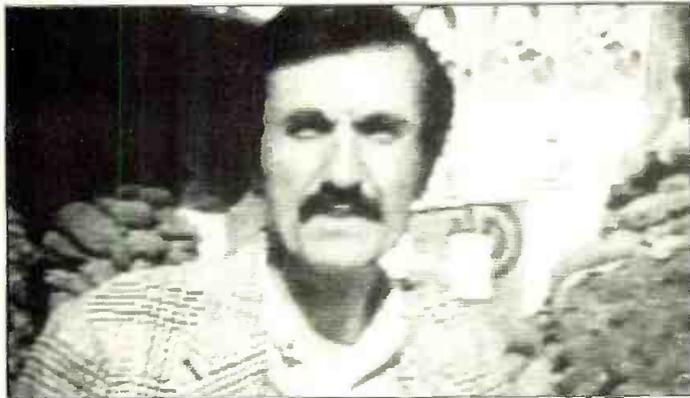


CNN Beirut bureau chief Jerry Levin disappeared last Wednesday (March 7), with no news as to his fate or whereabouts by week's end. CNN President Ed Turner flew to Beirut Friday (March 9) to



oversee effort to locate Levin, who had been in Beirut since December 1983. There were no signs of struggle at Levin's apartment, where he was last seen by his wife, Lucille, Wednesday night. There was no word that Levin had been abducted by kidnapers. Mark Dulmage, supervising producer at CNN based in Atlanta, has been dispatched to Beirut to oversee news operations there at least until Levin is found.

Limited advertising on public broadcasting was said to be "dead" issue—for time being. Temporary death knell was sounded at Public Broadcasting Service executive committee meeting and followed hearing before Senate Communications Subcommittee to discuss selling advertising time on public television (BROADCASTING, Feb. 27), and subsequent meeting Feb. 27 among National Association of Public Television Stations, station managers and directors of regional public television organizations. At second meeting consensus was reached to work toward increased federal funding authorizations for public broadcasting and to defer idea of three-year advertising experiment. From another front, endorsement for legislation "permanently authorizing limited advertising" was given in statement to Subcommittee by National Telecommunications and Information Administration Director, David J. Markey. However, Representative Timothy E. Wirth (D-Colo.) and Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), gave FCC go-ahead to "re-examine its underwriting acknowledgement policy" for public broadcasting. In letter to FCC Chairman Mark S. Fowler, March 8, two made it clear that "there is a major distinction between full-scale advertising" and enhanced underwriting. Any FCC "action on the advertising issue would be completely unwarranted," they said.

Price Communications Corp. announced Friday its purchase of **WTIX(AM) New Orleans and KOMA(AM) Oklahoma City, Okla., for \$6 million.** New York-based and publicly held group owner, headed by Robert Price, president, also owns **WOWO(AM) Fort Wayne, Indiana** and also bought, within past year, **KIOI(FM) San Francisco and WIRK-AM-FM West Palm Beach, Fla.** Seller, **Storz Broadcasting**, owned by Robert H. Storz, owns four other AM's. *Broker: Blackburn & Co.*

Price tag of \$950,000 has been put on **WGAY(AM) Silver Spring, Md. (Washington)** by owner, **Greater Media.** New Brunswick, N.J.-based group owner of five AM's and seven FM's must sell station to clear way for \$3.5-million purchase of NBC-owned **WRC(AM) Washington ("Riding Gain," Feb. 27).**

National Cable Programming Conference, annual programming conference of National Cable Television Association, which has played to mixed reviews since its inception in 1981, **has been folded into NCTA's annual convention**, slated for Las Vegas, June 3-6. NCPC will take over last day of convention and retain its own identity.

Presentation of ACE cable programming awards will no longer be part of NCPC. National awards will be presented in southern California ceremony in December (probably in tandem with Western Cable Show) and televised by superstation **WTBS(TV) Atlanta**; local awards will be given out at C-SPAN televised ceremony in Washington in September.

Broadcasters' performance on programming for children remained in congressional spotlight last week. Children's television was focus of House press conference (see story, page 46) where industry was rebuked for its record. Few days later, however, **National Association of Broadcasters** defended its record when it circulated "**Guide to Innovative Children's Programs for Television**," on Capitol Hill. Guide, published by NAB, includes listings of regularly scheduled, locally produced children's programs as well as syndicated series and special children's programs.

Edward M. Johnson, sole owner of **Edward M. Johnson & Associates Inc.**, which has prepared FCC applications for new broadcast facilities on behalf of clients, **sold Knoxville, Tenn.-based firm** last week **to one of its attorneys, Stanley G. Emert Jr.**, according to Johnson and Emert. Price was undisclosed, but Emert said it was in "seven figures," and Johnson intimated it was around \$4 million. With closing of deal, Emert said, name of firm was changed to **Omni Communications** and he became president. **Buford Television Inc.** had purchased 20% interest in firm from Johnson for \$1.4 million in late 1982, Johnson said, but sold it back to him year later for around \$800,000. Robert P. Buford, chairman and chief executive officer of Buford, had no comment. Johnson said contract contains 18-month noncompete agreement which prohibits him from setting up shop within 350 miles of Knoxville. But, he said, "I can't imagine me wanting to be back in the application preparation business." He said firm simply became "too big" for him to run. "There's a time to get in and a time to get out." He said he had no definite plans beyond running travel agencies he owns. "Right now I am going to see what the sun is like in Hawaii for a couple of weeks." Emert stressed that operating philosophy of firm would be different under his management. For one thing, he said, no employe of firm will be allowed to file applications prepared by the firm. "That would be a conflict of interest," he said. He said he would dismiss all his pending applications, except one for new UHF (ch. 29) in Charleston, S.C. He also said that Johnson would have "nothing to do directly or indirectly with the company."



Burnett honors. Actor **James Stewart (r)** presented actress/comedienne **Carol Burnett** with the **International Radio and Television Society's Gold Medal Award** on Wednesday, Feb. 28, during a banquet at New York's Waldorf-Astoria hotel. The medal, presented each year for outstanding achievement in radio and TV, was inscribed: "*Despite her enormous success, she remains a warm, gentle, thoughtful and down-to-earth human being.*"