EAST-MIDWEST CO-AX

Service Ready Jan. 12

AMERICAN Telephone & Telegraph Co. last week advised television broadcasters that the coaxial cable linking the East with the Midwest would be ready for network operations Jan. 12.

The historic joining of television stations from the East Coast to the Midwest will make the Mississippi will extend network service over AT&T cables or radio relays to at least 13 metropolitan areas with a total population of 11,500,000.

Two other cities, connected to networks by privately operated relays — Schenectady and New Haven — bring the total families in metropolitan areas to be served by interconnected television stations after Jan. 12 to over 12,600,000.

ABC, CBS, DuMont and NBC television exhibitions were known to be planning extensive celebrations of the linking of the East and Midwest, but plans were not yet crystallized.

Schedule to Be Worked Out

A meeting of broadcasters and AT&T representatives was held scheduled for Nov. 15 to discuss the schedules of use of the new cable link. Facilities will not permit indiscriminate use by individual broadcasters, and a schedule of sharing time will have to be worked out among all networks.

Although as yet no network has more than tentatively approached the planning of special programs in celebration of the network expansion, it seems certain that the inauguration of President Truman Jan. 20 will figure prominently in all program plans.

It was recalled that the opening of the Washington-New York coaxial cable television service was celebrated with the telecast of Lincoln Day ceremonies in Washington Feb. 12, 1946.

The new cable between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh was put into television service last Thursday and is expected to be ready for television use around the first of the year, when installation of terminal facilities is completed. Work is proceeding on the Pittsburgh-Cleveland land cable, which will be the connecting link between East and Midwest.

First call on the Philadelphia-Pittsburgh cable, designed primarily for telephone service, was a conversation between the mayors of the two cities. The link is capable of handling about 600 telephone conversations, or two television programs, in each pair of its eight coaxial cables. The project was commenced in October 1947 and cost approximately $8 million. Cost of the Pittsburgh-Cleveland segment is about $4.5 million.

Cities which will be interconnected by the AT&T system after Jan. 12 are New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and New Haven.

Preparations as to the dates of completion of network links to other areas still vary widely. AT&T has said that its coaxial cable equipped for telephone service will extend from New York to Los Angeles by the spring of 1949.

The equipment of this cable for television use, however, would take an as yet unspecified time.

The completion of AT&T's plan was in BROADCASTING'S TELESTATUS July 19.