

Capital Cities buys KTRK-TV in Houston

In what could be second highest price paid for single TV station, Capital Cities Broadcasting Co. announced it had bought KTRK-TV Houston for sum "in area of \$20 million." Purchase was announced by both parties Friday (Nov. 18), and is subject to approval by KTRK stockholders and FCC. Price could be close to \$20 million paid by Cox Broadcasting Corp. in 1964 for WHC-TV Pittsburgh.

Since Capital Cities already has FCC-imposed limit of five VHF television stations, it must sell off one of them. Mr. Murphy said Friday he didn't know which one is to be sold. Another hurdle to be overcome is current FCC policy requiring hearing where broadcaster with three VHF television stations in top 50 markets acquires fourth. Capital Cities' five TV stations already are in top 50 markets; Houston is also in that grouping.

Agreement provides that John T. Jones Jr. continues as president and Willard E. Walbridge as executive vice president and general manager. Mr. Jones is principal owner of KTRH-AM-FM Houston, which is not being sold. His ownership of radio station raises question, however, of another conflict with FCC ownership limitations since Capital Cities also owns its full portfolio of seven AM stations. This is not believed to be a major problem, however, since Mr. Jones will have no financial interest in Capital Cities.

KTRK, which began operating in 1954 on channel 13, is principally owned by Mr. Jones with 32.45% of stock; Roy Hofheinz, 16%; and others. Mr. Hofheinz, former mayor of Houston, owns 50% of KBAT San Antonio, Tex. KTRK is ABC affiliated.

Capital Cities stations: WROW-AM-FM and WTEN(TV) Albany, N. Y.; WKBW-AM-TV Buffalo, N. Y.; WTVD(TV) Durham, N. C.; WPRO-AM-FM-TV Providence, R. I.; WSAZ-AM-TV Huntington-Charleston, W. Va.; WPAT-AM-FM Paterson, N. J. (New York area); WJR-AM-FM Detroit and KPOL-AM-FM Los Angeles. It also owns WDCD(TV) Adams, Mass., UHF satellite for WTEN.

Meanwhile application for FCC approval of sale of Trigg-Vaughn Stations to Doubleday & Co. for \$14,125,019.66 was filed Friday (Nov. 18).

Doubleday Broadcasting, newly formed subsidiary company, will acquire, pending FCC approval, KOSA-TV

Odessa-Midland, KR0D-AM-TV El Paso, KITE-AM-FM Terrell Hills-San Antonio and construction permit for KDTV(TV) (ch. 39) Dallas, all Texas; KHOW Denver; KDEF-AM-FM Albuquerque, N. M., and KRNO San Bernardino, Calif. (BROADCASTING, Oct. 31). KOSA Odessa, owned by Trigg family, is not included in sale.

Filing listed Trigg-Vaughn total assets, as of June 30, at \$5,834,396. Principal long-term obligation was \$4,119,653 to Chase Manhattan Bank, New York.

Doubleday listed assets "in excess of \$27 million" and said combined net income for last two fiscal years was "in excess of \$12 million."

Cecil L. Trigg, president of Trigg-Vaughn, will continue as president of Doubleday Broadcasting. All vice presidents of TV stations will have similar titles under new ownership.

Strike skies brighten Friday

Outlook appeared brighter late Friday (Nov. 18) for agreement between various segments of broadcast industry and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists and Screen Actors Guild on new three-year pact (see page 66).

Though both unions were armed with strike authorizations, prospects improved when reports circulated that tentative agreement had been reached with both talent unions in TV commer-

Joint study of TV advertising seen coming

POSITION AND SEQUENCE OF ADS TO BE SCRUTINIZED

Study of commercial positioning, sequence and other questions bearing on effectiveness of TV advertising may be undertaken jointly by Television Bureau of Advertising, Association of National Advertisers and American Association of Advertising Agencies.

Don L. Chapin of Taft Broadcasting, retiring chairman of TVB, told TVB's annual membership meeting he was confident TVB board would back him in accepting proposal made earlier in meeting for joint discussion of such problems by representatives of all three organizations. Proposal had been advanced by TVB speech by Alfred Plant of Block Drug, chairman of ANA's TV Committee (see page 23).

AAAA reaction was not learned immediately but was generally expected to be favorable.

cial area. In addition, AFTRA separately extended its program codes with networks until midnight yesterday (Nov. 20), permitting them to tape programs.

Concession on taping provides that networks will not carry shows taped during contract extension if union should call strike.

Negotiations were to continue over weekend.

New cable system in N.Y. upsets franchise holders

Franchised CATV operators in New York City think there's interloper in their midst. It's Comtel Division of Bell Television, master antenna company, which is leasing lines from New York Telephone Company to distribute TV signals picked up on top of Americana hotel to surrounding area. This is in midtown section of Manhattan for which Sterling Information Services received CATV franchise. City franchise director says Comtel needs authorization before it can send signals across city streets, and thinks telephone company may be out of bounds in leasing lines for this purpose. Matter has been placed before city's corporation council for review.

Comtel is advertising \$3.95 per month charge to subscribers for service it calls "master antenna television." That's considerably below \$5 per month authorized in city's franchise grants.