

tions all to be sold within three years of purchase. The commission noted that nine of Combined's radio stations—KSDO(AM) San Diego, WWWE(AM)-WDOK(FM) Cleveland, WVON(AM)-WGCI(FM) Chicago, WDEE(AM)-WCZY(FM) Detroit and KSD(AM)-KCFM(FM) St. Louis—were acquired within the past three years. (The other radio stations are KHS-AM-FM Los Angeles and KEZL(FM) San Diego.)

The commission agreed to waive the hearing requirement on a number of grounds—among them that, to a certain extent, there will be continuity of ownership, as well as a continuity of operations with no apparent disruption of existing service. (Combined's Eller and two other Combined directors will be elected to the Gannett board, and Eller will also be a member of a new Gannett office of the chief executive.) The commission also noted that Combined had acquired most of its properties years ago and did not have a record of buying and selling stations for profit.

But one factor that caused at least as much discussion as the other two had nothing to do with existing rules or policy. Commissioner Tyrone Brown objected to the transfer of six AM-FM combinations. Even though the transfers would be in conformity with the rules, he argued for a condition that would require Gannett to break up the combinations by sale.

The result was a compromise, offered by Commissioner Robert E. Lee, to "get this thing off the dime." The commission attached a condition to its approval that would require Gannett to comply in the event the commission in the future adopts a rule prohibiting the acquisition or creation of co-located AM-FM combinations.

The issue required about an hour's discussion, and the condition was adopted over the objections of several commissioners who felt the commission should not attach it to an application that conformed to the rules. Commissioner Anne P. Jones felt strong enough about the matter to dissent to that portion of the order.

The commission also attached the condition to the approval of the Starr-Shamrock merger (KABL-AM-FM Oakland-San Francisco), over the dissents this time of Lee and Jones.

And it decided to attach the same condition to all applications that would result in the creation of co-located AM-FM combinations filed as of Friday (June 7). Left undecided was whether or not to attach it to applications already on file.

The Starr-Shamrock merger was approved by the commission with little discussion. The commission staff saw no reason that the Securities and Exchange Commission complaint filed against a number of Starr principals, including columnist William Buckley, should delay approval. Most of the principals have reached settlements with the SEC, which, among other things involve their payment to Starr stockholders of \$1.8 million in cash and stock. The staff said that consummation of the merger will help the principals meet that obligation.

The commission also noted—but took no position on—an agreement under which a Bay area citizen group, Community Coalition for Media Change, withdrew a petition to deny the transfer of the stations and a court suit it had filed against Starr. Both had been based on the charge KABL-AM-FM had failed to abide by the terms of an earlier agreement. Among

other provisions, the new understanding calls for Shamrock to pay CCMC \$60,000 to satisfy all claims it may have against Starr and another \$25,000 to a community service fund to be used for what is referred to as "minority community betterment."

## Goodman sees wider danger for the press

Retired NBC executive says recent court decisions are symptomatic of the political mood of the country at large

Julian Goodman, the former chairman of NBC who began his career as a newsman, last week expressed concern that this country is turning away from an absolutist commitment to the First Amendment's guarantee of a free press. And while, like others, he sees evidence of that in recent Supreme Court decisions, he sees it also in what he calls the country's slow turn "to the right over the past 15 or 20 years."

Goodman, who was delivering the second annual Frank E. Gannett lecture, sponsored by the Washington Journalism Center, offered a solution both simple and complicated: "Go back to the solid American belief in freedom of the press, without trying to change that absolute to conform to changing political beliefs and needs."

Goodman's theme was that, "in spite of the clarity of the words of the First Amendment, a succession of forays against it by those who disbelieve it—dis-

## In Brief

Buying into TV networks' **1979-80 prime-time schedules** has begun in earnest, network and agency sources said last week, with indications that **up-front buying**—which may total \$1.6 billion or more—**may be virtually completed by mid-July, if not earlier.** ABC-TV sources said their sales alone were approaching \$300 million as of Friday.

□

**National Cable Television Association will change dates of its 1980 convention**, in Dallas, from April 13-16 to May 18-21. Shift will be made to accommodate **National Association of Broadcasters**, which moved its 1980 convention from New Orleans to Las Vegas and into head-to-head conflict with NCTA dates. **Unhappy about it all: Canadian Cable Television Association**, whose 1980 convention is following week—May 26-29—in Vancouver. Proximity will cramp style of both exhibitors and delegates who attend both cable meetings.

□

National Black Media Coalition is **attempting to block dismissal of appeal in WESH case**, as requested by parties, including FCC. NBMC, which has participated in case as friend of court, last week asked U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington to deny motions filed by parties and issue mandate of order in which it overturns commission decision renewing Cowles Broadcasting Inc.'s renewal of WESH-TV Daytona Beach, Fla., and denies competing application of Central Florida Enterprises Inc. Issuance of mandate would send case back to commission, and NBMC said that issue in appeal is "validity" of process by which commission compared competing applications and "adequacy" of commission's articulated rationale.

General Accounting Office has cleared instructions for **FCC Form 395**, which commission had amended last February. New instructions—which have been mailed with forms to broadcasters, and are due by July 2—**require different types of listings of employees in various job categories than previously sought.** For example, depending on kind and level of responsibility expected of employees holding job titles "engineer" and "librarian," licensee would categorize them as "technicians" and "office and clerical," respectively, or "professional."

□

Time is coming when "**it will be impossible to distinguish" electronic from print journalists** and when "differences over the First Amendment won't exist," William A. Leonard, CBS News president, told **AP Broadcasters** in keynote speech Friday at their convention in New Orleans. He also foresaw possibility—without saying when it might happen—of around-the-clock news on TV with four major newscasts per day, updated constantly. Convention, which attracted more than 300 APB members, also was told by Ray Steinfort, AP vice president, that **AP will introduce on Sept. 1 new high-speed news service to TV stations**, transmitting 1,200 words per minute. Steinfort said new service, to be called APTV, will be "first news-wire service ever designed from the ground up with television in mind," and he named panel of news directors to help design it. APTV will be produced by AP's Broadcast News Center in New York under General Broadcast Editor Jim Hood.

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**Senator Harrison Schmitt** (R-N.M.), co-author of one of Communications Act revision bills, said over weekend that FCC Chairman Charles Ferris's testimony on Hill last week (see page 24) convinces Schmitt that **Ferris isn't "fully in step with the program" of radio deregulation.** Schmitt told AP Broadcasters convention in New Orleans