

Edwards Sr. that while he was originally informed that the four stations Glencairn was to acquire from Sullivan via Sinclair were \$80 million in debt, that amount is actually \$40.5 million.

Rainbow/PUSH and Kelley International Licensing LLC have objected to Glencairn's acquisition of KOKH-TV, pointing out that Sinclair already owns KOCB-TV Oklahoma City and saying that Sinclair controls Glencairn. The FCC currently bars a single broadcaster from owning more than one TV station in a market. Sinclair has defended itself by saying that the FCC has already signed off on its relationship

with Glencairn in previous rulings.

Of Glencairn's equity, 90% is held as nonvoting stock in trusts set up by Carolyn C. Smith for her grandchildren. Smith is the mother of the four brothers who run Baltimore-based Sinclair. Sinclair maintains an option to purchase Carolyn Smith's interest in Glencairn.

Kelley owns KWTW(TV) Oklahoma City. Rainbow/PUSH got involved last July after charging that Sinclair and Glencairn violated the FCC's equal employment opportunity rules in Texas.

Complaints about previous Sinclair-Glencairn deals in various markets

have been filed by Pulitzer Broadcasting Co., Harte-Hanks Television, First Media Television LP and Post-Newsweek Stations Inc. The FCC approved all the deals in June 1997, but Pulitzer's "appeal for review" is still pending in Greenville, S.C.

Sinclair has 20 days from March 15, the date on the FCC's letter, to respond.

In other Sinclair news, the company on March 19 said it is dropping plans to buy WMHQ(TV) Schenectady/Albany, N.Y. The company says that is part of its diversification program, which aims to sell TV and radio stations to raise \$500 million. ■



GET WITH THE PROGRAM

By Joe Schlosser

The Fox that would be King

Add Fox Family Worldwide to the list of potential suitors for syndication power King World Productions. Fox Family, a partnership between News Corp. and Saban Entertainment, has reportedly had discussions with King World executives about a possible purchase of the distribution company, which syndicates *Wheel of Fortune*, *Jeopardy* and *Oprah Winfrey*, among others. Fox Family currently has over \$1.5 billion in debt it incurred when it acquired The Family Channel two years ago. King World has over \$1 billion in cash reserves on hand and another half a billion coming in over the next several years in syndication license fees. King World executives have had discussions with CBS, Sony and other Hollywood entertainment companies over the last few months about a possible sale or merger. Both King World and Fox Family executives had no comment.

The Short of it

King World has cleared its upcoming talker, *The Martin Short Show*, on Chris-Craft/United Television's KCOP-TV Los Angeles for fall. The show is cleared in 71% of the country, King World executives say. Chris-Craft/United's WWOR-TV New York is expected to pick up the show as well. WWOR-TV executives had no comment.

'Evil Cat' gets another life

Stone Stanley Productions has entered into an exclusive deal with cartoonist Walter Santucci to develop *The Evil Cat* animated shorts into a half-hour animated adult series. *The Evil Cat*, which was released internationally as a trilogy, is described by Stone Stanley executives as a cross between *The X-Files* and *South Park*.

New role for 'Players' players

Two former members of the NBC series *Players* have found new roles this spring on UPN pilots. Rapper/actor Ice-T is joining the cast of a

drama, *The Disciples*, and Costas Mandylor is joining *Secret Agent Man*. Ice-T will play the character Master in the martial arts drama from Viacom TV and Kirk Wong (*The Big Hit*). Mandylor will play one of the leads in the spy thriller from producers Barry Josephson and Barry Sonnenfeld.

Winning Oscar performance

The Academy Awards may have been less than stellar for ABC (see story, page 34), but they presented Paramount Domestic Television's newsmagazine *Entertainment Tonight* with its highest ratings of the season. *ET* scored an 8.1 rating/13 share on Monday night with post-Oscar coverage, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Good Morning, Oprah

Oprah Winfrey and the producers of ABC's *Good Morning America* are currently discussing the possibility of the talk show host filling in for a week on the

struggling morning news program during the upcoming May sweeps. A spokeswoman at Winfrey's Harpo Studios confirmed last week that Winfrey has been talking with GMA executives, but added "nothing has been decided yet." Winfrey will likely be sitting in with new GMA co-host Diane Sawyer while Charles Gibson is on vacation.

Hail to the Chief

Twentieth Television's syndicated relationship series, *Forgive or Forget*, was the beneficiary of President Clinton's press conference on Friday, March 18. The freshman relationship show scored its highest ratings to date in the Big Apple with a 5.7 rating/14 share on WWOR-TV New York, according to Nielsen Media Research. Much of *Forgive or Forget's* toughest competition, including *Judge Judy* and *Oprah Winfrey*, was preempted by Clinton's White House speech.

Gotta DanceSport

Trans World International (TWI) is producing its third one-hour prime time special for NBC devoted to DanceSport, a combination of ballroom dancing and athleticism. *International DanceSport Championships III* will air this June on NBC.