

# KOMA REPLACES WKY IN NETWORK

- Independently-inclined Todd Storz signs with NBC
- One of network's first affiliates goes independent

A leading independent radio operator's station goes network; a leading network affiliate goes independent—that's the radio story in Oklahoma City this week.

Todd Storz, one of the nation's leading exponents of independent radio, has signed his newly acquired KOMA as an NBC Radio affiliate.



MR. STORZ

In the NBC line-up, KOMA replaces WKY, which is going independent in the belief that it can give better service to its listeners that way. By mutual consent, WKY and NBC Radio are severing an affiliation

that dates from the early days of NBC. The changes are effective today (Dec. 1).

Mr. Storz said affiliation of KOMA was based on a study of programming in the Oklahoma City market which convinced him that in this section there was a need for "a broad type of programming service." He said: "We felt we could fill this void by molding the extensive programming facilities of a major network with programs tailored to the local and regional needs of this growing market.

"The answer was NBC Radio with its national and international news, sports, music, entertainment, dramatic and public interest programming facilities. NBC is well known in the market. We will continue to do the intensive type of local and regional job that has marked our stations in other markets, and will control a majority of the actual hours KOMA is on the air."

Mr. Storz told BROADCASTING that KOMA would not depart from the Storz stations' basic music-and-news format. He said the music of KOMA, which under former ownership leaned to pop standards and ballads, would be "up-tempoed" and that other programming and promotion would be aggressive, in line with the policies at other Storz stations.

He said there were no plans to affiliate any of the other stations in the Storz group. While he didn't feel that a network was the right answer in every market, Mr. Storz said, he did think a network affiliation was "right" in Oklahoma City.

Mr. Storz said "we realize that to some extent this blending of two basic types of broadcast service is a new departure for Storz Broadcasting Co. However, we consider this a logical programming and commercial move in an era of changing local, national and international concepts."

Mr. Stewart said, "The history of Storz . . . stations has been marked by flexibility. We believe this dramatic new step will keep pace with the policies of the Storz stations

and this important market."

Jack Sampson, sales manager of Storz' WHB Kansas City, has been appointed general manager of KOMA, according to George W. Armstrong, Storz executive vice president. KOMA is on 1520 kc with 50 kw. The Storz company bought it for \$600,000 from Myer Feldman, Burton Levine and others in a deal approved by the FCC in October [CHANGING HANDS, Oct. 13] and took over operation Nov. 20. Other Storz stations: WHB; WTIK New Orleans; WDGY Minneapolis and WQAM Miami.

Matthew J. Culligan, executive vice president in charge of NBC Radio, in a joint announcement with Mr. Storz said that his network "applauds the forward thinking of Storz Broadcasting Co. in its decision to add the unique advantages of network affiliation to its local and regional services. There has always been a compatibility between network affiliation and leadership in a radio market."



MR. BAGWELL

WKY's move in the other direction—greatest emphasis on local programming—has been in progress for the past few months, Station Manager Norman P. Bagwell told BROADCASTING.

He said WKY had decided that "due to changes in radio, as evident over the coun-

try, by discontinuing our radio affiliation we would be better able to serve our listeners." This, he explained, would enable WKY to expand "our programming activities in public service, farm service, news and other entertainment features."

Mr. Bagwell said that in line with this belief WKY had been cutting back on network programs until, toward the end of the affiliation, it was carrying relatively little from NBC. (Network sources, also noting this trend on WKY's part, said that in contrast KOMA would clear a minimum of 90% of NBC commercial programming.)

The WKY executive said he felt the most popular radio in Oklahoma City was independent, "companion radio."

WKY, on 930 kc with 5 kw, has been affiliated with NBC since December 1928. P.A. (Buddy) Sugg, NBC vice president for owned stations and NBC Spot Sales, headed WKY for many years.

## 'No Requiem' for NBC, Sarnoff Asks in Letter

NBC board chairman Robert W. Sarnoff has taken the occasion of CBS Radio's announced program "consolidation" [LEAD STORY, Nov. 3], to ask that NBC be "excused from any contemplated requiems."

Mr. Sarnoff acknowledges that radio's functions have "changed drastically" and that its economy has declined. "But," he adds, "the functions of network radio are still vital ones, and its economy can improve with continued concentration on performing these essential functions with maximum effectiveness."

Mr. Sarnoff's remarks are contained in the November "letter" to the nation's radio-tv editors—one of a series begun earlier this year.

NBC, which claims 48% of all measured network radio sponsored time, does not face "the problem" of ratings and sponsorship level, Mr. Sarnoff declares. "The problem," he feels, "is one of general industry psychology. With one network's cut-back following another's, the temptation to write off all network radio can become more acute." He cautions the industry against allowing fear and uncertainty to stampede network radio to death.

Mr. Sarnoff quotes a speech his father—RCA board chairman-president David Sarnoff—made in Chicago four years ago. At that time the elder Sarnoff urged that "every effort must be made to find new sales patterns, new types of programs to arrest the decline . . ."

NBC Radio, Mr. Sarnoff goes on in the letter, has done just that. It has forced new sales and programming patterns that to advertisers "meant novel merchandising and marketing opportunities and greater cumulative advertising impact." NBC, he notes, now is "selling cost-per-thousand economy in large bottles . . . furnishing flexibility, frequency and mobility, the reach-where-television-can't principle." Result? Says Mr. Sarnoff: A 20% increase in commercial business over a year ago, an increase in

### FINIS FOR 'MATINEE'

The Foundation for the Preservation of Matinee Theatre, organized last spring after NBC-TV had announced that *Matinee Theatre*, hour-long weekday dramatic colorcast series, was to be discontinued [NETWORKS, May 5], has itself been discontinued. Total contributions, \$312,670, were far beneath the amount needed to restore the series to the air, so "every dollar collected is now being returned to each donor," Ruth Conte, trustee, said last week.

"The sole purpose of the foundation," Mrs. Conte explained in a letter to the tv editors who had publicized the public campaign to save *Matinee Theatre*, "has been to afford an articulate opportunity to the viewing public to state its preference in tv programming. In view of the results of our campaign, our assumption must only be that the number who are concerned enough to support this bid for higher programming standards is far too small to insure the fulfillment of the foundation's goal."