

Griffin, Leake plan to split up holdings

Griffin-Leake TV Inc., group owner, will divide its ownership subject to FCC approval. The announcement was made by John T. Griffin, chairman, and James C. Leake, president.

Mr. Griffin has formed Century Communications Co., which will be the licensee of KWTV(TV) Oklahoma City. Mr. Leake's holdings, through Leake



Mr. Griffin

Television Inc., will include KATV(TV) Little Rock, Ark.; KTUL-TV Tulsa, Okla., and interest in Cable TV Co., operator of a CATV system in Ponca City, Okla.

Mr. Griffin currently holds 56.38% of Griffin-Leake TV Inc. Marjorie Griffin Leake, Mr. Griffin's sister and Mr. Leake's wife, owns 37.21%, and Mr. Leake owns 6.07%. In addition, Mr. Leake has an 80% interest in WSTE(TV) Fajardo, P. R., which has a construction permit for channel 13.



Mr. Leake

allowed to cut plaintiff off completely from rights which until that time had only been temporarily delayed through a stay."

The judge also said it was unfair for a station seeking a waiver of the rules to benefit by the commission's delay "and gain all it asks, while the party without the burden loses all without having received any determination at all." That, he said, was the situation he found in the Bucks County Cable TV case.

Chronicle seeks reversal of license hearing order

Chronicle Publishing Co., licensee of KRON-FM-TV San Francisco, last week asked the FCC to reconsider its decision to designate those stations' license renewal applications for hearing.

The commission ordered a hearing last month on issues of possible news management, anticompetitive practices, and concentration of control (BROADCASTING, March 24). All three issues resulted from complaints by two former employees of the station.

In its petition for reconsideration, Chronicle protested the "unsupported, undocumented allegation that Chronicle Publishing has an undue concentration of control, especially since the licenses

were obtained through the front door by application involving all the pertinent facts." The real issue, according to the company, is whether newspapers should own TV stations in major markets—and that issue should be resolved by rulemaking rather than adjudication, it added. Chronicle cited the several other media outlets in San Francisco as evidence that no concentration exists.

Another issue involved charges that Chronicle had engaged in anticompetitive practices—specifically, that it had used profits from KRON-TV to cause its morning newspaper competitor, Hearst's *Examiner*, to fail, thus giving the *Chronicle* a morning news monopoly. Even if true, the *Chronicle* said, this allegation is no basis for a hearing: "There is no charge that Chronicle Publishing used improper means to better its competitive position, but only that it tried harder and became number one by acquiring 'expensive' circulation in areas outside the San Francisco city zone."

A related matter is the joint operating agreement between the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner* (now an afternoon paper), in which their noneditorial operations were merged. Several antitrust suits are now pending in federal courts concerning the general subject of joint agreements. One of these was brought by Blanche Streeter, former clerical em-

ployee of the *Chronicle*, who also brought the concentration-of-control and anticompetitive-practice charges against KRON-FM to the FCC. According to Chronicle, the joint operating agreement was executed only after the Justice Department indicated that it would take no action against any party to the agreement. Since the general issue of joint agreements is already pending in the courts, *Chronicle* said, "it is manifestly unfair and unjust for the commission to compel Chronicle Publishing to litigate the antitrust issue in an administrative proceeding."

The third issue, that of possible news management, was raised in a complaint by Albert Kihn, a former KRON-TV cameraman. Mr. Kihn charged that station newsmen had been ordered to suppress news that might run counter to the *Chronicle's* corporate interests.

In response, *Chronicle* said that licensee responsibility and news judgment had to prevail over Mr. Kihn's "own personal judgment of what KRON-TV ought to broadcast." The problem of "non-licensee disagreement with the editorial judgment of a licensee" is usually covered by the fairness doctrine, *Chronicle* noted. However, it added, there is no charge of fairness violation.

Annenberg sworn in as Britain ambassador

Walter Annenberg, president of Triangle Publications Inc., group publisher and station owner, took the oath of office last week as U. S. ambassador to Great Britain. A private ceremony was held in State Department offices, attended by Secretary of State William Rogers, and the governor and two senators from Pennsylvania, Ambassador Annenberg's home state.

While serving at the Court of St. James', Ambassador Annenberg told senators during his confirmation hearing, he will refrain from active editorial direction of his publishing and broadcasting properties, which include WFIL-AM-FM-TV Philadelphia, two Philadelphia dailies and *TV Guide* (BROADCASTING, March 10).

Davis, Hayes involved in Swiss switch

A former special correspondent with CBS in Geneva who is now a New York investment banker was named to succeed former broadcasting executive John S. Hayes as ambassador to Switzerland.

President Nixon last week nominated Shelby Cullom Davis to replace John S. Hayes in Bern. Mr. Hayes had been president of the Post-Newsweek Stations before his appointment in 1966.