

Closed Circuit®

Running mates

Senator Thomas F. Eagleton (D-Mo.), nominated as Democrats' vice-presidential candidate, has just about same voting record on broadcast-related legislation as that of presidential candidate, Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.) ("Closed Circuit," June 12). Both voted for cigarette-advertising ban on radio and television, favored campaign-spending law that puts unique restrictions on TV and radio, sided with Senate majority favoring repeal of equal-time law's application to presidential and vice-presidential candidates in general elections (killed in House). On his own, Senator Eagleton voted for Senator Alan Cranston's (D-Calif.) amendment to Phase II bill that would have exempted media from economic controls; amendment was stricken in later Senate-House conference.

Hooks, line and ?

Colleagues and staffers as well as outsiders are watching moves of FCC's first black commissioner, Ben L. Hooks, for signs of his politics and predilections. He served notice in first public utterances following his swearing in July 5 that he would press vigorously for involvement of blacks in all phases of communications and to extent he has participated in FCC's affairs since, he has lived up to his own billing (BROADCASTING, July 10).

Judge Hooks is in big demand. He was in and out of FCC sessions last week to take calls and keep engagements. Last Thursday he addressed Denver cable association. Next week he's off to Lake Geneva, Wis., to address Wisconsin broadcasters. Colleagues say he's showing deep interest in renewals and programing matters. Big question: Is he aligning himself with Nicholas Johnson? Quick answer is he hasn't chosen sides but is being courted.

No child's play

Hard look at probable costs of proposals to "reform" children's television is provided in soon-to-be-released study by Dr. Alan Pearce, consultant to FCC on economics of children's programing. Here are some specifics from his 70-page report: Proposal by Action for Children's Television to require at least 14 hours per week of children's programing would mean additional annual expenditure of about \$2.5 million for CBS, \$4.3 million for NBC and \$5 million for ABC, based on present average costs of such programs, which are calculated at about \$11,000 "per half hour per showing"; it would also add to stations' budgets "with little chance to recoup programing expenses."

Dr. Pearce sees no way networks could

compensate for total loss of revenue in children's shows if commercials were forbidden, as ACT has proposed. He says foundation underwriting and institutional advertising would provide no help. He volunteers, however, that if commercials were reduced by 25%, viability of children's programing "looks secure"—although NBC would "barely break even."

Roots at the roots

National Cable Television Association is well along in organization of permanent political-contact network keyed to congressional districts. Here's how it works: In each district one cable operator is appointed as political coordinator. His job is to encourage politicians to make maximum use of cables during and between campaigns and to persuade cable systems to give politicians maximum exposure. Aim, of course, is to create ever-replenished reservoir of understanding and good will at seats of lawmaking.

Mechanical problem still stands in way of easy access to cables by politicians: There's no standardization in tape-playback equipment now in use, hence no one type of tape politicians can make for general distribution to cable systems. NCTA headquarters is assuming bigger role in attempts to arrive at compatible systems of recording and playback.

Call for help

There has been marked increase but still inadequate response by radio broadcasters to FCC invitation to speak up on hardships suffered from "over-regulation." Staff is beginning preparation of rule-making to alter, piecemeal, Part 73 of FCC rules to lighten broadcasters' technical load. Set-up in comments was reported last week by Commissioner Richard E. Wiley, in charge of "de-regulation," to cut away fat built up in radio rules over nearly five decades ("Closed Circuit," June 26). Proposed changes will be discussed with various broadcasters groups (National Association of Broadcasters, bar association and engineers) this fall.

Street fight

Hunting season is getting under way for both A. C. Nielsen Co. and American Research Bureau in lining up agency clients for their competitive local-market TV reports for next season. In only confirmed change thus far, Ogilvy & Mather sources say they have signed for Nielsen station index (NSI) service and will not renew ARB. And sources at Foote, Cone & Belding, which also has been ARB agency, say they're inclined toward NSI but haven't signed anything. But that's just for openers: Both ARB and Nielsen

officials say they've renewed number of existing clients already and have signed or are near signing new ones.

Out of sight

It hasn't been generally known, but Charles W. Colson, 40, White House aide whose name was tied to bugging incident at Democratic National Committee last month, has been involved in media assignments—but not since news of bugging broke. Guests didn't know it at time, but Mr. Colson was originally on list of key administration figures scheduled to attend meeting of President and ranking station executives June 22. He turned up missing. Though his former role was never clear, he was in attendance at each of private meetings President held with top network executives earlier in his term.

Going to the action

Although CBS Inc.'s new president, Arthur R. Taylor, isn't due to assume new post until Aug. 1 (see page 28), odds are he'll have his feet under Black Rock desk any day. Presumably 37-year-old executive believes future with broadcast entity having diversified ambitions is brighter than one with paper company that depends on print media for big part of its business.

Satellite special

Metromedia Television and Associated Television, London, reportedly plan to co-produce 90-minute documentary on drug problem to originate live from New York and London and be fed via satellite to each locale. Program will be carried live in both U.S. and Britain in mid-September, with Metromedia carrying it on its five owned TV stations and arranging for "network" to other stations here. David Frost will be featured in program.

Switch to U

Trend of recent years wherein pro clubs in major sports retain own broadcast rights, will be reversed in Atlanta. Baseball Braves, which designated own originating station, set up own regional network and handled sales to sponsors, has sold TV rights for five years to WTCCG-TV Atlanta, with ch. 17 outlet handling whole TV package. First change will be increase from 20 telecasts this year (on WSB-TV) to at least 50 in 1973. No change announced for radio, now originated by WSB(AM).

Another incursion of UHF into local-regional sports programing will be in Baltimore where ch. 45 WBFF-TV is getting preseason Baltimore Colts football TV rights. Number of games to be telecast will be decided after Colts complete ownership swap with Los Angeles Rams.