

picture that already features two similar programs, Mr. Menchel said, "it leaves CBS having to recapture the audience," which now is watching ABC and NBC. He said NBC will pick up some new viewers for the *Tonight Show*, the independents will have a "windfall" since most will be counter-programming the talk-variety formats and Joey Bishop is not expected to gain any new viewers.

"If something has to give" once all three are in head-to-head competition, Mr. Menchel added, "it'll be Bishop since he hasn't set the world on fire." And, in case ABC is already thinking about a possible replacement for Mr. Bishop if the TVSI prediction holds, Mr. Menchel cautioned against moving Dick Cavett into the slot. Mr. Cavett, he said, "wouldn't be any better and maybe not as good." What will make *Bishop* the possible victim of the three-way race, he said, would be the number of and strength of the CBS affiliate line-up.

Widowers, shaggy dogs in TV vogue in fall

The Hollywood chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences last week took its annual sneak preview look at the new TV series that have found their way into the fall network program schedules. What the academy discovered, in a more than three-hour presentation that was held for its members, is that NBC last season brought in seven new fall shows and one midseason replacement, with three survivors for the fall; CBS came up with six fall shows last year and two midseason entries, with a total of six returnees; and ABC-TV presented eight fall shows a year ago and brought in four more at midseason, with a total of five shows coming back for second seasons this fall. In comparison, the 1969-70 season will see NBC-TV with seven new series, CBS-TV with four new programs and ABC-TV with 11 new shows.

Film clips of many of the new series that were shown and comments and observations made by the more than 20 producers, creators, production and network executives present for the sneak preview indicated: that the climate of nonviolence will be virtually all-prevailing; that talk, not bullets, or brawls, or blood will be the chief ingredient of prime time television in the fall; that sex, particularly in such shows as ABC-TV's *Love-American Style*, will be a substitute for violence; that variations of existing programming forms such as NBC-TV's *The Bold People* (three separate hour programs under one series heading but with no other cross-ties) will be more in evidence than ever before; and that relevancy to reality will be the watchword for practically all shows, even the frothiest situation com-

NBC, CBS still about neck-to-neck in ratings

NBC-TV averaged only a fraction ahead of CBS-TV in the national Nielsen ratings for the two weeks ended March 9. NBC had a 20.9 to CBS's 20.1 and ABC's 15.0.

Season-to-date averages, however, give CBS the slight edge: a 20.3 to NBC's 20.2 and ABC's 15.7.

The Wizard of Oz, broadcast for the eleventh time, took third place in the rankings as an NBC special March 9. Two NBC Saturday movies, "Some Like It Hot" and "The Birds," placed 17th. The rest of the top programs were the series that have placed regularly in the top-20 all season.

edies.

Indications were given too that the following will get a big play in prime time next season: widowers (as opposed to this season's run on widows); black school teachers; stories about heart transplants; mod, mod clothing and hip language (never say goodbye, say I'm splitting); lisping, broken-toothed children; shaggy dogs; wise-cracking housekeepers; and fire as a dramatic device to create physical violence without human involvement.

Sample comments from producers about their products: Danny Arnold, executive producer, telling what NBC-TV's *My World and Welcome To It* is all about: "It'll have a little bit of everything in it."

Roy Silver, executive producer, talking about Bill Cosby's role in NBC-TV's *The Bill Cosby Show*: "He'll play, because this is the year for it, a black school teacher."

Radio group focuses on suit against SESAC

The pending antitrust suit brought by a group of radio broadcasters against SESAC, music-licensing organization, occupied the All-Industry Radio Music License Committee last week at its traditional meeting during the National Association of Broadcasters convention in Washington.

Its suit against the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers and its negotiations with Broadcast Music Inc. both completed by agreements on new radio music-use contracts last year, the committee's chief concern now centers on the suit against SESAC, officials reported.

The suit is still in pre-trial proceedings, and authorities would not predict when the trial stage might be reached.

In organizational matters, the committee re-elected Elliott M. Sanger,

wqxr New York, as chairman, George W. Armstrong of the Storz stations as vice chairman and Robert D. Enoch of wxlw Indianapolis as secretary. It also accepted the resignation of John J. Heywood, resulting from his resignation as executive vice president and treasurer of Avco Broadcasting, and named Roger B. Read of Taft Broadcasting to succeed him. Mr. Read also was elected treasurer of the committee.

The meeting was held Tuesday (March 25) following a report on committee activities by Chairman Sanger at that morning's NAB radio assembly.

Members on hand in addition to Messrs. Sanger, Enoch and Read were Allen Jensen, KID Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Herbert Evans, Peoples Broadcasting. Emanuel Dannett and Bernard Buchholtz of the New York law firm of McGoldrick, Dannett, Horowitz and Golub, committee counsel, also participated.

Rastar dipping into TV, plans Baby Snooks pilot

Rastar Productions, Hollywood, formed by former Seven Arts productions executive Ray Stark to produce the stage and movie hit, "Funny Girl," last week announced a \$50-million production program to cover the next three years and to include a number of television projects. The production program essentially encompasses the making of nine motion pictures, several of which will be financed and distributed through Columbia Pictures. But also included in Rastar's plans is the entry of the company into television production.

Currently in preparation are the first two television specials in a projected series of six entitled *The Geniuses*. The company also is planning a television pilot based on the radio comedy character, Baby Snooks, who was created by Fanny Brice, the personality depicted in "Funny Girl." Mr. Stark is married to the daughter of Fanny Brice. The projected series about Baby Snooks would combine live-action and animation techniques.

Trans-General expands

Trans-General Inc., Los Angeles, formed last year as a division of Imagination Inc., St. Louis, has acquired National Film Services, Hollywood. National Film, formerly Wilding Films, is a production service organization whose functions include television. It will become a division of Trans-General, with former president-owner James Sommers continuing as head of the company. Financial details of the acquisition were not disclosed. Trans-General is involved in talent management, theatrical film and live-TV packaging, and in movie and TV production.