

Station sales market explodes

Taft, Jefferson, Kaiser, other corporations purchase radio and television stations throughout the nation

The sales of channel 29 WIBF-TV Philadelphia to Taft Broadcasting Co. for an aggregate of \$4.5 million; of channel 14 WJZB-TV Worcester, Mass., plus a construction permit for channel 22 WENS-TV Pittsburgh to United Artists for \$800,000, and of WAMO-AM-FM Pittsburgh, WUFO Amherst-Buffalo, N. Y., WOAH Miami and WILD Boston to Cypress Communications Corp. for \$2.5 million highlighted station sales last week.

At the same time, the FCC approved the sale of WRVA-TV Richmond, Va., to Jefferson Standard Broadcasting Co. for \$5 million; the sale of 40% of WKBG-TV and WCAS Cambridge, Mass. as well as WJIB(FM) Boston to Kaiser Broadcasting Co., to give it 90% ownership for a total of \$2.4 million, and the transfer of KTAR-AM-FM-TV Phoenix, and KYCA Prescott, both Arizona, to Combined Communications Corp., in the first part of what is estimated to be a \$15-million deal.

The Taft Broadcasting transaction was announced last week after the Oct. 16 meeting of its board. The agreement calls for the acquisition of all the stock of WIBF Broadcasting Corp. from William L. Fox and family of Jenkintown, Pa., for \$1.4 million. It will also assume obligations for \$2.8 million in long-term obligations and \$300,000 in short-term debt.

WIBF Broadcasting also is the licensee of WIBF-FM in Jenkintown. This is being retained by the Fox family.

In addition to TV and radio stations in Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio; Birmingham, Buffalo, Kansas City and Scranton, Pa., Taft Broadcasting owns Hanna Barbera Productions, and only last month announced agreement to purchase for a maximum of \$5.1 million over a period of years, Fouad Said Productions Inc. (BROADCASTING, Sept. 23).

Broker in the Philadelphia sale was R. C. Crisler & Co.

The United Artists' acquisition, which involves the purchase of all the stock of Capital Communication Corp., licensee of the operating UHF in Worcester, Mass., and holder of a grant for Pittsburgh, came a week after announcement of the agreement for the merger of Metromedia Inc. into United Artists' parent company, Transamerica Corp. (BROADCASTING, Oct. 14)

Capital Communications is a wholly owned subsidiary of Springfield Television Broadcasting Corp., a multiple

owner of TV stations in that city in Massachusetts as well as Dayton, Ohio; Raleigh, N. C., and Keene, N. H. Springfield Television bought the Worcester station in 1958 in a stock deal.

Springfield Television also bought the Pittsburgh permit in a stock transaction in 1965 valued at \$110,000.

United Artists already owns channel 43 WUAB(TV) in the Lorain-Cleveland, Ohio, area, and holds a construction permit for KUAB(TV) Houston.

The United Artists announcement last week is considered likely to complicate the \$300-million Metromedia-Transamerica merger by adding additional TV stations to the already over-the-limit count of the two companies.

Under FCC regulations, no single entity may own more than seven TV stations, of which not more than five may be VHF. Metromedia now has four VHF and one UHF and has an option to acquire the construction permit of another UHF station (WREP[TV] Boston). Transamerica, through UA, has one operating and one permittee, both UHF. With last week's announcement, it will have two operating and two CP's, all UHF.

There was speculation, however, that before submitting the merger proposal to the FCC, the two companies would "adjust" their holdings so that no question of excess TV station ownership would arise.

The Cypress deal involves payment in cash, notes and convertible debentures. Leonard E. Walk, president of Dynamic Broadcasting Co., licensee of the five stations, will continue in that post; Dynamic will be operated as a subsidiary of Cypress. Cypress, a public firm which operates CATV systems in five states with 44,000 subscribers, also holds a permit for UHF station KTXL(TV) Sacramento-Stockton, Calif.

In approving the sale of WRVA-TV

Richmond to Jefferson Standard, the commission ordered the buyer to change the call letters in order to distinguish corporate ownership of the TV station and the radio operations. WRVA-TV was sold by Larus Investing Co., owner of Larus Broadcasting Co., and of the Larus and Bros. tobacco company. Larus Broadcasting also owns WRVA-AM-FM, which is being retained. At the time of the sale announcement, Larus also announced that it was relinquishing a grant it held for channel 54 WTRT-TV Columbus, Ga.

Jefferson Standard owns WBT-AM-FM and WBT(TV) Charlotte, and WBIG Greensboro, both North Carolina. Earlier this year it sold WBTW(TV) Florence, S.C., to the Bluefield (W. Va.) *Daily Telegraph* for \$4.5 million.

The action was opposed by Commissioner Kenneth A. Cox. WRVA-TV began operating in 1956 and is on channel 12 with an NBC affiliation.

The Cambridge-Boston sale of 40% interest in Kaiser-Globe Broadcasting Corp., licensee of the three stations, gives Kaiser Broadcasting Corp., a 50% owner, all but 10% ownership. The *Boston Globe* will retain 10%.

The purchase calls for Kaiser to pay \$800,000 for the 40% interest and to assume \$1.6 million in notes held by the *Globe*. This changes the financing of the licensee firm to \$5.4 million from Kaiser and \$600,000 from the *Globe*.

Kaiser Broadcasting, a subsidiary of Kaiser Industries, is a multiple UHF television owner, with stations in Detroit, Corona-Los Angeles, San Francisco, Burlington, N. J.-Philadelphia, and a 50% interest in Cleveland. It also owns an FM station in San Francisco.

This time Commissioner Nicholas Johnson dissented to the grant.

WKBG-TV was founded in 1953 and is on channel 56. WCAS began in 1967 and is a daytimer on 740 kc with 250 w. WJIB is 22 years old and operates on 96.9 mc with 50 kw.

In the Phoenix-Prescott transaction, the stations are being transferred to CCC, a Phoenix-based complex of broadcast and outdoor advertising, which will, at the end of a series of transactions, be owned 60% to 65% by John J. Louis Jr., and associates and 35% to 40% by Karl Eller and his group. Mr. Louis and his associates now own the Phoenix and Prescott stations. Mr. Eller owns KBLU-AM-TV Yuma and Eller Outdoor Advertising. Because of the FCC's duopoly rules

KMST(TV) joins CBS on Dec. 1

KMST(TV) Monterey-Salinas, Calif., a new UHF permittee, will become a CBS-TV affiliate around Dec. 1. It will replace KSBW-TV, which carried both CBS and NBC programs, as the CBS affiliate. KSBW-TV will continue with NBC-TV. KMST, operating on channel 46, is owned by Monterey-Salinas Television Inc. Stoddard J. Johnston is president and William Schuyler is vice president and general manager.