



NECESSARY to receive uhf KPIK (TV) Los Angeles, signal are an "all channel" receiver, on which Thornton Chew (l), director of television engineering, John Poole Broadcasting Co., is resting his hand, and the "bow tie" antenna John Poole, owner-manager of Channel 22, is holding in his hand.

convert to uhf. John Poole Broadcasting Co. is already campaigning, mainly on KBIG, with the slogan, "America's New Standard—All-Channel TV." Immediately after KPIK's test pattern goes on the air, the promotion will be expanded to use billboards, newspapers and magazines. In this, Mr. Poole hopes for the cooperation of television manufacturers and distributors.

"We hope to build up a receiver market of roughly 200,000 sets a year. The manufacturers say all-channel sets will be rolling into the Los Angeles area in six months. Then, if the distributors want to sell sets, they can sponsor good shows on Ch. 22," Mr. Poole pointedly suggests.

His strongest immediate support will come from television set manufacturers and distributors, John Poole expects, primarily because he is starting a uhf station in a vhf area. "The Los Angeles area is practically saturated with vhf sets and the average receiver is two or three years old," he observes. "Their big problem is how to sell new sets. Uhf opens a vast new market, both for dealers to replace present vhf-only with all-channel receivers and for television services to convert existing sets."

All-Channel Set Need

Current receiver manufacturing is a subject on which Mr. Poole has strong feelings. "The manufacturers can't continue to construct 'custom-made' sets. At present they make vhf receivers for Los Angeles, for instance, and uhf for other markets. They'll have to standardize on all-channel receivers so they can mass-produce."

Color television might serve other purposes beyond offering a new facet of the medium, he thinks. "Conversion to color might clean out the old, exclusively-vhf sets. Of course, it won't happen overnight. The change to all-channel, color receivers will take place slowly until the price comes down. But it will eventually."

If preliminary observations are borne out by further research, one characteristic of uhf may prove a valuable selling point. Mr. Poole explains, "It's been definitely shown uhf signals are subject to less interference

from certain kinds of electrical disturbances, such as 'snow' caused by automobile ignition."

KBIG's success is attributed, in large part, to John Poole's ideas on programming, but he ruefully admits he has no "secret weapon" in store for KPIK's viewers. "The programs won't be costly," he says. "We'll have to rely on ingenuity for our low-budget, one-or-two camera shows. We don't intend to compete with the networks. Rather, we'll try to develop a programming to satisfy people not now completely happy with that of the networks and independents."

The four permittees who recently told the FCC that subscription television was a necessity to make uhf-TV economically sound [B•T, Aug. 10] do not find agreement from Mr. Poole. "We don't have to have it to survive. But if it brings additional and new service to the public, fine. However, I think people are so used to seeing television free, subscription TV will have to be very good to succeed."

KPIK will operate fewer hours than its vhf competition, owner Poole reveals. This will serve two purposes: To keep expenses down and to help the station's programming. "We'd rather have better than more shows," he says.

Less Than Authorized Power

The station will go on the air with less than its authorized power, mainly because of the difficulty in getting transmission equipment delivery. "We're asking the FCC for permission to operate with 12 kw at first, which, plus antenna gain, should give us 50,000 watts in all. There will be a substantial antenna tilt of 3 degrees. But when our custom-built equipment becomes available, we plan to go to 540,000 watts."

Commenting on KPIK's transmission building on Mt. Wilson, overlooking the greater Los Angeles area, Mr. Poole says, "We did consider building on Catalina Is-

land, where KBIG's transmitter is located, so we could serve some areas not now covered by television—Laguna Beach, for instance. But the advantages of Mt. Wilson outweigh those of Catalina. We get a better signal from Mt. Wilson. With our present interim equipment, we expect to serve virtually all of metropolitan Los Angeles with only slightly greater technical difficulty than the Mt. Wilson vhf stations."

"The great and growing Los Angeles area can ultimately make use of 10 television facilities, which is the present plan," Mr. Poole says, deferring to the authorized nine commercial and one educational station allotted the region. "Five years ago, when we were experimenting with KM2XAZ near Long Beach, I knew all the vhf channels were used up and that any other station coming into this area would have to be uhf."

Uhf television will not fade in importance as did FM radio, Mr. Poole feels. A number of cities must turn to uhf for second and third service because of the limited vhf channels. In some areas, uhf is the first service. Unlike FM, uhf in many places will not have to overcome the strong competition of long-established stations while trying to earn public acceptance. However, the entire controversy of uhf vs. vhf will become theoretical in the not-too-distant future because, he believes, "It will all be called television, whether it's uhf or vhf."

So Daniel, alias John Poole, marches into the lions' den with a firm faith that:

- Although five of the seven Los Angeles vhf stations currently are not operating at a profit, they eventually will solve their problems and find their way into the black.
- Uhf television will achieve an equal basis with vhf in a number of years, mainly through modernization of receivers.
- Los Angeles has enough varied tastes to make practical use of 10 TV facilities.

TRANSMITTER building of John Poole Broadcasting Co., atop Mt. Wilson near Los Angeles, houses two other stations besides uhf Ch. 22. Ground floor is leased by KFWB-FM (whose tower can be seen at right) and part of second floor is leased by Ch. 28, USC-Allan Hancock Foundation educational station (center tower), both Los Angeles. KPIK (TV), same city, has cooling equipment, engineering offices and workshop on first floor, transmitter equipment on rest of second floor, and microwave equipment on top floor. Tower at left is that of KHJ-TV Los Angeles.

