

day his plans are uncertain at this point. The 280 staffers at the station are "hanging out with a certain degree of anxiety," he said, "waiting to see what will transpire." He himself, he said, has had no talks with the new management.

Servodidio said the staffers' decisions to go or stay will be individual ones. "When it comes down to one-on-one, everyone is concerned about his or her job and professional growth." He said "there are a lot of good people at the station who are committed to the area," and the station traditionally has had light turnover in such departments as sales, personnel and public affairs. Servodidio thinks the new management "won't have the opportunity not to do a good job because this is so competitive a market. You can't stand still."

Lee said NETV would "reflect throughout the station minority involvement in operations." He said, "there is certainly a sufficient quality and quantity of minority people at all levels, so we're not talking about training programs."

Servodidio said the station has unjustifiably been called the lowest-rated station in Boston. He cited the station's lead in early fringe and prime time (CBS) weekend programming. Station publicity manager Robin Reibel said, "Nobody's leaving and nobody's crying." Her comments were paralleled by other WNAC-TV staffers, who noted that the long license struggle has drained much of the drama.

CBS-TV officials were still pondering last week over a replacement for WNAC-TV as their outlet in the Boston market. In the early 1970's the network lost its Boston affiliate, then WHDH-TV, when the FCC stripped the station owners of their license for channel 5. CBS-TV then elected to go to WNAC-TV rather than affiliate with the new channel 5 licensee, now WCVB(TV).

Faced with another affiliate loss from FCC action, CBS officials said last week they had been talking with "other people" in Boston as well as with representatives of the designated successor to WNAC-TV's owners. "We've been watching it very closely," one official said. "We'll wait and see how it unfolds." WCVB, the station it once spurned, and Westinghouse Broadcasting's WBZ-TV are the only other commercial VHF's there; the former is affiliated with ABC, the latter with NBC. There are several independent U's there.

New England Television Corp. has 65 stockholders, including former Community principal David Mugar, chairman, who owns more than 35% and, with trusts, controls more than 40%. Former Dudley principal, Ed Fredkin, president, jointly controls with his wife more than 7%. Bertram Lee, senior vice president, controls about 4%. Jerome Wiesner, former president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, controls more than 3%. Other stockholders who control 3% or more include John P. Chase, Robert C. Linnell, Henry M. Morgan and Ann L. Peretz.

NETV several years ago applied for the call letters WNEV-TV, which the FCC set aside for its use. □



On location. This CBS publicity shot taken during production of the *People Like Us* documentary shows correspondent Bill Moyers (r) talking with Father Steve Gliko (c) and volunteer Eddie Griffin at St. Benedict's Church in Milwaukee, which sponsors a free meal program CBS News cited in its account of "some Americans the government has let slip through the safety net."

CBS documentary a new cause celebre

White House takes umbrage over 'People Like Us,' asks for half hour to rebut it; network says no, argues it has given sufficient coverage to overall Reaganomics subject

CBS stung the White House last week. A spokesman said the network had "hit below the belt," and the White House asked for a half hour of prime time to present its view. It's a matter of "fairness or balance," said spokesman David Gergen. CBS thought otherwise, and rejected the request.

Cause of the White House concern was *CBS Reports: People Like Us*, featuring Bill Moyers in four segments on the plight of the poor under the Reagan administration's economic and budgetary programs. Gergen, in a press briefing on the subject, said the President had watched the program, but he declined to characterize Reagan's reaction—other than to say he would like to see the administration side of the story aired.

Gergen's briefing and his request for time were only part of an administration effort to respond to the program that contended that poor people are falling through the safety net and that, in the words of Moyers, "some of the truly needy are truly hurting." The administration also issued a fact sheet taking issue with points made in three of the pieces.

Gergen had made a number of efforts in advance of the Wednesday night airing to persuade CBS to include an administration spokesman. He also went to the unusual length of asking for a tape of the show before broadcast. CBS turned down all requests.

And, on Thursday morning, following a meeting with White House aides and acting with what he said was the express approval of the President, Gergen sent a

telegram to Van Gordon Sauter, president of CBS News, requesting "in the interest of fairness," the half hour of prime time "to present our side of the story." Gergen said the time would be used to air a film "made and financed by private sources."

Sauter said that, given the nature of the broadcast, CBS did not believe it "journalistically appropriate or necessary to include an administration spokesman." And "similarly," he said, "in light of the extensive coverage which CBS has and will continue to provide to administration viewpoints, we do not believe that a special administration rebuttal broadcast" is required.

Gergen, in his meeting with reporters, continually stressed what he said was the need for "fairness" and "balance." Indeed, at one point, he said, "I believe the last time I looked that there was such a thing as the fairness doctrine." But he quickly backed away from any suggestion the White House might seek to invoke the doctrine its FCC chairman, Mark S. Fowler, is attempting to persuade Congress to repeal.

Gergen said the White House, like Fowler, believes in removing restrictions from broadcasters. But he remained troubled. He noted that while the press says the government is accountable, he feels that, "in an equally important way . . . the press is an accountable organization, and it's accountable to the public."

Gergen also indicated the White House—which had tried to maintain a friendly relationship with the press—does not intend to suffer in silence in the future. "When there are particular shows that come out that raise questions as sharply as this one does, we think we have a right to say something," he said. "We don't think we have to sit here passively and be hit over the head."

Gergen offered his own testimony as to