

bination of the 20 kw ERP, the half degree tilt, and the 1,285 feet elevation provided a perfect picture in Hartford at a seven to eleven mile distance and in Springfield at approximately a 30 mile distance, but did not adequately serve all of the New Britain area from two to six miles from the antenna. New Britain is located at a point 885 feet lower than the center of the antenna radiating system. There were some serious light signal areas as far as four miles from the tower. At this point the station's engineering department decided to experiment with a one degree tilt in an attempt to improve the poor signal areas within two to four miles of the tower. The shift to a one degree tilt resulted in a tremendous increase in signal strength over the entire New Britain area and also improved the signal in the Hartford area, which was already excellent from seven to eleven miles away.

During the first week of July, WKNB-TV is replacing the present TFU-21BL antenna with the new RCA TFU-21DL. This antenna will be installed with a one-half degree tilt which will restore the original service to such areas as Springfield, 30 miles distant, and at the same time is designed to provide adequate signal strength in the area close to the tower. The present antenna is doing an excellent job and this new antenna installation will serve to further increase the effectiveness of the Ch. 30 operation. Late this year it is expected that the final amplifier will be delivered by RCA which will increase the ERP to 206 kilowatts.

Prior to the start of operations, the sta-

tion had spent months in negotiating with the various networks on an affiliation contract. Since the only service that was reaching the Hartford County area at all was from the basic NBC station in New Haven, the emphasis was placed on working out the details with CBS, and a supplementary contract was also made with DuMont. As was the case with most new markets, the station quickly found that the network sales organization was not in a position to concentrate on any single market, and large portions of the network business placed were solicited directly by the station sales staff through the national agencies. The demand for the market was widespread, and the major agencies placed contracts immediately for network shows based on an estimated 20,000 set figure for the start of operations. The Class A one-time rate was established at \$250 per hour. On February 25, two weeks after the start of operations, sworn statements from most of the distributors in the area showed a set count of 36,645. On March 31 a similar count showed 53,017 sets equipped for Channel 30 in the market area. On April 27 this count, which was verified by a firm of certified public accountants in Hartford, reached 61,789.

As a promotion vehicle to further stimulate the conversion of existing vhf sets and to promote the sale of new receivers, the station contracted for the coverage of the Boston Red Sox baseball games with the station providing the relay facilities from the Boston station. While this proved to be an extremely expensive undertaking, it is expected that it will substantially increase

the number of uhf units in the market even though the summer period is normally extremely poor for television receiver sales.

By March of this year, the picture regarding uhf had become even more complicated in the minds of national agency buyers by reason of exaggerated set counts, inability of some stations to maintain regular schedules due to faulty equipment, and reported disinterest in some markets on the part of the public to convert to uhf. Several agencies and trade organizations were attempting to survey various uhf markets to establish a true picture of uhf performance. In some cases it was found that the set counts had been exaggerated; in many other cases the sudden demand for transmitter equipment had caught manufacturers unawares with resulting shortages and technical deficiencies. However, these were isolated cases, and in general uhf was found to be doing an amazing job with a growth that far surpassed that of vhf. in its pioneering days.

CBS Survey

Early in March, within the first three weeks of operation, a CBS representative, on an official mission to determine the uhf story, made a survey of the Hartford-New Britain market and covered a radius of some thirty miles with a glowing report of WKNB-TV's progress as a result. This survey was based on visits to dealers and hundreds of calls at private homes where the home-owner was asked whether or not he had installed a Ch. 30 receiver, or if he intended to do so. In many cases, homes with no outside antenna were found to be already equipped with Ch. 30. In those homes that were not already converted, there was intense interest, and in most cases where Ch. 30 was being received, home-owners were tremendously enthusiastic about the quality of the picture and the type and caliber of programming presented.

The station programming at this time was based on approximately 33 CBS shows weekly and three DuMont presentations, plus top quality film presentations on an early show from 6:15 to 7:30, and a late show from 11:15 to sign-off. Gaps in network programming were covered with such features as wrestling and other sports films plus half-hour feature films and syndicated shows sold on a local basis.

The local advertiser in the Hartford-New Britain market, as well as more outlying communities such as Springfield, Manchester, Middletown, Meriden, and Waterbury gave the station a tremendous vote of confidence by placing more than a quarter of a million dollars of annual business within the first two months of operation.

We didn't trust to luck. We stuck closely to the fundamentals of advertising, and if I were asked to suggest a plan for launching a uhf station, I would recommend this formula. It worked for us and I believe can be adapted to any other area. A full-scale educational promotion campaign in the entire Connecticut and western Massachusetts area was started four months prior to the station's inaugural telecast. Luncheon meetings were held with distributors of television receivers to orient them on the station's plans, coverage pattern, and programming and to promote the procure-

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