



Hearst

Walters

Schultz

Koop

Smith

when Russians, according to reports from Moscow negotiating site, set \$50 million as price for production facilities—before bidding on rights themselves was to start. It has been speculated events might cost \$75-\$100 million compared to \$25 million this year.

- CBS News aired exclusive interview with **Patty Hearst** last Thursday (Dec. 16) on *CBS Evening News With Walter Cronkite* and on half-hour special at 11:30 p.m. NYT. Sources said Harold Dow, CBS reporter in Los Angeles bureau, badgered Miss Hearst's lawyer, F. Lee Bailey, for months until Mr. Bailey (who sat in) agreed to allow interview with some subjects off limits for legal reasons.
- Robert Wold Co. officials said Friday that CBS-TV had **reversed its basketball/football lineup for Jan. 2** in apparent move to keep 80 affiliates from preempting CBS basketball to carry East-West Shrine football game being presented that day on Wold lineup. CBS Sports spokesperson confirmed that Sun Bowl football and National Basketball Association authorities had agreed to change their game times—so that Sun Bowl would start at 3 p.m. NYT instead of 12:30 and NBA basketball at 1 instead of 3:30—but said it was done not to hurt Wold "but to help us." Wold officials said they had 135 stations lined up for Shrine game, including 80 CBS affiliates, and planned to stick to original start time.
- National Association of Broadcasters 1977 Engineering Award will go to **Daniel H. Smith**, senior vice president for engineering, Capital Cities Communications Inc., Philadelphia. Award will be presented March 29 at NAB engineering conference during annual convention in Washington.
- FCC last week **designated for hearing** license renewal application for WTUV(TV) Tupelo, Miss., on basis of petition to deny filed by local citizen group. In other matters disposed of on **petition-to-deny day**, commission renewed licenses of KCOP-TV Los Angeles; WCBD-TV Charleston, S.C.; KAJN(AM) Crowley, KRMD-AM-FM Shreveport, KXKW(AM) Lafayette, WNPS(AM) and WSHO(AM) New Orleans, all Louisiana; WKAB-TV Montgomery; WEZI(FM), WMPS(AM) and WMQM(AM) all Memphis. It also deferred renewal of WXEL(FM) Slidell, La.; denied petition for reconsideration of renewal of KJAZ(FM) Alameda, Calif.; deferred action on WSMB(AM) New Orleans and WDIA(AM) Memphis; granted short term renewal to WWEE(AM) and requested additional information from KWAM-AM-FM, all Memphis; affirmed previous renewal of WGBH-FM Boston; dismissed petitions to deny filed against WBBM-AM-FM-TV, WMAQ-TV, WLS-TV and WBBM-TV all Chicago, but deferred action on WMAQ-TV application and granted WLS-TV renewal subject to outcome of pending court cases.

What happens to broadcasting if regulatory act is rewritten?

No hard clues given by drafter though he hints of radical change and deplores lack of comment

The House Communications Subcommittee's planned rewrite of the Communications Act could be the best thing that ever happened to broadcasting. Or the worst.

It depends on the inferences to be drawn from remarks by subcommittee counsel Harry M. (Chip) Shooshan at a luncheon of the Federal Communications Bar Association in Washington last week. Speaking to what one official said was a record luncheon crowd for the association (including three FCC commissioners, Chairman Richard Wiley, Abbott Washburn and James Quello), Mr. Shooshan said broadcasters have been unjustly fitted with black hats, when the real villain of most of the criticism that has showered on radio and television is Congress.

Broadcasters, Mr. Shooshan said (and he hastened to add the opinion was his own), are doing exactly what Congress told them to do in establishing this nation's system of broadcast regulation—"to operate as businessmen in a commercially supported enterprise." As businessmen in their local communities, he added, broadcasters do a much more responsible job than other businessmen in responding to community needs.

That was the bright side of his speech. The dark side for broadcasting was his suggestion that the entire system should be re-evaluated. Perhaps, he posited later, away from the microphone, a commercially supported broadcast system is not the best approach.

The problem, Mr. Shooshan said, is that "we have no coherent communications policy in the country today." He laid the blame on Congress, saying what the nation has had in the communications field is "40-plus years of ad-hocery," of Congress and the FCC applying Band-Aids to an outdated Communications Act. Congress he said, has been "k'kaloof," getting into communications matters only after they have mushroomed into crises.

What Congress has to consider now, he said, is whether it was right to create what Mr. Shooshan called a "hybrid status" for broadcasting. The dichotomy is between the broadcaster's mandate to serve the public interest and his mission as a businessman to make a profit. Mix into that equation the First Amendment, which ostensibly should keep government out of regulating program content and the result is a "great tension," he said.

The Communications Subcommittee

to be the first step on the road to a fourth network."

Ed Taylor, president of SSS, has indicated that he eventually hopes to bring other television station signals to cable systems. And "in a matter of weeks," he said, the company will file another application at the FCC which will cover other programming to television stations and cable, and perhaps video services to business.

Unlike other domestic common carriers providing television service, SSS will be leasing facilities, and thereby is classified as "resale." RCA hardware is being used, including a 24-hour-per-day lease on a Satcom satellite transponder and an uplink in Atlanta.

Although Turner Communications originally incorporated SSS, the two firms are now said to be totally independent. No payment is being made between Turner

and SSS for the transmission of the WTCG signal. Rather, Turner is counting on the increased exposure to boost its advertising revenues and is currently working with the ratings services regarding ways to measure its future impact.

SSS will be charging cable systems 10 cents per subscriber for 24-hour transmission of the WTCG signal and two cents per subscriber for programming from midnight to morning.

SSS's Mr. Taylor estimates the subscriber total will reach 500,000 by April 1 and one million by Oct. 1. He said that about 60 systems with some 500,000 subscribers have already signed with SSS. Over-all, he said, 171 systems have indicated interest.

With the FCC's relaxed stance on small-dish earth stations (preceding story), he anticipates that another 200 small systems might come on board.