

at deadline

WJR Gets Flint Ch. 12; Other FCC Actions

FINAL decision granting Flint ch. 12 to WJR Detroit announced by FCC Friday, reversing initial decision of year ago which recommended grant to WFDF Flint. Final order denied competitive applications of WFDF and Butterfield Theatres Inc. Comr. Frieda B. Hennock dissented.

Commission majority overruled findings of examiner that WFDF should be preferred because of program proposals for Flint and choice of antenna site nearer Flint. Majority concluded all three sites put more than minimum signal into Flint and allocation table requires station to be Flint outlet despite extra coverage in Detroit. All three promised Flint service, FCC noted.

WJR was favored on basis of greater live program plans, superior technical equipment including mobile unit for immediate remote programming, and realistic network proposal. WJR said it would air DuMont, not presently in Detroit area, while others planned NBC. FCC also issued order denying petition of Butterfield for re-argument of initial decision in view of long pendency of case.

Sale of KOTV (TV) Approved; Lee Concerned Over Trend

SALE of ch. 6 KOTV (TV) Tulsa by Jack Wrather-Helen Alvarez group to New York investment firm of J. H. Whitney & Co. for \$4 million—involving “substantial profit,” according to Comr. Robert E. Lee—approved by FCC Friday [B•T, April 12].

In concurring statement, Comr. Lee indicated no objection to specific sale but expressed concern over trend toward big-price tv transactions and transfer procedure in which no opportunity for comparative evaluation of applicants is allowed as in contest for new station permit.

Wrather-Alvarez interests acquired KOTV control in mid-1952 for \$1.6 million. Station is only vhf outlet at Tulsa, carries all four networks. KCEB (TV) Tulsa is on ch. 23, KSPG (TV) holds permit for ch. 17. Comr. Lee said:

I am concurring in this case solely because of the length of time that the station has been operating in an apparently satisfactory manner. I am, however, taking this opportunity of expressing myself on a problem that has been giving me growing concern.

The Commission, consistent with its mandate under the Act, has been diligently guarding the public interest. Elaborate and time-consuming procedures have been perfected in an effort to pick the best qualified applicant to award, for a specific period of time, a piece of the peoples property, namely space in the valuable spectrum for broadcast purposes. In comparative cases this is done after long and lengthy hearings and investigations. Many of these cases are close decisions since either of two or more competing applicants might do the job equally well. This is a great responsibility for the Commission and I know is of great concern to the individual Commissioners.

It is for this reason that large transactions such as this give me cause for some alarm. The Commission transfer processes do not provide for the possibility of competing applications or comparative consideration of applicants as in the case of requests for original use of a channel. I am aware that this may be due to statutory limitations, and I do not suggest here that this is inappropriate. But I am concerned because the transfer processing does not answer for me the question as to how the prospective purchaser would have fared in a comparative hearing. I hasten to add that the new owners in this instance are to the best of my knowledge, good civic-minded citizens who will, I am confident,

ATOM DRAMA

WCPO-TV Cincinnati decided late Friday to accept ABC-TV May 18 drama dealing with atomic attack on U. S. following tabulation of results in viewers' poll (story page 78b). Mortimer C. Watters, WCPO-AM-TV general manager, said only 7% of votes were against telecasting of drama, to appear on *Motorola Tv Hour*. WCPO-TV reviewed advance copy of script before making decision.

do an outstanding public service job, nor do I complain at the fact that the licensee is making a very substantial profit since most of the assets, as a matter of fact some 75%, are listed as good-will, lease, film and network contracts.

Spartanburg Permit Returned

PERMIT for ch. 17 WSCV (TV) Spartanburg, S. C., returned to FCC and deleted, Commission reported Friday. Uhf outlet was not on air.

Edwards Sued for Half Ownership of 'This Is Your Life'

RALPH EDWARDS, program packager and m.c., was sued last week for half-ownership of *This Is Your Life* (NBC-TV, Wed., 10-10:30 p.m.) by Mel Vickland, writer-producer. He valued his alleged 50% ownership of the program, sponsored by Hazel Bishop, at \$1.75 million. Mr. Vickland claimed he conceived program idea in 1947 while hospitalized with polio. He said he received \$100 weekly while working on 25 programs. Despite agreement to share profit, complaint stated, Mr. Edwards said there was none. Besides half of \$1 million he claims has been made up to now, Mr. Vickland asked court to grant him equal share of estimated \$2½ million which Mr. Edwards will receive from program during next five years under NBC contract. Mr. Edwards denied allegations. He said program idea was utilized in present form in April 1946 on NBC *Radio Truth or Consequences*, several months before Mr. Vickland claims he conceived idea.

40 Take ABC-TV Boxing

FORTY STATIONS have signed to carry boxing bouts over ABC-TV, starting today (Mon.) at 9:30 p.m. EDT, Les Arries, ABC-TV sports director, reported Friday. Telecast also will be presented on eight far-western stations on delayed basis. Barney Ross, former welter-weight champion, will provide blow-by-blow commentary.

UPCOMING

May 19-21: Senate Communications Subcommittee, hearings on status and development of uhf channels and consideration of Johnson multiple-ownership bill. Room G-16, U. S. Capitol, 9 a.m. Open.

May 19-21: House Interstate & Foreign Commerce Committee, hearing on HR 1227, Bryson bill to bar alcoholic beverage advertising from interstate commerce. Room 1334, New House Office Bldg., 10 a.m. Open.

For other Upcomings see page 141.

PEOPLE

H QUENTON COX, veteran Northwest broadcaster, resigned Friday as manager of KGW-AM-FM Portland, Ore., after 18 years with that station. He said he would announce future plans soon. Mr. Cox served as director of NARTB and is at present chairman of its Fm Committee; he also served on NBC station planning board and was officer of Oregon Assn. of Broadcasters. Gordon Orput, president of Pioneer Broadcasters Inc., expressed regret of station owners at Mr. Cox' departure.

LEONARD F. ERIKSON, who resigned as director of Voice of America April 30 to return to McCann-Erickson, N. Y., as vice president, presented with scroll of appreciation by former colleagues at luncheon in New York.

LOUIS T. FISHER, media director for Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, N. Y., appointed a vice president.

STAN VAINRIB, formerly with Storer Broadcasting Co. in Birmingham, Ala.; WIND and WJJD Chicago, and Arthur Meyerhoff and Grant Adv. agencies, appointed vice president of Academy Film Productions Inc., Chicago, Bernard Howard, Academy Film president, has announced.

WILLIAM BALLARD, radio and television writer, father of girl, Lynn Ballard, born in New York Friday. REGGIE SCHUEBEL, owner of Reggie Schuebel Inc. (story page 32), is grandmother of child.

Senate Unit Clears Funds

SENATE Appropriations Committee Friday denied FCC's \$950,000 request for frequency usage monitoring program. Request was only addition to House approved appropriation asked by FCC for fiscal 1955, beginning next July 1 [B•T, April 19]. Funds bill now goes to Senate.

Roberts Resigns from UHFTA

RESIGNATION of Col. William A. Roberts (Roberts & McInnis) as general counsel of Ultra High Frequency Tv Assn. was tendered Friday. Organization, formed last fall, is scheduled to meet today (Mon.) in Washington's Sheraton Carlton Hotel, two days before Potter subcommittee hearings get underway.

Henley FCC Asst. Gen. Counsel

J. SMITH HENLEY was named by FCC Friday as assistant general counsel in charge of Litigation Div. to succeed J. Roger Wollenberg, who resigned earlier to join Washington radio-tv law firm of Haley, Doty & Schellenberg. Mr. Henley is partner in Henley & Henley, Harrison, Ark., and former city attorney there.

New CBS-TV Affiliates

CBS-TV announced Friday that effective July 4, WBRC-TV Birmingham replaces WABT (TV) as network's basic affiliate [B•T, May 3] and, effective Aug. 6, WLAC-TV Nashville replaces WSIX-TV as basic affiliate. WLAC-TV (ch. 5) is owned by Life & Casualty Insurance Co. of Tennessee, and WBRC-TV (ch. 6) is owned by Birmingham Broadcasting Co., subsidiary of Storer Broadcasting Co.

Improved Lawrence Tube

CHROMATIC Television Labs Inc., N. Y., is announcing today (Mon.) that it has launched pilot production of new 'improved version of Lawrence color tv tube at company's West Coast development laboratory in Oakland. Called Chromatron PDF 21-3, it is said to incorporate radiation - suppressed chromapac (color grid structure at front of tube). Tube is said to present true rectangular picture 14½ by 11 inches.