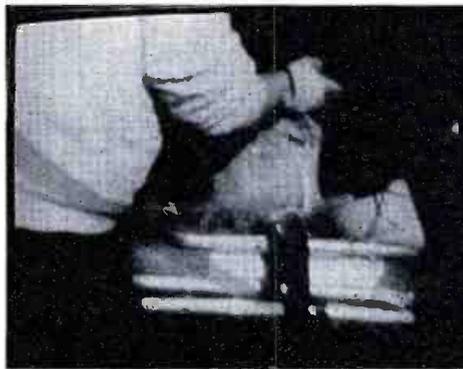




**WABC-TV New York** sent a film crew to Lenox hospital when it learned former Vice President Nelson Rockefeller was ill, and was the only news



team there when the ambulance and later his wife, Happy, arrived. Bulletins announcing his heart attack and death went on shortly.



Airlines Flight 173 crashed. The station had two crews at the airport after hearing reports of a plane in trouble; the plane crashed five miles from the airport at 6:15 p.m. Bulletins and updates were inserted all evening and the story led the 6:30 news. Staffers were at the airport providing live coverage and updates through the evening with nearly all of the 11 p.m. newscast devoted to the story. After the late news, a special team headed by news director Chuck Biechlin worked all night to produce an hour-long special report that aired at 9 a.m. the next day with live interviews with survivors. The next day another special was aired with new information including a look at safety practices at United Airlines.

The day the city of Cleveland went into default, **WKYC-TV** there opened its 6 p.m. newscast from the city council chambers with an interview of the city council majority leader, criticizing the handling of the city's finances. At the same time, the station's other anchor was live in the studio with the mayor, defending his policies. The debate ran for 10 minutes.

Washington was the scene for a spot news story for **WKYC-TV** last year. A local businessman was kidnapped and murdered and his wife injured. When word

reached the Cleveland station that one of the key suspects was going to surrender to his brother, a policeman in the Washington suburb of Arlington, Va., the station chartered a plane and sent a minicam crew. The story was covered live through the facilities of co-owned **WRC-TV** there, which used a secondary network line for the hookup.

A police strike in New Orleans made national news when it caused the cancellation of the Mardi Gras. **WWL-TV** there had 42 news staffers on the story full time, working two angles: (1) the hard news aspects of the stoppage and the efforts by the city and state to provide law enforcement protection, and (2) the complex story of the issues involved and the negotiations and legal maneuvers behind the scenes. The strike lasted for nearly three weeks, during which the station cut into regular programming 57 times, and expanded 16 newscasts as much as an hour. **WWL-TV** commissioned a local pollster to conduct daily public opinion polls. The station's two ENG vans fed more than 100 live remotes, at times from as many as five different locations during a single newscast. During the strike the station remained staffed 24 hours a day. Finally, early one Sunday morning, the police,

demoralized and financially broken, suddenly began drifting back to work. **WWL-TV's** overnight crew confirmed the development and claimed an on-air beat of four hours with the story.

In all, the station aired more than 11 hours of strike coverage outside its five daily newscasts and the staffers logged more than 1,000 hours of overtime during a 25-day period. According to **WWL-TV**, it was the station's most extensive and expensive coverage of a single story.

Becoming personally involved in a story is something reporters try to avoid, but it couldn't be helped in the case of seven of the 10 staffers at **KFDX-TV Wichita Falls, Tex.**, whose homes were destroyed by a tornado that hit north Texas and southern Oklahoma in April. The station worked all afternoon and past midnight getting information on the air until the power was knocked out, taking the station off the air. Twenty-four hours later, when the power was restored, **KFDX-TV** broadcast news and information uninterrupted for three hours and 40 minutes. Newscasts were expanded for the next five days, followed by an hour special documenting the storm that killed 62, injured over 3,000 and left 20,000 homeless.

The problems of election coverage for stations in cities away from the state capital where most of the candidates are headquartered were tackled by two South Carolina stations, **WFBC-TV Greenville** and **WIS-TV Columbia**. The two stations pooled their resources to cover the headquarters of the two gubernatorial and senate candidates in Columbia and local congressional candidates in both Greenville and Columbia. Close coordination between the two station producers allowed for reporter stand-ups using the pool video lines and microwaves. A separate audio network allowed each station to use its own reporters, with a mixer bringing in podium audio from the candidates as needed.

In election times, tempers often flare when opponents for political office confront each other. That happened in-studio at **WBBM-TV Chicago** when U.S. senatorial candidates Alex Seith and incumbent Charles Percy appeared on a Sunday-morning interview show. Seith arrived angry over a Percy-sponsored newspaper ad



**WCAU-TV Philadelphia** captured exclusive film footage of local police as they allegedly beat Delbert Africa, leader of a local cult called MOVE, after a shoot-out.