

**Representatives of major broadcast networks and major programing producers have had informal discussions on revamping FCC financial interest and syndication rules,** setting stage, it is hoped, for more substantive meetings at "relatively high level" within next six weeks, according to sources close to talks. One was careful not to overstate significance of talks so far: "The wheels are under the cart, but nothing's rolling." If anyone was overstating situation last week, it was Motion Picture Association of America President Jack Valenti. In Aug. 5 letter to FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick, Valenti said: "The negotiations, though taking longer than anticipated, are still in progress, and continuing at this time.... We hope these negotiations can be concluded expeditiously." Asked for details, MPAA spokeswoman said: "They will begin again, but no time, date or name of negotiators have been set yet." Fin-syn, which limit networks' ownership interest and ability to syndicate rules, has been point of contention for years between networks and Hollywood. Cheered on by networks, FCC tried to eliminate rules in 1983, but Congress and personal intervention of President Reagan quashed effort. In related development, Fox Broadcasting Co. said last week it would back off efforts to have its network exempted from fin-syn and prime time access rule to give network-Hollywood talk chance. In comments to FCC, it said: "Fox does not want its request to distract the parties from these discussions, and, to the extent the negotiations proceed quickly and diligently, Fox is agreeable to having this proceeding await the resolution of the negotiations." Fox may have been reacting to July 28 letter Senate Communications Subcommittee Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) sent to Patrick in which Inouye urged chairman not to act on Fox's petition for exemption until there is "reasonable opportunity" for network-Hollywood talks to bear fruit.

Pursuing local angle during this week's **Republican convention in New Orleans** will be **4,048 anchors, editors, correspondents and technicians** representing 315 television and 245 radio stations. Those figures show a slight drop in attendance by stations compared to Democratic convention last month in Atlanta where 338 TV and 275 radio outlets were among the 4,100 initially registered with Radio-Television Correspondents Gallery, which attributed decrease to more thorough "culling process" second time around.

With sale of **wcix(TV)** Miami to CBS (see page 65), **Fox Broadcasting has major market affiliate hole to fill.** FBC president Jamie Kellner and executives at **wsvn(TV)** Miami (ch. 7) are scheduled to meet next week to "explore our options," said station VP/general manager, Robert Leider. FBC official also said two other UHF independents in market have expressed interest in affiliating with Fox, including **wbsf-TV** (ch. 33) and **wdzl(TV)** (ch. 39), but that interest could not be confirmed at deadline.

**TVX Broadcast Group Inc. was granted temporary exemption from qualification standards for NASDAQ stock listing.** New status (and new stock symbol of TVXGC) for TV group owner, indicative of company's financial troubles, specifically resulted from its negative shareholder's equity as reported on March 31 balance sheet.

**FCC may be closing in on person who last September disrupted satellite feeds of two adult-oriented programing services, Playboy Channel and American Exxtasy, overriding feeds briefly with messages telling viewers to "repent."** According to *Norfolk (Va.) Virginian-Pilot*, FCC has been focusing its investigation on male technicians at CBN in Norfolk, Va., with access to cable network's uplinks, and that federal grand jury in Norfolk heard testimony on case on July 28. CBN spokeswoman Frankie Abourjilie confirmed report, saying CBN has been target of investigation for several months. "We have complied and cooperated with the FCC in every way we can," she said. As cable network, she said, CBN feels it is important for FCC to find "culprit" to preserve integrity of satellite feeds. However, she said, CBN believes its employe is innocent. "We have talked to him, and he remains on the job.... We support our employe. We don't think it

had anything to do with us." Richard Smith, chief of FCC's field operations bureau, declined comment. "We can't talk about a grand jury proceeding." But, he said: "We do expect to crack this case very soon."

Although staying in business to rent four remaining trucks, **Hubbard Communications will cease manufacturing satellite news-gathering vehicles next month,** said Hubcom president, George Orgera. In early 1980's, Hubcom was first to build light, mostly Ku-band uplink and video production trucks that uplink directly to satellites. Orgera emphasized that Hubcom will continue honoring warranties on more than 70 trucks sold, although he confirmed discussions with several parties seeking purchase of designs and facilities. "If they do, fine; if they don't, fine," he said. Hubbard "never intended" long-term commitment to manufacturing, he said, and entered business only to provide vehicles to co-owned Conus newsgathering cooperative, buyer of first "25 or 30" built.

**Prime Ticket, regional cable sports service, will increase number of hockey games of Los Angeles Kings** from 37 to 60 this season as result of trade of Wayne Gretzky to Kings. Added revenue from Prime Ticket purchase of rights to more games, plus other promotional contributions, will help fund acquisition of Gretzky by Kings, said PT President Tony Accone.

**Narragansett Capital has retained Goldman Sachs & Co. to assist in "discussions with certain select organizations which have indicated interest in acquiring the Narragansett-owned ABC affiliate, KOVR-TV Sacramento, Calif."** Gregory Barber, managing director of Providence, R.I.-based venture capital firm, which bought station two years ago for \$104 million, said KOVR-TV was bought with part of \$75 million proceeds from 1982 limited partnership fund, much of which has since been "cashed out" at gains of close to 300%. Firm, said Barber, is under no pressure to sell station since limited partnership agreement, although having typical seven-year "life," provides managing directors with option of maintaining its investments indefinitely. Narragansett's other managing director, Jonathan Nelson, said firm's second fund, which raised \$215 million, was "just yesterday bidding on other network affiliates."

**Association of National Advertisers** has sent letter to Senate Majority leader Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) expressing **concern over proposal floated by Senator Tim Wirth (D-Colo.) on children's television.** Wirth's proposal (BROADCASTING, Aug. 8) would go further than House-passed bill, reinstating FCC limits on advertising in children's programs and requiring broadcasters to provide educational programing for children as condition of license renewal. ANA said Wirth proposal "presents a serious challenge to the First Amendment rights of program producers and advertisers and would work to undermine the efforts of both groups to improve the quantity and quality of children's programing."

**Columbia Pictures Television's "Columbia Night at the Movies" barter movie package scored 10.3 overnight cumulative rating** with airing of its third-quarter presentation of "Band of the Hand." Rating was compiled from 16 metered markets. Over all, movie was cleared in 132 markets, representing 88% of country. Each of package's four films can be aired twice. Columbia Night at the Movies' second-quarter film, "Critters," scored 10.0 national cumulative rating. Package's five-year average is 10.1.

**Only members of Congress, government officials, press and invited television industry leaders will be admitted to two-day demonstration of high-definition TV on Capitol Hill,** set for Sept. 8-9. Demonstration, to be held in room 345 of Cannon House Office Building, is expected to be heavily attended. House Telecommunication Subcommittee, which is sponsoring demonstration, has rescheduled earlier postponed hearing to review latest HDTV advancements for Sept. 7. Time, location and witness list for hearing have not yet been announced.