the proliferation of UHF is going to restrict the growth of community antenna television. If you get 14 stations in Los Angeles without cables, how many more will people want?"

Until recently Mr. Overmyer shunned personal publicity in connection with his broadcasting plan, but now seems willing enough to speak out on his new enterprise. Politically, he describes himself as an "independent thinker and middle-of-the-roader", and seems ready to have his stations become unflinching commentators on the affairs of the communities they will serve.

Mr. Overmyer says he has no intention of getting directly involved in the day-to-day programing of his outlets in either entertainment or news, but he professes an interest in having the stations become involved community spectators.

Dislikes Bland Approach ■ He describes most newscasters as "Casper Milquetoasts" and thinks "there ought to be more interpretive reporting in which the opinion of the commentator comes through. There's too much pussy-footing. Every television station has a responsibility to present editorials. There's no difference, in my mind, between the broadcast media and any other media in this respect."

Mr. Overmyer, who is a large man and a hard-driving personality at 41, opened a warehouse in Toledo in 1947 with several thousand dollars in borrowed cash and a vision of warehousing on a grand scale with a national, integrated chain of storage facilities.

In 1966 that vision is indeed a thriving warehouse chain grossing more than \$20 million annually, operating

He's hitched his wagon to a UHF star

in 56 cities with 260 warehouse installations and claiming to be the largest such organization in the world.

Sitting in his New York headquarters with tie off, shirt sleeves up, and generally relaxed, Mr. Overmyer displays confidence and changeable moods. A discussion of his broad plans for television lights his eyes with enthusiasm and he may jump from his chair to stroll the office as he talks. But an annoying call on the phone, involving a small operational matter, can cause a lightning-quick change of mood.

He delights in relating the origin of his stations' call letters; each bears the initials of a member of his family. Thus, first on the air is WDHO-TV, for Dan Harrison Overmyer. The Newport station, WSCO-TV, stands for Shirley Clark Overmyer, his wife, and there are call letters for each of his four children.

Mr. Overmyer would obviously like

WEEK'S PROFILE



Daniel Harrison Overmyer—president, D. H. Overmyer Warehouse Co., which owns Overmyer Communications Company and "Toledo Monitor" b. Dec. 6, 1924 in Toledo, attended Dennison University. U. S. Army, warrant officer. Formed D. H. Overmyer Warehouse Co., 1947. m. Shirley Anne Clark, 1943. Children, Barbara M., 13; Elizabeth C., 8; John D., 4 and Edward M., 2. Hobbies, skiing, hunting, golf.

to bring the economies that led to a successful chain warehousing operation to the field of group station broadcasting. And he's convinced the way to get started in UHF is with a group plan. "There's no reason UHF shouldn't be completely competitive with VHF," he claims. To reach this status in Toledo he's built a 1,460-foot antenna tower and has a power authorization of 275 kw. WDHO-TV estimates that 47% of the market in its coverage area is now UHF-equipped, that by January 1967, the figure will have reached 79%.

The Local Potential ■ Mr. Overmyer feels local advertising is a largely untapped resource and that UHF represents a remarkable opportunity to the local distributor. He's not a complete stranger to the media world. D. H. Overmyer Warehouse Co. owns a small weekly business paper, the *Toledo Monitor*, aimed at local business men. It claims a circulation approaching 10,000. Other interests of the parent company are a national leasing company and a Toledo bank. A finance company is being planned and the warehousing operation is moving into Canada and overseas.

After two weeks on the air, WDHO-TV has orders for time totaling more than \$150,000, according to Robert Bryan, president of the new UHF group.

National representation for Overmyer Communications Company is handled by National Television Sales.

Asked if the Overmyer organization might someday become a public company, he responded, "not in the foreseeable future."

Mr. Overmyer's own history includes two years at Dennison University, split by a three-and-a-half-year term in the Army. He entered the service as a private, emerged three and a half years later a warrant officer, having taken part in the Normandy invasion and seen duty as a prisoner-of-war camp interpreter.

His working day now is about 14 hours long during the week and about 10 hours on Saturdays. An associate says those who work with and around him are worked hard, but by comparison with the boss they can't find much room for complaint. The boss's diversified warehousing business and other enterprises keep him traveling about 60% of the time.

Mr. Overmyer says he came to broadcasting because "it is a field with obvious growth potential," but he indicates he's aware that establishing his UHF group is not going to be a push-over. Although he wants to get his stations on the air as soon as possible, he says he's ready to take a long-term view of his broadcasting venture. And he's got the resources of his own large company to help him.