

# RADIO FIRST AS NEWS SOURCE

## Pulse Survey Reveals

RADIO is still America's number one news source, outranking newspapers by 38%, television by 268%, according to a survey made early last summer by Pulse Inc. for Free & Peters, which revealed the results of the survey last week in an attractive brochure titled "Radio News Is Bigger Than You Think."

"It was a study we felt impelled to sponsor," the station representative firm explains, "to obtain factual answers for those who, in 1950, were quite ready to bury all radio, most certainly news over the radio. . . . It was an attitude we found hard to accept. That there had been a strong habit of turning to the radio for news, no one would deny. . . . Was it possible that a habit so firmly established, so strongly catered to, so universally acknowledged, could suddenly weaken and fade away? Only research could give the answer."

As guinea pig, Free & Peters selected a program of almost pure radio news broadcast by seven of the stations the company represents: Four five-minute broadcasts a day sponsored by the same advertiser (Esso, although the name is not mentioned in the report), with each station selecting and rewriting the news for each program, both news and commercials being broadcast by an anonymous voice.

Three key questions were chosen for the survey: Do people listen to the radio for news? Is there any difference in news listening between families living in the station's city and families living in surrounding towns 25 to 40 miles away? How does TV set ownership affect listening to radio news?

### More Depend On Radio

In answer to the first of the three key questions, F&P found "more people depend on radio for news than on any other medium." Asked whether they got most of their news from newspapers, radio or television (in that order), people gave radio the decision over newspapers by 38%, city dwellers preferring radio to newspapers by 18%, "outsiders" by 60%. Radio led TV in the overall figures by 268%, radio's lead in the city being 195%, its lead in the outside area of satellite markets 25 to 40 miles away being 352%.

"This greater dependence on radio for news by respondents in the 'outside' areas was observed in every single market," Free & Peters reports, noting that the average plus of 23% in "outside" over city figures is missed by surveys of listening based on interviews made only "inside" the city. "It means that radio news is bigger than you think."

Moving from general news listening to the specific "guinea pig" program, the Pulse surveyers found

that "in the course of a week one out of three families listens to at least one broadcast of this news program." Furthermore listening to it becomes a habit, "more than one out of four listeners hear two or more of these broadcasts every day, more than half listen five or six days a week; more than four out of five listen three to six days a week."

A sizeable proportion of the listeners to these newscasts—37% or more—comes either from other stations or turns on its radios expressly to get the news. No less than 28% go to another station or turn the sets off after the news is finished.

Checking on TV homes, "we found that television set owners do 73% as much listening to this radio news program as non-TV owners," the report states. It points out that TV listeners do

more of their listening in different parts of the house—41.6% in the kitchen, 34.2% in the living room, 18.6% in the bedroom and 5.6% in the dining room—than non-TV owners, who do their listening largely (65.0%) in the living room and only 20.3% in the kitchen, 10.9% in the bedroom and 3.8% in the dining room.

### 95% Are Adults

Analysis of the *Esso Reporter* audience by age and sex shows more than 95% of the audience comprised of adult men and women. Coupled with the fact that 57% of program's listeners were able to identify its sponsor, this implied that the program should do a good sales job. But Free & Peters was not satisfied with mere implication and went a step further, matching each member of a listening group with a non-listener, age for age, sex for sex, dwelling

for dwelling, community for community, so that "as closely as competent research could achieve, both groups were exactly the same in all respects—but one: One group listened, the other did not listen to this news program."

Sales to listeners were 50% higher than to non-listeners, with 29.6% of the listening group having bought Esso gas at the last purchase while only 19.7% of the non-listeners had bought this brand. As listening increased so did the per cent of purchasers: 24.0% of those listening one or two days; 27.9% of those listening three or four days; 33.4% of those listening five or six days bought the advertised brand.

Free & Peters concludes the report with this sentence: "Radio news stands out as a vital service to listeners . . . as an effective vehicle for advertisers."

# DON LEE SALE

## General Tire Purchase Approved

THE RECORD \$12,320,000 acquisition of the Don Lee radio and TV properties by General Tire & Rubber Co., along with parlay sales of one AM and one TV station, was slated to be consummated yesterday (Sunday), after FCC approved the transactions Wednesday.

Arising out of the Los Angeles Superior Court's acceptance of the General Tire bid for the stock of Thomas S. Lee Enterprises from

the Thomas S. Lee Estate [BROADCASTING • TELECASTING, Nov. 20, Oct. 23, 1950], the multiple transactions break down thus:

● The First National Bank of Akron, as trustee of the retirement plan for salaried employes of General Tire and certain subsidiaries, acquires the radio-TV properties of Don Lee Broadcasting System, including its four owned AM stations and one FM and one TV station for \$12,320,000 cash.

● The bank sells KTSL (TV) Hollywood and four experimental and associated facilities to CBS for \$333,765 plus long-term lease arrangements covering studios, transmitter site and other facilities for a total rental of \$3,115,000.

● To meet FCC's duopoly requirements, CBS must dispose of its 49% interest in KTTV (TV) Los Angeles—which is slated to go to the Los Angeles Times, already owner of 51%, for a reported \$450,000.

● General Tire acquires all of the Don Lee properties except KTSL and one AM station from the bank as trustee for \$650,000, subject to adjustment not to exceed \$750,000, with General Tire's Lee Enterprises leasing space and facilities for 10 years at a total rental of \$3,480,000.

● To comply with FCC's multiple-ownership policy limit of seven stations, General Tire, which also owns Yankee Network and Yankee's four owned stations, sells the Don Lee KDB Santa Barbara to Lincoln Del-lar, sole owner of KXOA-AM-FM Sacramento, KXOB Stockton, and KXOC Chico, Calif., for \$25,000.

### Part Not Included

Not included in the FCC actions, since FCC approval is not required, was Don Lee's 19% interest in Mutual, which went to General Tire, already owner of approximately 19%. General Tire also acquires control of Pacific Northwest Broadcasting Co., through which the Don Lee Network has 25 affiliates in addition to 16 affiliates in California.

With completion of the sales, the California properties involved will be held as follows:

General Tire—Don Lee Broadcasting System, including KHJ-AM-FM Los Angeles, KFRC San

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EVIDENCE of a satisfied sponsor is reflected on the dotted line of the 1951 contract signed by Feld Chevrolet and KCKN Kansas City, Kan. Firm has sponsored broadcasts in the Kansas City market without interruption since March 1937. New pact for KCKN broadcasts is signed by Milton Feld, president of the company, while looking on are (l to r): Hurlley Kaylor (seated), KCKN commercial representative; Lester Goodman, Feld secretary-treasurer, and Merritt Owens, president, Merritt Owens Advertising Agency, which handles account. Feld has sponsored a \$10,000 "mystery voice" contest and other programs on KCKN.