

Angeles news director Tom Capra.

PALM SPRINGS

Lonely at the top

Competition for seats on National Association of Broadcasters executive committee is sparse. On radio side, current vice chairman, David Hicks of WKFR(AM)-WKMI(FM) Kalamazoo, Mich., is running unopposed for chairman. Richard Novik, WKIP(AM) Poughkeepsie, N.Y., is seeking vice chairmanship with no apparent opposition. It seems television is even having trouble finding directors interested in post. No candidates have yet to surface.

Nonproblem

Potential flare-up on Capitol Hill over efforts to ban or restrict beer and wine ads is source of concern for National Association of Broadcasters. But quick survey among Hill staff indicates that while issue may bubble up, any real danger of congressional action is highly

unlikely. Such key communications policymakers as House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell (D-Mich.) have shown no desire to regulate in that area. Furthermore, Congress is working on tight schedule (it is election year) and issue so controversial as beer and wine advertising is not considered easy to move.

HOLLYWOOD

In suspense

Tribune Entertainment is pitching new game show strip, *The Puzzle Game*, as "likely" daytime network strip on CBS, but syndicator has yet to receive word from network whether show will actually get daytime exposure in midseason or fall 1990. David Sifford, senior vice president, sales, Tribune Entertainment, said show is just now being pitched to stations and reps, but was unable to indicate if any major clearances had been locked down or if Tribune would place *Puzzle Game* on

any of its O&O stations.

Not yet

Despite apparently robust test run for proposed daytime talk strip *Private Affairs* (BROADCASTING, Dec. 25, 1989), distributor Multimedia Entertainment is delaying expected fall 1990 rollout of Cindi Rinehart-hosted vehicle. Bruce Johansen, vice president, West Coast regional sales and program development, Multimedia, said *Private Affairs* won't go public at NATPE convention in New Orleans because "quantitative research" (done in Sacramento, where it aired on KCRA-TV) is "far" from complete.

TULSA

Taking a hit from syndex

United Video has tallied early damage report on syndex. With caveat that some operators are still taking wait and see attitude on whether more blackouts, and thus more station drops, will occur, common carrier said it

has lost about 45% of base of KTVT(TV) Dallas, dropping 350,000 subscribers from base of 800,000. And it has lost 20%, or 300,000 subscribers, from 1.4 million base for WPXI(TV) New York. Meanwhile, it has gained over one million homes for WGN-TV Chicago. But because of programing and administrative costs of syndex, company estimates it may be several years before it fully recovers, despite WGN-TV subscriber increases.

BARCELONA

Cash or carry

Report that Japanese television rights to 1992 summer Olympics were sold at substantial discount to those paid by NBC (see page 53) will no doubt continue debate over whether U.S. bears more than fair share. Disparity between just-announced \$62.5 million versus \$401 million NBC will pay is hard to ignore but at least some of difference is eliminated by rarely reported fact that Japanese will pay money upfront, while NBC payment schedule is less immediate. Using 10% discount rate value of Japanese rights, if calculated at times games actually run, it's close to \$80 million, or almost 30% higher than current payment. Upfront requirement also applies to Canadians who recently agreed to \$12 million sum for rights to 1992 games.

BERLIN

Eyes on Berlin

European and U.S. broadcasters are now discussing details for setting up joint TV news production center and satellite relay facility in Berlin. Professional Video Service Corp. (PVS), seven-year-old company which currently offers similar service out of its Washington headquarters, is in planning stages of setting up facility in Germany in cooperation with NBC and BBC. According to PVS President Bob Grevenberg, Berlin center could be opened within next few months.



Growing skeptical in the White House press room

White House correspondents participated last Tuesday in an unusual Donahue session—a roundtable discussion, with no audience, taped in the BizNet Studios of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington. One consensus that emerged—dealing with the press corps' relations with President Bush—was that the President may be headed for a credibility problem. UPI's Helen Thomas said Bush appears to have a passion for the kind of secrecy that "boomeranged" on Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. And ABC News's Brit Hume noted that Secretary of State James Baker III admitted he had "mised" the press corps concerning administration meetings with the Chinese government since the June massacre—contrasted with a clip of Bush saying, "I don't think Jim Baker would ever deliberately mislead anyone." L to r: Hume; John Cochran, NBC News; Phil Donahue; Charles Bierbauer, CNN; Mark Shields, Washington Post. Seated: Thomas and Lesley Stahl, CBS News.