

FCC okays Post buy in Hartford; Okla. Publishing purchase in Tacoma

Commission finds 'compelling public interest' showing of new owners; WTIC-AM-FM spin-off to Patricelli also passes muster at commission

Two major media combines—the Washington Post Co. and the Oklahoma Publishing Co.—last week added major television properties to their portfolios, as a result of two FCC actions.

In one, the commission approved the sale of Travelers Corp.'s WTIC-TV (ch. 3) Hartford, in the 20th-ranked market, to the Post's subsidiary, Post-Newsweek Stations, Conn., for \$33.9 million.

In the other, the commission approved the acquisition by the Oklahoma Publishing Co.'s WKY Television System of the Tribune Publishing Co.'s KTNT-TV (ch. 11) Tacoma, Wash., in the 18th-ranked Seattle-Tacoma market, for \$4.5 million.

Nor was that the end of the major sales approved by the commission last week. A third was a spin-off of the Travelers' WTIC-AM-FM to a company in which Leonard Patricelli, president of the former licensee, Broadcast-Plaza Inc., is 50% owner. The other 50% owner of the company, Ten Eighty Corp., is David

Chase, of Hartford. Sales price was \$6 million.

Katharine Graham, chairman of the board of the Washington Post Co., and Larry H. Israel, president, issued a statement in which they welcomed the opportunity to become part of the greater Hartford-New Haven area and said that the station "will be locally managed and responsive to local needs."

They also said that when the sale is consummated, which is expected to occur in early March, the station's call letters will be changed to WFSB-TV, the initials of the late Frederick S. Beebe, former chairman of the Washington Post Co., who died last May.

Both the Post company and the Oklahoma Publishing Co. are heavily engaged in publishing and broadcasting. The Post Co.—50.1% of whose Class A stock is owned by Mrs. Graham and her family; its Class B common is listed on the American Stock Exchange—owns the *Washington Post* daily and Sunday newspaper, publishes *Newsweek*, owns 50% of the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service, and 30% of the Paris-based *International Herald Tribune*. Through subsidiaries, it owns WTOP-AM-TV (ch. 9) Washington, WJXT-TV (ch. 4) Jacksonville and WPLG-TV (ch. 10) Miami, both Florida, and WCKY(AM) Cincinnati.

The Oklahoma company, which is owned principally by the family of E. K. Gaylord, chairman of the board, publishes *The Oklahoman* and *The Times*,

morning and evening newspapers, respectively, in Oklahoma City. Through WKY, it owns five television stations—WKY-TV (ch. 4) Oklahoma City, KTNT-TV (TV) (ch. 11) Fort Worth, KHTV-TV (ch. 39) Houston, WVTM-TV (ch. 18) Milwaukee, and WTVT-TV (ch. 13) Tampa, Fla., and two AM stations—WKY Oklahoma City and KOGM Albuquerque, N.M.

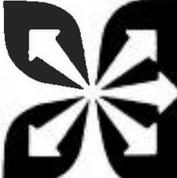
Despite these holdings, the commission found grounds to decide that both the Post Co. and the Oklahoma company had made "compelling public interest" showings warranting approval of the sales. Commission policy requires such showings on the part of applicants seeking to acquire more than three television stations—or more than two VHF's—in the top-50 markets; the commission wants assurances the benefits resulting from the acquisitions will outweigh the presumed detriments to its policy aimed at diversifying ownership of mass media. The Oklahoma company is acquiring its fifth top-50 market stations; KTNT, KHTV, WVTM and WTVT are all in top-50 markets. The Post Co. will be adding its third top-50 market VHF station; its others are WTOP-TV and WPLG-TV.

The commission, in approving the KTNT-TV sale, noted that WKY said that it would revitalize a financially ailing station, that the sale would contribute to the diversification of mass media control in the Puget Sound area (the Tribune Co. owns an AM and FM in Tacoma, publishes the only daily newspaper there, and operates a cable system in Pierce County) and that it would provide new and responsive programing.

WKY also sought to minimize the concentration of control problems its holdings suggest. It said that its stations do not dominate their respective markets and are not geographically concentrated. The commission five years ago refused to approve Oklahoma Publishing's purchase of KTVH-TV Wichita-Hutchinson, Kan., on the ground that it would result in a regional concentration of control. (BROADCASTING, Aug. 18, 1969). Moreover, the commission last week said the same problem is not presented in the purchase of the Tacoma station. The only WKY stations that might be said to constitute a "cluster" the commission said, are located in Oklahoma City, Fort Worth and Houston.

The commission made these points in recounting the Post Co.'s "compelling public interest" showing: The sale would significantly diversify mass-media ownership in Hartford by breaking up an AM-FM-TV combination, and the new owner proposes substantial qualitative and quantitative improvements in the television station's programing; and The Post Co. also said that its acquisition of WTIC-TV would not result in a concentration of control of mass media because of the many competitive voices now serving the area and that the same is true of the other markets which are served by Post-Newsweek stations—and which are widely separated from Hartford.

Complicating the sale of the three Travelers stations were two discrimina-



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